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OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE

SAION

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Cover story: Dromex. See page 20
Editor’s Comment

Tragedy struck London a few days ago when a massive fire engulfed a 24 storey residential building in north Kensington. Lives were lost. Possessions destroyed. People were left homeless. Investigations will probably find that the fire could have been prevented.

While back in South Africa, hundreds of houses and informal settlement shacks were destroyed in the Knysna wildfires resulting from severe storms. No amount of pre-planning could have prevented the devastation.

Far too many companies are affected by fires every year resulting in injury, lost customer support and building damage. Even if no lives are lost, many fires will result in the loss of jobs therefore leaving families destitute.

Every company must have a fire prevention plan (FPP) to help avoid these costly damages and prevent potential fines which may be instituted afterwards. The article “Implementation of a fire prevention plan” in this issue discusses this in more detail - examining the fire hazards, combustible materials, heat producing equipment that could cause sparks resulting in fires. Employees should all be educated in the fire prevention plan of the company which must be reviewed at regular intervals.

Over and above the FPP, companies must train team members and implement a fire emergency evacuation plan. If everyone knows their responsibilities in the case of a fire, the response will be easier and evacuation more effective. The plan must establish how and when to respond, identify the path of escape and formalise a central place of meeting in the case of evacuation.

In the London fire, many of the occupants were told to stay in their apartments until help arrived - this advice resulted in many of them losing their lives. In Knysna, most residents were successfully evacuated, although some fatalities were tragically reported.

Attention must also be paid to the special needs of employees who may require assistance.

Emergency and exit lights must stay illuminated at all times - not only when there is an evacuation. Routine maintenance needs to be undertaken so that burnt out bulbs can be replaced. It is too late to find out they are not functioning once a fire breaks out.

Daily housekeeping is important to ensure that facilities are clear of fire hazards and that escape routes are not blocked. Companies often leave storage boxes, ladders etc in front of fire exits or aisles. These must be kept in proper storage areas.

Of course, fire extinguishers and automatic sprinkler systems must be in place and serviced regularly.

It is the company’s responsibility to make sure that its facility and employees will be prepared at all times in the case of a fire emergency, and will be trained to react properly and safely.
Working together for your safety.

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Conducting effective oil and gas safety audits

by Dr Bill Pomfret

Managing Consultant, Safety Projects International, Canada specialises in auditing and evaluating both client and contractor Safety Programmes and in developing with them pro-active preventative systems procedures and programmes to control all incidents.

When I conduct an effective internal health and safety audit, one of my regular starting points is to share my opinions with attendees.

GET ALL STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The first thing I always do is to get all stakeholders involved. The safety team must be represented, often by an auditor in training. I also think it is important for at least one employee from each of the areas to be involved in the audit. In addition, I never forget that the area supervisor is the key player who can make a big difference to the successful outcome of the audit.

TEAM MEMBERS MUST BE TRAINED

The second requirement is to make sure all members of the safety team have attended the Safety Projects International Inc. Certified Accredited Auditors course, and are therefore competent to conduct safety audits. There are several equally effective courses in South Africa. During the course, they will also have been trained to interact with the other stakeholders in a professional manner. It is extremely important that the safety team representative doesn’t come off as a safety policeman or a know-it-all.

THE INTENT IS TO UNCOVER POTENTIAL DANGERS

Next I recommend a simple format for health and safety audits. It is desirable that stakeholders outside of the health and safety department have an understanding of the format and the intent of the audit before starting. This includes letting them know the intent of the audit is not to “bust” people and get them in trouble. We want a proactive approach, contributing to the mature safety systems and a progressive company safety culture. People may still be worried about the safety police and/or getting “busted”, so it is important to make the point up front that health and safety audits are a proactive means to uncover potential health and safety issues, and not a means to write ‘em up, suspend ‘em, and/or fire ‘em.

Next, the team should never call out an employee on the spot, unless of course they are actually in imminent danger. Even then, we must use respect in stopping them from the unsafe action. We, the auditors as a group, need to document any unsafe condition or behaviour and let the supervisor address the issue. This serves a dual purpose. It allows the supervisor to maintain his or her authority, without him coming across like a safety police.

The line supervisor should also be responsible for mitigating safety deficiencies, as well as unsafe conditions or behaviours, in their area. The audit team should take immediate action, with the presence of the supervisor, if the deficiency poses a clear danger to workers in the area.

The health and safety department should stay out of the “fixing” process. If the safety department allows itself to become the responsible party for taking care of safety deficiencies, the supervisor will assume that the safety team is responsible for mitigating all audit findings as well as all other safety deficiencies in the area.

This of course would give no incentive for the supervisor to keep the risks out of their area. Don’t get me wrong; supervisors have a ton of responsibility and will naturally choose to passively delegate tasks to anyone who chooses to take on tasks. So the safety practitioner involved with the audit should maintain a consulting role.

LISTEN TO THE WORKERS

During the audit, I try to focus on what the workers are saying. If you take on the responsibility to tackle everything you see, you are losing the perspective of the people who do the work every day. So if you see some little thing, take a quick note and revisit it with the supervisor once the audit is complete. So for now, let the employees in the area know your focus is on them and what they perceive as safety issues.
This of course does not mean that you shouldn’t ask questions of the employees. You certainly are obliged to ask questions, but make sure they are relevant to the job the employee is doing. During audits, I have had employees bring up safety issues that I would have missed. Remember, they know best what is going on. Also, it is important to verify records to ensure things are recorded properly.

I have had employees tell me that something is perfectly safe, when I know better. In this situation, the audit team should ask why the employee feels safe performing a task that on the surface does not look safe. There may be a great answer, but more often than not, the answer is something along the lines of, “I’ve been doing this job this way forever and have never gotten hurt.” This is a great way for the supervisor to see the employee’s perception first-hand. It’s also a good time to explain to the supervisor — assuming they don’t already know — why it is not safe. This allows the supervisor the opportunity to take control, have a conversation with the employee on why the action is not safe, and share the safe way to perform the task. Again, this gives the supervisor the authority and responsibility to ensure the dangerous behaviour changes.

**EVALUATION/ANALYSIS OF THE AUDIT**

Once the audit is complete, the safety team, and the supervisor need to perform an evaluation / analysis of the audit. It is surprising to me how many safety audits are just signed off, thrown in the filing cabinet, and never seen again. It’s like fulfilling a requirement without really accomplishing the point of the requirement. A great time to review and analyse health and safety audits is during safety team meetings. This way we have more minds available at the evaluation / analysis to ask questions of the team who actually performed the audit.

I have had some great questions asked during this type of review process, which has prompted me to go back to the source (in this case, the supervisor or the employee) to get clarification.

**COMPARE THE FINDINGS WITH THE SOPS**

The process is still not complete. The next step is to compare the safety audit findings with the standard operating procedures, or SOPs, of the audited area to look for gaps in the SOPs that lead to any observed health or safety issues. If the SOP addresses the observed issues, re-training and supervisor reinforcement may be in order.

If there is no mention of observed safety issues in the SOPs, and it would be relevant to add them, well ... there’s no time like the present. We need to ensure the specific SOP or SOPs are updated and the employees are trained on the updates. It is almost forty years since I went out with NOSA’s best auditors, and having to convince them that the one day audits with the scores being added on the way home were not effective. Eventually, we collectively agreed to make all audits a duration of five days. Many employers did not like the change and it took a Nosa board meeting to change the policy.

**INOLVE LINE MANAGEMENT**

Another policy change was to involve line management more. While we all hated to throw more responsibility on the supervisor’s plate, this was something they all needed to be directly involved with.

One of my favourite sayings that continually pushes me to strive for supervisor involvement is: “If it’s important to my boss, it’s important to me.”

**MY OBSERVATIONS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA**

During my experiences with South Africa I have learned that it is a country where risks are controlled because everyone believes that suffering and accidental losses are morally, socially and economically unacceptable. This is commendable and must continue.
Every organisation’s objective is to prevent potential injuries and ill-health of employees, contractors, visitors and other relevant stakeholders, which might arise due to exposure in an unsafe working environment. The same applies to the relevant stakeholders who must adhere to the applicable health and safety procedures and programmes being implemented.

Through a combined effort, management and employees have a duty to identify hazards and associated risks in their workplace. Subsequently, suitable control measures such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are recommended and provided. The overall strategy is aimed at developing, implementing and maintaining a PPE programme.

What constitutes a PPE programme and why have one? This article summarises the elements that a good PPE programme should consider.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND PPE ASSESSMENT

An effective PPE programme is developed, implemented and maintained initially by taking into account the hazards as well as the risks associated with the identified hazards in the workplace.

The completed risk assessment should inevitably recommend the appropriate control measures, for example the use of PPE.

Depending on the operations or activity being performed, the recommended PPE may be either respirators, protective clothing, goggles, ear plugs or hard hats.

It is advisable, when conducting the PPE assessment to involve the personnel that have an understanding of the operation(s) and how they should work safely and use the PPE.

For organisations that have already implemented the OHSAS 18001:2007 standard or are in the process of doing so, they will be familiar with the following clause: “4.3.1 Hazard identification, risk assessment and determining controls”.

The clause specifies that “The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) for the ongoing hazard identification, risk assessment, and determination of necessary controls”.

When determining controls, or considering changes to existing controls, consideration shall be given to reducing the risks according to the following hierarchy:

a) elimination;
b) substitution;
c) engineering controls;
d) signage / warnings and / or administrative controls;
e) personal protective equipment.

This is illustrated in Figure 1 Hierarchy of Controls.

It is evident that PPE is always considered as the last alternative, which is the emphasis of this article. It is important to understand that PPE is intended to complement other control measures.

DETERMINE AND PROVIDE THE APPROPRIATE PPE

The outcome of the PPE assessment provides an input into the type of the PPE to be used.

However, caution should be taken as to what is perceived as a control - there are cases when PPE might pose a significant risk to the personnel wearing it.

When deciding on the type of PPE, the following key questions are of significant help but not limited to:

• Does the selected PPE comply with the applicable legal and other requirements?
• Does the PPE take into account the personnel's health?
• Will PPE be adequate or sufficient to mitigate the risks instead of increasing the risk exposure?
• Will the PPE fit the person wearing it to prevent further risk exposure?
• Is the PPE suitable for the identified or potential emerging risks?

When the above questions or concerns have been addressed, the employees or any other personnel are provided with appropriate PPE.

It must be remembered that PPE is used to complement, and not replace other appropriate and effective control measures used to mitigate the risks.

This is a similar call from the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1993, Section 8 "General duties of employers to their employees". In subsection (b) among other duties, the employer must be "taking such steps as may be reasonably practicable to eliminate or mitigate any hazard or potential hazard to the safety or health of employees, before resorting to personal protective equipment."

TRAIN, TRAIN AND RE-TRAIN

All too often, PPE is issued to personnel working in a hazardous environment without appropriate training. In this case, the person using the PPE will probably still be exposed to the risk.

A combination of practical and theoretical PPE training needs to specify:

• The risks identified and the type of PPE recommended to mitigate the risks.
• The rationale to use the PPE provided, its potential limitations especially if not used correctly, but also, the importance of taking into account other controls measures.
• The PPE should be used and the consequences of not using it.
• Most importantly, how the PPE needs to be used and maintained.
Retraining is important especially where human behaviour issues are common that might hinder effective implementation of the PPE programme.

Retraining is also recommended when there are changes in your workplace, for example new machinery being installed.

Do not forget to maintain training records. Records provide evidence especially when incidents occur related to the unsafe use of PPE or even additional exposure from the hazards that escaped the controls!

**MONITOR THE USE AND REMOVE UNSAFE PPE**

A PPE programme needs to be monitored to determine its effectiveness. A routine question might be "Is the PPE adequately mitigating the risks?"

Monitoring is not a one-off exercise. It should form part of task observations, routine inspections and auditing without imposing a policing attitude.

Consultation and participation of personnel is encouraged in the form of obtaining their views and opinions, for example whether the PPE is in safe working condition.

PPE issued is not always permanent, sometimes it does have to be replaced. Employees must pay attention to the condition of the PPE being used. If it is worn out or damaged, it must be replaced. Once damaged, there is no assurance it will provide the necessary protection against the hazards.

This points us to ensuring that a PPE maintenance and replacement schedule is adhered to.

**IN PURSUIT FOR SAFETY**

We recognise that PPE is usually referred to as the last resort in the protection of personnel in the work environment. What makes a successful PPE programme will differ from one organisation to another. However the fundamental elements discussed give us assurance that when the programme is effectively implemented and maintained, exposure to hazards will be considerably reduced.

One safety slogan explains it clearly "Remember it is PPE not DOA (Death on Arrival).”

Lastly, management and supervisors need to be role models, to lead by example and ensure strict adherence to their organisation's PPE programmes.

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The views expressed in this article are the views of the author. They are not intended to substitute legal or professional advice.

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Indoor environmental quality in high-rise buildings
- its implication on health and safety of workers
Evaluation of Lagos State Government administrative buildings in Nigeria

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The problems associated with indoor environmental quality (IEQ) and the possible subsequent effects on workers, as experienced by the employees of Lagos state government in multi-storey office buildings in Lagos, Nigeria, were investigated and are discussed in this article. To find a possible association between these poor physical environmental indoor conditions and the potential adverse affects on the health and motivation of workers, a cross sectional survey was conducted to assess the physical, biological and chemical quality of indoor environmental quality (IEQ). The data was collected between February and April 2012. A total of 1000 questionnaires were randomly distributed among employees working in the 12 multi-storey buildings out of a total of 16. Each building consists of 6 floors each, with an average of 60 offices in each block. Occupants in each office vary between one and maximum of 6. Eight hundred and ninety seven (897) responded to the questionnaires.

The overall aim of the study is to emphasise that working environments should be conducive for workers and other users.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Indoor air quality
Health and well-being at work are two of the main preconditions for good productivity and work performance. In contrast, poor indoor environment as a result of indoor air problems may lead not only to health problems in workers but also to a loss of productivity and to financial loss (Fisk, 2000). On the other hand, good indoor air quality has a beneficial effect on the health of employees, the social atmosphere at work, and productivity in offices (Lahtinen, et al., 2002). Therefore, there is a great interest in the identification and management of indoor air problems at work, combined with a need for good practices on how to solve and prevent such problems.

Poor indoor air may result from the presence of chemical substances, including particles, and biological agents, as well as contributing physical factors. Air pollutants, ergonomics, lighting and temperature may cause a deterioration of health of the occupants
outdoor air to dilute emissions from pollutants by not allowing enough Inadequate ventilation increases indoor air pollution. Importance of good ventilation

Inadequate ventilation increases indoor pollutants by not allowing enough outdoor air to dilute emissions from indoor sources. The IAQ problem may also originate from office machines and chemical cleaning materials that may be harmful to human health. An example of such an air pollutant is carbon monoxide, which is an odourless and colourless gas, and causes a blockage in the transportation of oxygen to the human body. These blockages often cause dizziness, nausea and fatigue to the occupants of the office. Improved air quality evaluation in buildings is necessary to avoid the formation of air pollutants that are harmful to human body. Problems associated with poor lighting

Poor lighting in buildings could lead to poor vision among occupants of a building. Lighting should be included at the initial design stage to ensure that the required level of lighting is adhered to (De Carli and De Giuli, 2009). Inadequate lighting in the building may reduce productivity among occupants. Different tasks require certain levels of lighting. Office light is supposed to support both the paper-based work and computer-based work, which makes it difficult for the occupants to adjust the lights to meet both requirements. Light emitted by the computer also contributes some challenges to the occupants' health if the screen light is not set correctly (AL-Anzi, 2009). Incorrect lighting leads to headaches, stress, dizziness and loss of productivity. Quality of lighting in the office building is linked to productivity, because without high-quality lights in the building the productivity drops (Samani, 2011). Constant evaluation of the building's performance is necessary to yield an improved IEQ, which may boost the quality of life of the occupants (Cho and Lee, 2010). This indoor air problem may lead to a total dysfunction in an organisation if it is not prioritised at the earliest stage, since it would reduce the productivity of the organisation (Antikainen et al., 2008). Proper precautions should be taken regarding the efficiency of the IEQ in order to safeguard the lives of the occupants in the office against diseases that may be caused by poor lighting.

Thermal comfort

Thermal comfort is the comfort of occupants when they feel satisfied with the level of heat or cold. The lack of evaluation of buildings regarding the thermal comfort may lead to occupants being uncomfortable if the building is too hot or too cold. If the evaluation of the building is done at certain intervals, occupants are enabled to choose the type of clothing that is suitable to the temperature of the building (Hassanain, 2008). AL-Anzi (2009) identifies some effects of high and low temperatures on the occupants in the office. A high temperature causes occupants to become tired, whereas low temperatures may affect occupants with flu, especially occupants with weak or compromised antibodies.

Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the study where it is determined whether an occupant is in a place where it suits or fits him or her so that work can be performed without any disturbances. Ergonomics aims to improve the occupant's comfort, safety and work efficiency (Mustafa et al., 2009). Improved IEQ is not complete without addressing ergonomics in buildings or any office environment. Poor ergonomics may cause work-related diseases called musculoskeletal disorders (MSD). Workspace designs should be done in a manner that satisfies the occupant's work needs. The
Designers must comply with the highest standards of IEQ, which will stimulate the occupant’s morale and satisfaction. IEQ for workspace must be taken seriously when employers choose workspace, as these may have a serious impact on the occupants’ health (Vischer, 2008).

Satisfactory workspaces

It is important that the employer creates a workspace that is suitable for occupants so that they will feel valued and inspired by their employer, and be proud of the work they do.

Workspace psychology may play an important part, whereby motivation and commitment could influence occupants to be more productive. Working in an unhygienic workplace will reduce the morale and increase job dissatisfaction among the occupants (Davies, 2010).

In a suitable workspace, job satisfaction among occupants improves, which would lead to a rise in productivity. Failure to achieve effective ergonomics in the workplace results in low productivity and poor quality of work.

Sound ergonomics will also ensure that occupants perform work faster (AL-Anzi, 2009). Noise disturbances

Office noise disturbances prevent occupants from concentrating on their work. Many researchers have acknowledged that noise may lead to stress, headaches and other disorders (AL-Anzi, 2009). Designers are therefore required to design projects that include acoustic materials to be used for the projects.

Design of workspaces

Designers should be able to analyse the way that occupants will be placed in the office space. Office wall-panel height must be considered to ensure that at least minimum privacy is maintained, even though it is an open-space office. An employer should be in a position to select an acoustic office design that will control noise management and reduction within the workstation. Strategic thinking is required if the employer wants to reduce the level of noise by increasing the room’s capacity for absorption, increasing screen height and increasing the masking of the sound level (H ongisto, 2008).

HEALTH RISK OF POOR INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Indoor environments are the sites of a variety of biological, chemical, and other environmental hazards. Biological hazards include infectious agents such as bacteria and viruses, molds, endotoxins, and antigens from house dust mites, rodents, cockroaches, pollen, and animal dander. The allergic constituents of indoor air are predominantly biologic in origin (Institute of Medicine (IOM) 2000).

Symptoms related to poor IEQ vary depending on the type of contaminant. They can easily be mistaken for symptoms of other illnesses such as allergies, stress, colds, and influenza. The usual due is that people feel ill while inside the building, and the symptoms go away shortly after leaving the building, or when away from the building for a period of time (such as on weekends or a vacation). Failure of building owners and operators to respond quickly and effectively to IEQ problems can lead to numerous adverse health consequences.

Health effects from indoor air pollutants may be experienced soon after exposure or, possibly years later (EPA, 2010). Symptoms may include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat; headaches; dizziness; rashes; and muscle pain and fatigue (Bernstein, et. al., 2008).

Health problems linked to poor IAQ

Diseases linked to poor IAQ include asthma and hypersensitivity pneumonitis European Concerted Action (1991). The specific pollutant, the concentration of exposure, and the frequency and duration of exposure are all important factors in the type and severity of health effects resulting from poor IAQ.

Age and preexisting medical conditions such as asthma and allergies may also influence the severity of the effects. Long term effects due to indoor air pollutants may include respiratory diseases, heart disease, and cancer, all of which can be severely debilitating or fatal (Bernstein, et. al., 2008).

Figure 2 illustrates the complexity of the relationship between the indoor structure, the hazards generated as a consequence, and the ultimate health effects in the occupants. Characteristics of the building structure, such as its composition, contents, and building systems, as well as attributes of the population and activities within the building, all contribute to the health of the indoor environment which can ultimately lead to a variety of adverse health effects as shown in Figure 2.

METHODOLOGIES

Method

The overall purpose of the study was to determine the level of satisfaction of building occupants’ in terms of Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) and how it affects their health and safety vis-a-vis their productivity at work. The questionnaire was in five sections (A-E).
The design of the questionnaire envisages a maximum of 15 minutes for its completion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Observations from the data led to the view that the satisfactory level of IEQ awareness is low among the employees. It was found that most of these employees face a multitude of hazards in their offices which include biological and chemical contaminants, as well as poor ergonomics, lighting, and physical design.

These hazards cause and exacerbate a variety of adverse health effects, ranging from asthma to sick building syndrome to cancer.

CONCLUSIONS

Organisational structure needs to be formed that will enlighten occupants about the factors that contribute to poor indoor air quality (IAQ).

Employees must be well informed of such risks in order to make useful health decisions; they must also understand both the health consequences of poor indoor environmental quality, and some simple and feasible interventions to improve IEQ.

Indeed, policy changes at multiple levels are needed to achieve healthy workplace indoor environments. Education and information dissemination on the public health risks associated with indoor environments are essential.

Policy-makers must be well informed of such risks in order to make useful public health decisions. Similarly, individuals must understand both the health consequences of poor indoor environmental quality, and some simple and feasible interventions to improve IEQ. Public health education conducted by community health workers has been found to be cost-effective regarding behavioural changes in the home and resulting health benefits. Indeed, policy changes at multiple levels are needed to achieve healthy indoor environments. It is quite certain that the benefits of such investments, measured in terms of improved human health and productivity, significantly outweigh the costs.

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The importance of a fire prevention plan

Workplaces need to continually assess the fire safety of their environment. The first line of safety defense must be prevention and this requires a clear understanding of the hazards involved in any particular situation. It is also essential that people remain vigilant towards the general condition of any equipment, materials, or other items they are using. The best way to avoid fire damage is to recognise and avoid hazardous situations from the start.

WORKPLACE FIRE PREVENTION PLANS

A fire prevention plan (FPP) is a document that explains the procedures that will help to prevent a fire from occurring in the workplace. An FPP includes essential fire prevention basics, as well as building systems such as fixed fire extinguishing systems and alarm systems.

FPPs are usually in written form and include:

a. A list of all major fire hazards, proper handling and storage procedures for hazardous materials, potential ignition sources, and the type of fire protection equipment necessary to control each major hazard.

b. Procedures to control accumulations of flammable and combustible materials.

c. Procedures for regular maintenance of safeguards installed on heat-producing equipment.

d. The name or job titles of employees responsible for the control of fuel source hazards. Employers must inform new employees of fire hazards and review the FPP with all employees so they can plan for self-protection. Ask your supervisor if you are unsure if your workplace has an FPP.

Proactive fire prevention must occur on a daily basis and demands the vigilance of both employers and employees. The maintenance of a clean and orderly workplace is essential for preventing workplace fires. You must routinely inspect the workplace to help avoid fires from these potential hazards:

a. Flammable liquids and chemical agents. Flammable materials can generate evaporative gases that accumulate in enclosed areas.

b. Processes that include open flames, sparks, or heat. These include welding, forging and heat treatment, cutting, and grinding operations. These processes can generate sparks and enough heat to ignite nearby flammable materials.

c. Overloaded, flawed, or damaged electrical circuits can reach high temperatures and ignite surrounding flammable materials.

d. Materials that chemically decompose generate internal heat, and spontaneously combust. Sawdust, grain dust and other organic dust accumulation and oily rags in open containers are especially at risk of sudden combustion. Smoking and careless disposal of tobacco products.

e. Poor housekeeping allowing the build-up of combustible materials.

f. Refuse left in insecure area externally but adjacent to buildings.

g. Unauthorized repairs to electrical equipment or systems.

CONTROL MEASURES

Controls to prevent fire/explosion from occurring include correct design, selection, and maintenance of the equipment and protective devices and establishing work rules. Some of the control measures in practice are stated below:

- Removal or separation of incompatibles.
- Elimination of ignition sources.
- Substitution.

REMOVAL OF CONTRIBUTING AGENTS

Materials that can contribute to a flammable liquid fire should not be stored with flammable liquids. Examples are oxidizers and organic peroxides which, on decomposition, can generate large amounts of oxygen.

ELIMINATION OF IGNITION SOURCES

All non-essential ignition sources must be eliminated where flammable liquids are used or stored.

The following is a list of some of the more common potential ignition sources:

a. Open flames, such as cutting and welding torches, furnaces, matches, and heaters—these sources should be kept away from flammable liquids. Cutting or welding on flammable liquids equipment should not be performed unless the tank has been properly emptied and purged with a neutral gas such as nitrogen.

b. Electrical sources of ignition such as motors, switched, and circuit breakers—these sources should be eliminated where flammable liquids are handled or stored. Only approved explosion proof devices should be used in these areas.

c. Mechanical sparks—these sparks can be produced because of friction. Only non-sparking tools should be used in areas where flammable liquids are stored or handled.

d. Static sparks—these sparks can be generated because of electron transfer between two contacting surfaces. The electrons can discharge in a small volume, raising the temperature to above the ignition temperature. Every effort should be made to eliminate the possibility of static sparks, by earthing and the use of materials which do not cause static electricity.

e. Sparks from over-head welding in the workshop environment are best protected from falling by cordoning off the area with fire resistant sheet and someone must be on stand by with a fire extinguisher.

f. A hot work permit system should be implemented when doing hot work in the vicinity of combustible materials.
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Flirting with danger

Dodging tankers

by Rob van Hemert

It was 1980, I had taken a scuba diving course and really enjoyed it. The training was done in the huge pool at the university of Singapore and then with a few open water dives we were awarded the PADI class 1 scuba diving certificate (or whatever it was).

I had a boat there, and one weekend Greg and I decided to dive at a deep reef out in the Singapore straits. That is a busy shipping lane, probably second busiest after the English channel. From any point at any one time you could probably count 6 vessels.

We anchored the boat in 10 m deep water, donned our gear, checked each other out and entered the water.

Somebody asked once why do divers always fall off their boats backwards. The answer given was that if they went the other way they’d fall into the boat and hurt themselves.

Anyway, descending I got into trouble at about 8 m with an excruciating pain in my right ear. I could not clear the Eustachian tube to equalize the pressure on both sides of the eardrum. I blew hard into my nose and finally after moving my jaws sideways back and forth a few times there was a most welcome high pitched peeetooouuwww sound, as air squeezed through a narrow hole, and the pain subsided.

Visibility was only about 5 m, due mainly to the amount of shipping in this relatively shallow body of water.

Deep ships would ride only about 4 m above the bottom and churn up the silt. The reef was covered in silt and of no interest, so Greg indicated that we should explore deeper.

The sandy bottom shelved downwards at a gentle angle and we followed it,

We were in the westbound lane of the Singapore straits with a ship bearing down on us. Another had just passed us by 500 m. My boat was about a kilometer away. We both swam like mad towards it, the ship passing us by not more than 100m. Too close for comfort and certainly would have been tickets if I hadn’t come to when I did.

What we had done was totally irresponsible. We should never have ventured out into deep water alongside or into the straits. A passing ship could easily have ripped all our gear off with its wash. With hindsight, the fact that I didn’t drown in my own blood is also surprising. A lucky escape!
Message from the President

Joep Joubert

Good Day IOSM Members!

By the time you read this we will be well into winter! I trust that you will have your cold weather plans in place to ensure the exposure of your employees to the cold is adequately managed. Those of you working in a winter rainfall area should by now also have considered and implemented your wet weather driving strategies!

LEGISLATION

The Department of Labour has been very busy over the past months amongst others with the publication or the new Ergonomic Regulations for comment, as well as working on the revisions of a number of the other regulations to the OHS Act, 85 of 1993. As indicated some time ago, the draft OHS Bill is also still in process and according to the Chief Inspector, now getting closer to being published for comment. We will try and keep you as up to date as we can!

One document which has been quite a while in seeing the light is the Guidelines to the Construction Regulations 2014. That was published in Government Gazette No. 40883, dated 2 June 2017. All members of IOSM can access the Guidelines at www.iosm.co.za or you could access it directly from the DoL website at www.labour.gov.za or from the Government Printers website at http://www.gpwonline.co.za/Gazettes/Pages/Published-National-Government-Gazettes.aspx.

Those involved in construction work should make it their business to look at these as the DoL has clarified a number of issues that created a bit of confusion in the past.

FEEDBACK ON A-OSH EXPO 2017

This annual Health and Safety event was held from 30 May to 1 June at Gallagher Estate.

As usual it was well attended by exhibitors and visitors alike. The A-O SH Expo Seminar Theatre - this year sponsored by the BBF Safety Group - again was well attended.

Speakers included the Chief Inspector, Mr Tibor Szana and Mr Shamusideen Kadiri from Nigeria who spoke on the perspective of the challenges faced by OHS practitioners in the rest of Africa.

The topics were diverse and presented by experts dealing with the proper use and selection of specific PPE, environmental management, selection of Occupational Hygiene service providers and ISO 45001.

I would like to thank the SAPEMA team for their cooperation to again make the seminar theatre a success this year!

Please note that the IOSM has a number of electronics means of communication, besides our regular e-mail circulars that we send out. Our web page at www.iosm.co.za is updated with relevant information and contains very useful information in the body of knowledge section, we have a LinkedIn group at https://www.linkedin.com/in/iosm-institute-of-safety-management-83307b110/?ppe=1 and a face book page at https://www.facebook.com/iosm1/

Please don’t only like the page, also send us a friend request, we want to grow the group as much as possible! Also expect to see some information on webinars soon!

Keep well and keep informed!!
Agricultural pollution refers to biotic and abiotic by-products of farming practices that result in contamination or degradation of the environment and surrounding ecosystems, and can cause injury to humans and their economic interests.

The pollution may come from a variety of sources, ranging from point source pollution (from a single discharge point) to more diffuse, landscape-level causes, also known as non-point source pollution.

**Abiotic sources are:**
- Pesticides, fertilizers, heavy metals and land management.

**Biotic sources are:**
- Greenhouse gases, bio pesticides, introduced invasive species, genetically modified organisms and animal management.

Pesticides and herbicides are applied to agricultural land to control pests that disrupt crop production. Soil contamination can occur when pesticides persist and accumulate in soils, which can alter microbial processes, increase plant uptake of the chemical, and also cause toxicity to soil organisms.

Pesticides can also accumulate in animals that eat contaminated pests and soil organisms. In addition, pesticides can be more harmful to beneficial insects, such as pollinators, and to natural enemies of pests (i.e. insects that prey on or parasitize pests) than they are to the target pests themselves.

**PESTICIDE LEACHING**

Pesticide leaching occurs when pesticides mix with water and move through the soil, ultimately contaminating groundwater.

Leaching is most likely to happen if you are using a water-soluble pesticide, when the soil tends to be sandy in texture or if excessive watering occurs just after pesticide application.

**Fertilizer**

Phosphate rocks contain high levels of fluoride. Consequently, the widespread use of phosphate fertilizers has increased soil fluoride concentrations.

**Radioactive elements**

The radioactive content of fertilizers varies considerably and depends both on their concentrations in the parent mineral and on the fertilizer production process. At present it is not considered to be a danger to humans.

**Heavy metals**

Steel industry wastes, which are recycled into fertilizers for their high levels of zinc (essential to plant growth), can include the following toxic metals: lead, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, and nickel. The most common toxic elements in this type of fertilizer are mercury, lead, and arsenic.

The nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) applied to agricultural land (via synthetic fertilizers, composts, manures, bio-solids, etc.) can provide valuable plant nutrients. However, if not managed correctly, excessive N and P can have negative environmental consequences.

**ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS**

Manures and bio-solids contain many nutrients consumed by animals and humans in the form of food.

The practice of returning such waste products to agricultural land presents an opportunity to recycle soil nutrients. The challenge is that manures and bio-solids contain not only nutrients such as carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus, but they may also contain contaminants, including pharmaceuticals and personal care products.

**LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Soil erosion and sedimentation**

Agriculture contributes greatly to soil erosion and sediment deposition through intensive usage or inefficient land cover.

It is estimated that agricultural land degradation is leading to an irreversible decline in fertility on about 6 million ha of fertile land each year.

**BIOTIC SOURCES**

**Greenhouse gases from fecal waste**

Animal management. Manure management

One of the main contributors to air, soil and water pollution is animal waste. It is estimated that one dairy farm with 2,500 cows produces as much waste as a city with around 411,000 residents.

It has been identified that odours are the most significant animal emission problem at the local level. According to a 2005 report by the USDA, more than 335 million tons of “dry matter” waste (the waste after water is removed) is produced annually on farms in the United States.

Animal feeding operations produce about 100 times more manure than the amount of human sewage sludge processed in US municipal waste water plants each year.

**Food for thought: Humans need Nature. Nature does not need Humans.**

If we keep on destroying our planet, our children may one day look at us and ask: “What have you done?”
There are many unscrupulous training providers who are not accredited to register credits for certain training, but still issue training certificates showing the credits to be awarded, thus giving the false impression that the delegate will be awarded credits on the National Learner Record Database (NLRD). I raised this issue with the training provider after an application was made to HWSETA for an extension of scope for an additional unit standard. HWSETA advised that the provider was not approved for that unit standard nor for a skills programme. Yet, the provider’s training certificate reflected the HWSETA logo as well as the credits to be awarded. Now, 3 years later and the matter has still not been resolved! Regular communication sent to the provider has been ignored. Needless to say, the credits have also not been registered on the NLRD!

Training certificates are regularly submitted with membership applications to the Registrar for The Institute of Safety Management. My advice to you ... Check with SAQA if your credits shown on your certificates have been recorded on the NLRD or follow up with the training provider. These courses are not cheap!

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Send Email to:
verifications@saqa.co.za
Your ID number
Please forward my credits as per NLRD

Obituary Robin W Jones 07 May 1943 - 13 June 2017

by Leighton Bennett

Tuesday 13th June 2017 was a very sad day for Occupational Health and Safety in South Africa. Robin stepped down as the President of South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Saiosh) during the A-OHS Expo Conference at the Gallagher Estates Convention Centre last month - but his story goes back some 40 years in occupational safety.

I knew Robin from his days as the safety officer at the Sappi Fine Paper plant in Tongaat where he later became the safety manager for many years.

Over a number of years we met monthly at the SABS building in Mayville in Durban for the CHiSE and later IOSM meetings where Robin often gave very entertaining safety presentations, normally with his style of telling a joke or using some aid to illustrate his safety point.

Robin was passionate and committed to the safety profession and succeeded by being awarded as the IOSM National Safety Practitioner of the Year in 1996 and again 2006. He became part of the IOSM Executive and was the IOSM President from 2000 to 2002.

Robin was a Founder Member, Director, Councillor, President of Saiosh, and Immediate Past President at the time of his sudden passing. In recent years my contact with Robin has been through emails and phone calls, or at conferences, meetings or seminars in Gauteng, and sadly I missed seeing him at Gallagher Estate last month.

Robin is another of the safety profession’s stalwarts that has left a legacy for the safety profession going forward. Thank you, Robin for your dedication to our safety profession, IOSM and Saiosh over the years.

Our condolences and thoughts go to Robin’s family. I will miss you my old friend.
The Safe Gas Equipment Scheme - A safety measure

The Department of Labour has mandated the Southern African Gas Association (SAGA) as the verification authority for Natural Gas and Liquefied Petroleum Gas industrial equipment.

All industrial equipment needs to conform to the SANS 329 and SANS 347 specifications which are used by SAGA Industry Stakeholders to ensure that all equipment manufactured in South Africa or imported to South Africa and supplied to the market place conforms to the Pressure Equipment Regulations (PER) and is suitable for gas usage.

The PER regulates all Natural Gas and Liquefied Petroleum Gas industrial equipment which meets a safety standard and will not be the cause of any health hazard or endangerment.

These regulations set out the requirements regarding the design, manufacture, operation, repair, modification, maintenance, inspection and testing of pressure equipment. In terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993, the PER also addresses persons intending to work on any gas systems to undergo specific training and to be registered with the South African Qualification and Certification Committee - Gas (SAQCC Gas) to obtain a licence to work on gas systems.

"Gas is cheaper, more efficient and in some cases more environmentally friendly. It can however be very dangerous to use if not operated properly." - George Davis, Risk Benefit Solutions (RBS)

Curbing unlawful installations

In an effort to curb unlawful gas installations, SAGA, under its mandate, has established the Safe Gas Equipment Scheme (SGES) that is set to ensure that all industrial equipment installed in South Africa has been tested and is in conformance with an international or nationally acceptable standard that is safe and fit for its intended purpose.

All industrial equipment that has been declared fit for use within a gas system will be provided with a SAGA Equipment Verification Permit, which is issued to the manufacturer or importer to prove conformity.

A registered gas practitioner will need to indicate and certify on the Certificate of Conformity (COC) that the equipment installed has been confirmed fit for purpose by the SGES Committee, a permit number or the certificate to be recorded and or be attached to the COC.

If equipment is installed that has not been awarded a Verification Permit, the user owning the equipment or operating it, is liable for any damage or injury that may occur.

Accidents with non-verified equipment are inevitable; they are a disaster just waiting to happen.

The PER is a legally binding regulation, therefore anyone not in conformance with these regulations stands to be legally charged.

Egoli Gas - The natural alternative

Since 1892, Egoli Gas as (Pty) Ltd, a member of the Southern African Gas Association (SAGA), has been proudly reticulating natural gas to various markets. This environmentally friendly fossil fuel is extracted from decomposed plant and animal matter and serves as an effective and energy efficient source of energy that reduces pollution, aiding in maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

Egoli Gas as an authorised gas installer accredited to distribute piped natural gas within the GJM area. It is committed to creating a low carbon lifestyle that is energy efficient. Egoli aims to encourage natural gas as an alternative form of energy in the Johannesburg metropolitan area.

Johannesburg-based Egoli Gas acquires its natural gas from Sasol and stores it at a secure facility in Langlaagte where it is carefully monitored and controlled. The gas is reticulated to Egoli Gas' Cottesloe premises where it is stored in low-pressure holders prior to being reticulated to homes and businesses across the city.

Egoli Gas has been supplying natural gas to over 7500 domestic spaces, central water, multi-dwellings, and hospitality and industrial markets. Gas to these various premises is reticulated via an established, safe, 1200km gas network in the Johannesburg area.

For domestic use, Egoli Gas is located in many of the more established Johannesburg suburbs; however, the pipeline extends even further for commercial and industrial customers.

To contact Egoli Gas, call 011 356 5000, e-mail info@egoligas.co.za or visit www.egoligas.co.za

For more information on SAGA visit www.sagas.co.za

Non-compliance - fatal example

For example, on February 17th, 2017, contractors at the Naval Base in Durban were assigned to work in the sewers when there was a sudden methane gas leakage in one of the underground installations. All three of the contractors died, along with three members of the South African National Defence Force (SandF) who attempted to rescue them. The six men were exposed to methane gas and all died from inhaling it. Explained the spokesperson of the SandF MafiMgobozi. Methane gas will kill if inhaled.

The military police, as well as the SAPS, are conducting investigations with intent to hold someone liable for the six deaths in a homicide case.

Consumers and end users of gas must understand that if their unlawful appliances or installation cause any harm, they are directly liable.

www.sagas.co.za
Are you sure you are insured?

Years of faithful insurance premiums can prove valueless in the absence of a Certificate of Conformity (CoC).

It is a startling fact that you stand to lose hefty amounts of money that were meant to be an “insurance” on your assets.

Insurance companies will not cough-up if you cannot present a valid CoC when making a claim. Can you afford to lose all your assets and have your insurance repudiated?

AwAreness of rEgulations and safetY sTandards

A vast majority of South African citizens are moving towards the use of gas appliances due to the increasing cost of electricity and possible outages. However, most users are unaware of the specific regulations and safety standards with which they must comply when getting gas equipment installed in their households. Overlooking these regulations can be detrimental in many ways.

According to the Pressure Equipment Regulations (PER), all natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas appliances and equipment should meet the specified standards to ensure safety. These regulations set out the requirements regarding the design, manufacture, operation, repair, modification, maintenance, inspection and testing of pressure equipment.

In terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993, the PER also requires persons handling the installation of any gas systems to undergo specific training and to be registered with the South African Qualification and Certification Committee - Gas (SAQCC Gas). The Registered Gas Practitioner must issue a Certificate of Conformity (CoC) for any equipment they install.

What is a Certificate of Conformity?

A Certificate of Conformity (CoC) for Gas installations is a legal document which must be obtained whenever a gas system is installed, modified or repaired and should be retained for possible future requirement.

Only registered practitioners may issue a CoC, a complete list of these practitioners can be found on: www.saqccgas.co.za

CO C and insurancE

Most people are oblivious to the importance of holding a CoC for every gas installation on their properties, this includes air conditioning and refrigeration units - the importance is generally realised when it is too late.

It is usual for people to get insurance cover for their properties and assets, however, it is a staggering truth that owners could be paying insurance premiums for years and end up receiving no cover in the occurrence of an incident or accident involving gas.

Should there be no valid Certificate of Conformity, many insurance companies will not accept liability for costs of damage caused to property or assets. The loss and damage suffered by an owner/user due to a gas installation for which a valid CoC has not been issued, falls entirely on the owner. Regardless of cost of repairation, the insurance will most likely not cover it.

“The majority of insurance companies would require this certificate to prove that the installation was safe and has been serviced regularly,” says Lanice Steward-managing director of Knight Frank Anne Porter.

About SAQCC Gas

SAQCC Gas is a Non Profit Company that has been formed by four Member Associations to establish a central database which displays details of registered and authorised Gas Practitioners to work on gas and gas systems. The SAQCC Gas has been officially appointed and mandated by the Department of Labour to register gas practitioners, on their behalf, within the following gas industries:

• Natural Gas
• Liquefied Petroleum Gas
• Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Gas
• Compressed Industrial and Medical Gases

The Member Associations are:

• LPGSASA - Liquefied Petroleum Gas Safety Association of Southern Africa
• SACGA - Southern Africa Compressed Gases Association
• SARACCA - South African Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Contractors Association
• SAGA - Southern African Gas Association
A-OSH 2017 was a great show for us and we were proudly an official sponsor of this and the SAIOSH conference, which ran alongside.

Through both of these platforms we had the opportunity to showcase our brand and premium PPE range to a large number of Health & Safety Officers in South Africa & Africa.

Dromex is committed to the Health & Safety of industry by supplying PPE products that meet international standards and undergo performance testing and also by dedicating our time and resources to five major tradeshows over 2017 & 2018 that are tailored to different industrial sectors, which include A-OSH, KZN Industrial Trade Exhibition (KITE), Inter Build and Electra Mining.

In addition we will also be partnering with SAIOSH again this year for both rounds of their national workshops to create awareness around and provide solutions to current health & safety issues that challenge Safety Officers from various industries.

At Dromex we’re passionate about new products and PPE advancements that protect lives better and make work zones safer. This year alone we have added the following items to our range:

- Full Face Mask
- Ear Plug Dispenser
- Ventilated Reflective Shirts
- Gumboots
- Mining Spec Workwear
- Mach Mechanic Mining Glove
- Flat Fold Respirator
- P3 Pre-Filter
- Arc Face Shield & Arc Hard Hat

The value of our PPE doesn't just lie lie in the product itself but also in the required standards they conform to and the supply chain they support.

PPE is also only effective when it’s used correctly so speak to us about our onsite PPE Assessment service, product matching, technical back up and Fit Tests.
Choose DROMEX for the leading innovative head-to-toe solutions that will equip you and your team to operate safely in any potentially hazardous environment.

Stel Stylianou is at the helm and, together with his team of experts, is dedicated to personally selecting every quality safety item in our range at the best prices so that we’re able to provide PPE that doesn’t cost an arm and a leg but that will save more than a hand or a foot. A process that means we stock EN Certified products from ISO 9002 accredited companies around the world.

We have a state-of-the art 35 000m² warehouse facility, which stores vast quantities of all our products which along with an established logistics network, means we are able to meet our customers’ requirements within 2-3 days. Our extensive experience in the various fields requiring PPE enables us to assist all our customers with technical back-up and selecting the appropriate products for their specific application.

“"We believe that all employees in any work environment are entitled to maximum safety protection and that employers should not have to compromise on the quality of the PPE products they provide for their staff.”

Stel Stylianou, CEO

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DuPont celebrates 50 years of DuPont™ Tyvek®

### 50 years of scientific innovation in the service of protection

Designed in 1967, DuPont™ Tyvek® is a non-woven material that has revolutionised the limited use chemical protection garment market thanks to its combination of exceptional properties: chemical barrier, durability and breathability. This unique invention has also influenced many other industries and applications for which high-performance protection was needed.

Today, with over 200 million garments and accessories sold worldwide and innovations being developed yearly, DuPont Protection Solutions has become the world’s leader in chemical protection garments.

### Dupont™ Tyvek®, a material with unrivalled performances

In 1955, Jim White, a researcher at DuPont, discovers a new source of fibres that will give rise to Tyvek®. Several years later, a research and development programme, led by Herbert Blades, results in the company registering a patent for high density polyethylene. Its exclusive DuPont flash spinning production process creates continuous fibres distributed randomly and in a single direction.

In April 1967, the Tyvek® brand sees the light of day. The recognised performance of the naturally white Tyvek® material resides in its unique blend of properties. Combining comfort and durability, its multi-layer structure proves to be an excellent barrier against a wide range of dry particles and liquid chemical products.

Since then, this invention has revolutionised many industries and become an invaluable material in lots of applications: paper, sterile packaging, construction materials... and chemical protection garments.

At the end of the 1980s, DuPont, forever attentive to users’ specific needs, detects a requirement for protection against the risks of exposure to liquid chemicals and therefore develops a full range of high protection Tychem® garments, designed using Tyvek® technology.

Today, thanks to their superior protection levels, several million DuPont™ Tyvek® garments are sold annually. Over the last 50 years, it has played a considerable role throughout the world, supporting emergency response efforts in many catastrophes: protection for healthcare staff in west Africa dealing with the Ebola virus, the clean-up operation following the tsunami in Japan, including the Fukushima nuclear power stations etc.

These limited use DuPont™ Tyvek® garments have set the standard for protection against hazardous dry particles, including asbestos fibres, lead dust etc. They can also be used in cleanrooms.

### Dupont’s expertise in the service of safety and reliability

The specialist in chemical protection garments, DuPont Protection Solutions puts the safety and quality that runs through the company’s veins at the heart of its strategy. This is why DuPont Protection Solutions is committed always to exceed the standards required for PPE, as is demonstrated by the performances of the Tyvek® Classic Xpert overall, the range’s flagship product.

For this type 5 and 6 garment, DuPont Protection Solutions therefore measured the permeability of the Tyvek® material with over 40 chemical products, even though the standard only requires this test from type 4.

As regards garment penetration by fine particles, the standard specifies a rate of internal leakage of less than 15%. Tyvek® Classic Xpert recorded a leakage rate of just 1%, a performance well in excess of the standard’s requirements!

In our continuing quest for reliability, DuPont Protection Solutions is already subjecting its overalls to some 500 chemical substances, and regularly tests them with new substances.

At the same time, DuPont Protection Solutions provides customers with access to a technical team and an interactive DuPont™ SafeSPECT® website for advice and support in the choice of the most suitable garments for their protection requirements.

### Innovation for ever better protection

For 50 years, DuPont’s success has been based not only on the unique properties of DuPont™ Tyvek® and its leading edge technology expertise, but also on the development of innovations.
market that has become increasingly competitive in the last 10 years, DuPont Protection Solutions continues to boost its strategy of innovations.

A perfect illustration of this continuing research, the Tychem® ThermoPro stands out as a unique offer on the market.

The result of extremely sophisticated technical and scientific development, it offers triple protection in one single-layer garment against projections of chemical products, heat and flames and electric arcs. It also won the 2016 award for innovation at the Préventica Lille trade show.

A further example is the Tyvek® 800 J, a type 3 chemical protection garment that combines resistance to pressurised jets of aqueous chemical substances, breathability, durability and freedom of movement, thanks to its impermeable “Tyvek® Impervious Technology” technology. Designed for use in very damp environments, it offers an unequalled comfort that was recognised by the 2014 award for innovation at the Préventica Marseille trade show.

To meet customers’ specific needs, DuPont Protection Solutions works closely with them to design special products, such as the Tyvek® 500 HV overall.

This solution was developed in partnership with SN CF, which needed a type 5 and 6 protection garment combining high visibility, a chemical barrier, protection against exposure to biological and health risks, and a hoodless design to avoid interference with operatives’ hearing.

All of these examples illustrate how DuPont has been providing its scientific and technical expertise for 50 years in the service of first-rate protection for every type of application.

These 50 years of performance have built the reputation of DuPont™ Tyvek® throughout the world, and gained it the unfailing trust of all its users.

A success that DuPont intends to continue in the coming 50 years as it maintains its policy of innovations to improve the way we meet market requirements.

Find out more: www.safespec.dupont.co.uk
Contact: Loren Pearson
Tel: 011 218 8600 /082 377 6765
Loren.pearson@dupont.com
Five reasons to choose PU over PVC

PVC gumboots can be cold in winter, sweaty in summer and heavy all year round. Polyurethane boots from Wayne keep feet more comfortable, better protected and happier for longer. And while they may cost more than PVC, there are more than enough reasons why:

**LIGHT AND FLEXIBLE**
- Weigh less than PVC gumboots.
- Stay flexible in extreme temperatures of -20°C.

**SUPERIOR INSULATION**
- Foamed polyurethane material contains tiny air bubbles that make boots warm in winter and breathable in summer.

**UNDENIABLY DURABLE**
- Tests show that PU boots last up to 3x longer than PVC boots.
- Withstand fats, chemicals, hydrocarbons, mild chemicals and industrial greases.

**SLIP RESISTANT**
- Excellent traction sole.
- Less slip and fall injuries.

**OPTIMAL PROTECTION**
- Steel or composite toe caps for extra safety.

There's no reason to have cold feet about buying polyurethane boots from Wayne.
Safety just got more comfortable

uvex pheos cx2

The uvex pheos cx2 boasts innovative features making it even more powerful than the established uvex pheos and pheos s safety spectacles. For example, the advanced X-Twist technology and the new X-tended eye shield are proven to help ensure an optimal fit as well as complete coverage of the eye area, providing reliable protection in every situation.

SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGY

X-tended eye shield: Optimum eye protection for every situation.

The soft components, which are fixed directly to the lens, provide dependable protection from dust and water. The innovative uvex X-tended eye shield fits perfectly on the wearer's face, ensuring a high level of wearer comfort and 100% protection.

PERFECT CURVATURE

X-Twist technology: No matter how the head is moved.

Featuring X-Twist technology, the uvex pheos cx2 is suitable for all situations enabling completely free head movement. The light spring effect of the side arm ensures the spectacles fit individual head shapes ergonomically combining a secure fit with maximum wearer comfort.

PROPERTIES AND BENEFITS

1. Comfortable and slip resistant

The soft bridge and nose pieces, which are directly moulded to the lens, as well as the X-Twist technology, ensure optimum wearer comfort and secure fit.

2. Scratch resistant and anti-fog

Thanks to uvex supravision excellence coating technology, the uvex pheos cx2 is highly scratch resistant and permanently anti-fog on the inside. Additionally, the spectacles offer 100% protection against UV 400.

3. Optimum protection of the eye area

The duo-spherical with a uvex X-tended eye shield features additional curvature on the upper edge for safe and reliable eyebrow protection.

4. Smooth opening mechanism

The metal-free hinges fold effortlessly. Innovative materials ensure consistently smooth movement of the side arms.

5. Excellent ventilation

The sophisticated side arm design provides exceptional ventilation and helps to improve the climate around the eye.

Leak test

Convincing performance. When sprayed directly with a reagent, the X-tended eye shield did not let a single droplet through - whether sprayed from the front (as per standard), from above or laterally (in accordance with uvex procedures). This confirms that the uvex pheos cx2 provides excellent protection when working overhead.

SUCCESSFUL IN DISCIPLINE

or laterally (in accordance with uvex procedures). This confirms that the uvex pheos cx2 provides excellent protection when working overhead.

A close fit

Ergonomic fit on the face. The distance between the forehead and spectacles has been measured at four different points, confirming a snug and secure fit. Here also the uvex pheos cx2 gains points.
Obituary
Cobus Kruger

Cobus joined Consafe in 2004 and took on the position of Managing Director. Over the years, regardless of the challenges he may have had along the way, everyone who’d ever had the privilege of working with him, always found him a special pleasure to work with.

Cobus was a wonderful person who understood the meaning of the word “team.” He was always more focused on the good of the company than on his own benefit.

He made many great contributions to the company and helped it move forward in numerous ways. His work here will not soon be forgotten.

Cobus was a valuable part of the management team. All of his staff thought highly of him, always willing to go the extra mile for anyone that worked for him.

For those of us who had the privilege of calling him “friend” outside of work, we were humbled by his kindness and compassion to everyone around him.

Cobus retired at the end of 2015 enjoying a well deserved but short lived retirement at his beautiful home in Naboomspruit. Shortly after his retirement at his beautiful home in Naboomspruit, he was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer. Despite the devastating news, he remained positive and continued to live life with a passion. Sadly on 6 April 2017, Cobus lost his battle to cancer.

He was a highly valuable and respected member of the Consafe team and he will be greatly missed.

Fighting workplace fatigue

Some of the worst environmental and travel disasters of the past few decades have been ascribed at least partly to sleep deprivation in the workplace, and its subsequent wider impact in different arenas. This is according to Dr Denis Cronson, who was presenting a seminar on Fighting Workplace Fatigue at this year’s official A-OSH EXPO which is now in its seventh year and ran from 30 and 31 May and 1 June.

Dr Cronson was speaking at one of the free-to-attend NOSH EBO Seminar Theatre sessions at the expo, sponsored by BBF Safety Group.

EXAMPLES OF EXTREME FATIGUE

He mentioned some deadly global examples in which tremendous environmental damage or loss of life was caused by sleep deprivation in the workplace. These included the Exxon Valdez oil spill off Alaska in 1989, the second-largest oil spill in American history; the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine in 1986, said by some to be the worst nuclear disaster in history; a train disaster in Canada in 2001, when two Canadian National trains crashed into each other, spilling 3,000 gallons of diesel, and the deadly crash of Air France Flight 447 in 2009, which killed all 228 people on board.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION CAN CAUSE DEATH

These are admittedly extreme examples but they show without a doubt a how deadly sleep deprivation in the workplace can be - and not only for the person who is sleep deprived. We can see, therefore, why combatting fatigue in the workplace is such an important concern.

Dr Cronson says, “Fighting fatigue in the workplace is a contemporary issue in workplaces around the country.

EFFECTS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION

An acute and ongoing state of tiredness leads to mental and physical exhaustion and prevents people from functioning within normal boundaries.

By law, employers have an obligation to establish the risk that fatigue that represents; try to eliminate or reduce fatigue in the workplace and provide a work place that is safe and without risk to the health of the employees. It is a part of basic health and safety conditions.”

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Dr Cronson explains that key contributing factors to fatigue at work include (but are not limited to):

• The scheduling of the times the employee is required to work;
• The duration of the working time, including the rotation of shifts;
• Mental and physical exhaustion;
• Environmental factors such as heat, cold or excessive vibration;
• Individual factors that come into play from the person's lifestyle, such as the responsibilities of children and the employee’s general fitness, diet, home and sleeping conditions.

He clarifies, “So we have work and non-work related fatigue, which all impact on work-related issues and, taken to extreme, can lead to disasters.

We know that excessive alcohol consumption leads to performance impairment, significantly slowing reaction time and distorting vision. It has been shown that, at the legal blood alcohol limit of 0.05g of alcohol per
100 ml, an individual is four times more likely to be in an accident.
It has further been proven that when an individual has been awake for 17 hours, this is like the equivalent of having imbibed alcohol to the legal limit. When you have been awake for 20 hours - just another three hours more - it is as though you are at double the legal limit.
Fatigue really reduces your ability to concentrate, make decisions, recognise risks and communicate effectively - it really raises the risk of accidents.

RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Dr Cronson says it is important to follow a practical risk management approach, in which the hazards need to be assessed and the risks managed. “Consultation is critically important in the workplace, among employers, employees and health and safety representatives and committees. This consultation process becomes especially important in the case of a near miss. A risk assessment needs to show where employees are at risk of becoming impaired by fatigue, who they are and how many of them, how often this could happen and the degree of harm that would result.

A risk management schedule needs to be set in place, hazards identified and risks assessed. Thereafter control processes can be set up.

IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO REDUCE EMPLOYEE FATIGUE

He outlined a number of practical considerations in setting up fatigue management plans in the workplace, concluding that “The implementation of a fatigue management plan in the workplace has the potential to reduce employee fatigue or its causes, reduce the further likelihood of fatigue occurring in the workplace, and counteract the effects of fatigue when it does occur.

Fatigue management systems need to identify the hazards of fatigue, assess the risks and implement control measures, and monitor and review the effectiveness of the fatigue management plan.

Dr Cronson’s presentation can be accessed from www.aosh.co.za.

PPE protection for winter

FOOTWEAR

Slips, trips and falls are among the most frequent workplace injuries, and often lead to workers compensation claims as a result of head injuries, back injuries, broken bones, and lacerations. Employers are affected by lost work time, the cost of temporary employees to fill in for injured employees, and increased insurance premiums.

Maintaining safe working conditions is the most important way to prevent these accidents. But, proper winter footwear also plays a role in worker safety and the prevention of slips and falls. Depending on the nature and environment of the workplace, protective footwear options include steel toe, composite toe, metatarsal, slip-resistant, cold resistant, heat-resistant, and chemical resistant boots, shoes, and overshoes - among others.

Styles for protective footwear range from heavy duty to lightweight and flexible. Many styles of footwear are available in natural rubber. Because it stretches, natural rubber footwear is easier to put on and take off - and it stays comfortable all day. It stays supple in the winter months because it performs very well in low temperatures.

Waterproof boots can help prevent frostbite in wet conditions, which is needed especially for workers who often have to stand in slush while working. A properly designed sole that provides traction on slippery surfaces protects workers from falls on snow and ice. Deep lug, cleated outsoles provide sure-footed traction in wintry conditions. Many workers prefer to wear their own work boots even if they are not made for winter environments.

Workers in outdoor environments already face many hazardous conditions. From slips and falls to protection from the cold, proper outerwear and footwear help keep workers safe.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

High visibility apparel is important in many outdoor work areas, so workers need winter gear that meets regulatory requirements while also enabling them to work effectively in a cold work environment. When road workers are on roadways and highways surrounded by drivers in winter weather conditions, high visibility protection is even more important to their safety.

Outerwear like jackets, coats, and overalls should not just protect workers from the cold. They should also be designed to allow for flexibility and freedom of movement, so workers can continue to easily perform their tasks on the job. Breathable materials help workers stay comfortable when the jobs they perform cause them to sweat into their clothes despite the cold.

When selecting winter protective clothing, look for jackets and coats with features like seams sealed for waterproof protection, throat guards to seal out wind and rain, and draw cords to seal out the cold. Overalls provide more cold weather protection than jeans especially if they are waterproof. Jeans easily absorb water from melting snow or rain, and most are too lightweight to offer much insulation.

Layering clothes traps air between layers and warms the body more than one thick jacket or coat. Jackets with removable liners enable workers to easily adjust the layers they are wearing depending on conditions, which can change over the course of a work day.

Reprinted with thanks from Protection Update (winter 2016) - an e-newsletter with the aim of informing users, specifiers and purchasers of personal protective equipment, and those who regulate it. Visit the ISEA website at www.safetyequipment.org
News from SAIOH

Report from the SAIOH President and Council Members

SAIOH has had a busy time since the last issue of the journal was published, particularly in terms of collaboration activities that are incorporated into the SAIOH Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the South African Department of Labour (DoL). To this end, SAIOH was asked by the DoL to review and provide professional inputs for the proposed Draft Ergonomics Regulations which had been issued for public comment until 27 April 2017.

SAIOH is grateful to all members who provided comments on the Draft Regulations, and is especially indebted to two members - Garth Hunter and Sean Chester - who selflessly and willingly went to great lengths, taking much effort and personal time, to provide their technical expertise in the form of an extensive review of the Draft Regulations, as well as the collation of comments received from other SAIOH members. In the true spirit of collaboration, SAIOH partnered with the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Saiosh) and, together, the two organisations drafted and submitted a composite review report which had final oversight from both SAIOH and Saiosh Council members, before submission to the DoL. Collectively, SAIOH and Saiosh represent more than 10 000 registered occupational health, safety and hygiene professionals.

In summary, both SAIOH and Saiosh are supportive of additional control of physical ergonomic risk in the South African workplace. It is also noted that, through the drafting of ergonomic regulations, the DoL can be congratulated for taking a bold and positive step forward to achieve control of ergonomic risks. Nevertheless, the combined review of the draft DoL document has suggested that a more subtle approach should be taken. The report includes recommendations for changes to the current draft regulations for the DoL to consider, particularly in terms of the references made to “Ergonomics Risk Assessment”, “Ergonomics Programme”, “Ergonomics Risk Factors” and “Competent Person”.

The President and Council Members of SAIOH are pleased to announce that Hennie van der Westhuizen has been elected to SAIOH Council to manage the Technical Portfolio. As a certified occupational hygienist who recently retired from a long career in academia, Hennie has extensive experience and expertise in occupational hygiene, environmental health, safety, the management of academic programmes in occupational and environmental health, and research. We extend our congratulations to Hennie, on behalf of all SAIOH members.

SAIOH participated in exhibiting at AOSH Expo 2017, Africa’s leading occupational health and safety expo, which took place from 30 May to 1 June at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Gauteng. The AOSH Expo, now in its 6th year, plays a pivotal role in assisting to identify and address workplace occupational health and safety issues, through an informed exhibition base, a collaborative educational portfolio, and the offering of many networking opportunities.

We take this opportunity to remind our members to please diarise the dates of the SAIOH Conference and Annual General Meeting, 25 to 27 October 2017. The Conference will be held at the Midrand Sun City Hotel in Midrand, Gauteng; this year’s theme is: “Ocupational Hygiene: Building Bridges Beyond Borders”.

In this issue of the National Safety Magazine (and the next issue), SAIOH includes a refresher on the many benefits and advantages of being and/or becoming a SAIOH member.

“Competent Person”

"How are you protecting your profession; and giving back to SAIOH?"

Our suggestions would be to acquire knowledge and expertise to be at the pinnacle and cutting edge of the occupational hygiene skills set.

The ultimate goal of any academic institution is knowledge which is followed by certification. The SAIOH Professional Certification Committee (PCC) is the occupational hygiene skills set custodian, continuously testing.
members' knowledge to ensure they can be certified to practise occupational hygiene.

John Fletcher stated, "deeds, not words shall speak". Consequently, a good working knowledge of the occupational hygiene discipline is the best multi-purpose tool we have to certify us, market us, protect the profession and, in turn, protect SAIOH.

Remuneration

In most companies, registered members are recognised and remunerated as per their individual registration or certification categories. This process recognises individuals' qualifications and levels of experience.

In defining "occupational hygiene", we often see words like "Art and science of..." - one needs not only the science but also the art of practising occupational hygiene.

There have been countless arguments and debates amongst practitioners who believe they should be handed occupational hygienist registration status without first being subjected to examination. One of the reasons is that the examination process tests both the science and the art required for the practice of occupational hygiene; education provides the science, and experience will provide the art.

The registration categories are well-recognised during the certification process and, as a result, the registered occupational hygiene assistant (ROHA), the registered occupational hygiene technologist (ROHT), and the registered occupational hygienist (ROH), are remunerated in accordance with their registration level.

Enhancement of knowledge

SAIOH provides wide access to resourceful information such as case studies, presentations, regulatory updates, white papers and articles written by experts in many areas of interest in the broad field of occupational hygiene.

As part of their SAIOH membership annual fees, members are afforded the added benefit of access to publications such as the Occupational Health Southern Africa journal (electronic and print versions), the National Safety magazine (electronic version), as well as newsletters issued at individual branch level.

SAIOH organises numerous events throughout the year that allow members to learn from their peers, as well as from local and international experts, in the form of annual scientific conferences, branch and discussion group meetings, and workshops. At these events, members are requested to share ideas, volunteer to be speakers, or become members of organising committees and/or other subgroups, such as technical committees.

Being part of these associations and actively participating in such events and learning opportunities can only benefit members by exposing them to new ideas and knowledge updates across various interest areas, best practices, professional networking, and collaboration platforms, as well as brainstorming with peers practising in the occupational hygiene field.

The added benefit is that members are rewarded for their participation in such learning events by being awarded points towards the fulfilment of their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

Members are reminded that, as part of the ongoing certification process, they are required to keep their Personal Learning Portfolios (PLPs) current and up-to-date.

Networking and mentorship

In any career, creating and sustaining professional relationships are important processes; by joining SAIOH branch and discussion groups, members are presented with the best platforms for networking. These platforms can be used by members to support and help each another in attaining professional ambitions.

During the annual scientific conferences members have opportunities to network with their peers, as well as with local and international experts. Members are given ample opportunity to identify mentors in line with their professional needs, but the greatest benefit, and perhaps reward, is the opportunity for a member to volunteer to be a mentor. Member participation in chat groups or discussion boards organised by the various SAIOH structures is also an ideal way to grow member networks, by using peers as sounding boards, and very often forging knowledgeable friendships along the way.

Through these networks and mentorship opportunities, most SAIOH members have met and befriended top achievers across various areas of expertise in the occupational hygiene profession.

Job opportunities and industry recognition

The number of university graduates has increased considerably, as more universities and other tertiary education institutions develop and offer occupational hygiene-related courses and/or degrees.

Other study fields have been known to use the scarcity of certified occupational hygienists to their advantage. The Health and Safety Council (MHSC) convened a recent meeting to address the issue of engineering graduates who find it difficult to secure employment due to the current economic climate. Many environmental health students are struggling to find placements in the public sector to carry out their community service work which is a pre-requisite for the completion of their studies. It is becoming increasingly difficult for graduates to find employment once they leave university. In the midst of these challenges, it is interesting to note that many companies use professional registration status as a means to shortlist candidates for posts, and students registered with SAIOH have been known to seize these job opportunities, even at entry level where it is known that job opportunities are especially limited.

A professional certification with SAIOH provides a special benefit in terms of increasing chances of employment.

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To be continued July/August
After ten years at the helm of this exciting and expanding association, I have decided that it was time to step down and to provide the young blood with an opportunity to captain the ACHASM ship. So, as from the beginning of March 2017, my good friend and very capable and esteemed colleague, Marius Eppenberger has taken to the helm.

In closing this chapter in my career, I would like to reflect in brief what ACHASM has managed to achieve over the past ten years, since our official inception back in 2006.

I cannot say that it has been plain sailing for all in our industry, as there have been many up and downs, with the biggest struggle being the arduous ongoing task of changing the mind-sets of the industry stakeholders regarding the critical importance of health and safety in the South African construction industry. However, I have been fortunate enough to have experienced many positives within my reign as ACHASM chairman and I would just like to briefly highlight a few of them:

1. The decision amongst the founding members to establish the Association of Construction Health and Safety Management in 2006, in providing a voice and platform for all those practising within the construction health and safety profession, under the Construction Regulations (2003) at that time.

2. ACHASM joining the Built Environment Professions Grouping (BEP) in 2008/9 as the built environment representative for Construction Health and Safety in this voluntary group of council members.

3. ACHASM being requested by PROCSA (Professional Consultants Services Agreement Committee) to assist this built environment professional grouping in developing then services and deliverables of the Construction Health and Safety Consultant off the back of the Construction Regulations (2003) and the potential Construction Regulations update. The final product was a professional Client/CH&S Consultant agreement to be used by client/employer bodies within the infrastructure development and construction industry in South Africa.

4. In 2010/11, the request for ACHASM to be a strategic member of the newly established Occupational Health and Safety Task Team at the SACPCMP (South African Council for the Construction Project and Construction Management Professions). This project task team was set-up to establish the scope of services for the future registration of the three identified construction health and safety practitioners being: the Professional Construction Health and Safety Agent; Construction Health and Safety Manager; and Construction Health and Safety Officer. The first category for registration was opened in June 2013 and was for the Professional Construction Health and Safety Agent, with the other two categories for registration following shortly thereafter.

5. ACHASM being asked to join the CIDB Stakeholder Forum in 2012 to provide a voice and offer guidance for the South African construction health and safety practising fraternity.

6. ACHASM having delivered a number of very successful and impactful one and two-day conferences on a national basis over the past eight years.

7. ACHASM having recently been recognised as a voluntary association by the SACPCMP, with having fifty or more SACPCMP registered practitioners as members.

Although I am stepping down as chairman, I will however remain on the ACHASM Executive Board as a director, where I can hopefully still add some value and guidance in the coming years.

As an outgoing message, I would just like to say that ACHASM as a collective membership, must not lose sight of our initial objectives and goals set and that we must all strive to uphold and improve our profession in the years to come.

I am very confident that Marius Eppenberger will drive ACHASM and the profession to its rightful place in the industry and to be equals in professional standing as other built environment professions.

Bon Voyage and to True North sailing!
How to validate a IWH Certificate
to ensure you are not contracting a provider in possession of a forged certificate

There are a lot of fraudulent and forged certificates out there. Providers also misuse our logos. Others never upload learners to the SETA’s - this means these candidates are NOT COMPETENT! How do you know the candidate is in fact registered and COMPETENT? Our certificates and cards are the ONLY way you can be sure that candidates has been uploaded to SAQA!

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All certificates issued by the Institute for Work at Height Professional Body will have a QR code on. This initiative was implemented in 2014. When scanning the code it will give an indication of who the certificate belongs to. Practitioner validation can also be done on the IWH Website by clicking on “practitioner validation” www.profbody.co.za

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Recognised Provider Logo
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Provider Logo
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A-OSH stand winners

The quality of exhibition stands at the seventh A-OSH EXPO - Africa’s occupational safety and health exhibition - from 30, 31 May and 1 June at the Gallagher Convention Centre were excellent.

Joshua Low, event director for A-OSH EXPO expressed gratitude to the 80 exhibitors that showed great commitment to this year’s expo at the show awards function on 1st June.

Joshua also thanked the events’ sponsors, which included BBF Safety Group, Dromex, Health|Insite, PASMA, Ansell and Select PPE, media partners, and supporting associations.

The exhibitor awards were independently judged and the event took place at the Gallagher Grill, where Low and Zelda Jordaan, exhibition manager, handed out 2017 exhibitor awards for the following categories – stands of 12m² or less, 15 to 18m², and stands larger than 21m².

Exhibitors acknowledged included:

**Stands of 12m²:** winner – Astutis
runner-up – Phoenix Health and Safety.

**Stands of 15 to 18 m²:** winner – Skills Resource Group,
runner-up – Pienaar Bros.

**Stands of 21 m² and larger:** winner (for the second year running) 3M South Africa
runner-up Dromex.

“Congratulations to all of our winners, your support of A-OSH EXPO 2017 was outstanding and contributed to what has been an exceptionally successful show,” Low said.
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