



Your Essential Connection

Sacramento Valley Section

Established in 1980

November 6, 2002

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Message from "Acting President"

The last board meeting was on October 28, 2002. The nominating committee has still not been successful in recruiting a candidate to become the new president of the local section. We need some help real soon and many of the Board members are not willing to serve another term.

At the board meeting we discuss a number of issues. Primarily about upcoming training programs and the Holiday Party. The first training program is to be held at the Buggy Whip on November 14, 2002. The Holiday party will be held at the same location on December 6, 2002.

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

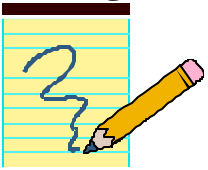
The Joint Meeting with ASSE, Monday October 28, 2002 was a success and it appears our local section made about \$136.00 or so.

Hearing loss Prevention Program by Charlie Fankhauser of Cal-OSHA on November 14, 2002 at the Buggy Whip.

Holiday Party, December 6, 2002 at the Buggy Whip. See attached flyers.

Please send any address and e-mail updates to:
rockyone@pacbell.net

NOTE: We are on an all electronic-newsletter distribution, unless members specifically request mailing. Please provide us with your current e-mail address so we can keep you informed. There are a large number of Ex-members and would be members who are missing out because their information is not current.



From Our Last Board Meeting....

The Board met on October 28, 2002. The following items were discussed:

Activities: ASSE/IAHA Joint Meeting, Hearing Loss Prevention Training & the Holiday Party.

Also, several Board members expressed concerns about the Sacramento Advocacy's perpetual unavailability. For the last four years we have ask them to come to one of our meetings and that have always had a conflict of some sort. Perhaps this is a coincidence and unfortunate. However, we pay a lot of money into CIHC and we feel that we ought to at least get this.

Budget: We currently have over \$3600.00 in our bank account. We have paid CIHC for the year 2002.

We have been sending letters and e-mails out to around 120 listed members, ex-members and others. We have stopped sending either to former members as of June 1, 2002 who have not paid their dues.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY DEGREE PROGRAM

California State University, Sacramento's Occupational Health and Safety program has been revised and expanded, effective Fall of 2002. In addition to offering a Bachelor of Science degree, the program will offer interested student the opportunity to obtain a minor in Occupational Health and Safety. The minor was developed for students interested in expanding their knowledge in the field of OH&S while completing an undergraduate degree in a related science or management related program.

Please contact Michael E. Nave at menave@csus.edu or (916) 278-6306 if your organization is interested in obtaining additional information on:

- The Bachelor of Science or minor degree programs,
- Providing student internship opportunities within your organization, (there are about 7 or 8 possible individuals as of March 1, 2002) or
- Providing a student the opportunity to observe industrial hygiene personnel at work.

Happenings From the Hill

October 25, 2002

By Aaron Trippler's Office

CONGRESS GOES HOME – NOW WE WAIT!

BUDGET TO BE DEBATED AFTER ELECTION

As everyone now knows, Congress left town in mid-October and went home to campaign for the upcoming November election. And as everyone knows, Congress recessed without having approved a fiscal year 03 budget for all agencies and departments except national defense. They will return to Washington for a “lame-duck” session scheduled for November 12.

Who will be in charge? This is anyone’s guess. Will they adopt the remaining appropriations bills before January? That is also anyone’s guess. An interesting conclusion to the 107th Congress to say the least.

OSHA AND NIOSH END YEAR WITH MANY ISSUES IN PLAY

With the end of the year approaching here’s a look at some of the issues of interest to AIHA at OSHA and NIOSH:

Ergonomics

OSHA continues to move forward with its plan to provide industry-specific voluntary guidelines on ergonomics. So far, guidelines have been announced for the nursing home industry, with those for the poultry processing and retail industries expected by years end. The voluntary guidelines for the nursing home industry are currently out for public comments. These guidelines are at the core of the OSHA approach to ergonomics, along with outreach and research.

OSHA has announced that they will not be enforcing these voluntary guidelines. However, John Henshaw has stated that while they will not be enforcing these guidelines, OSHA will continue to go after those who have not acted in good faith under the general duty clause.

One of the other major parts to the OSHA ergonomics approach is the ergonomics advisory committee. According to OSHA, they have received over 250 nominations to this advisory committee, part of the reason the appointments have yet to be made. However, OSHA states that they expect an announcement very soon on the advisory committee and it’s meeting.

Voluntary Protection Program

While OSHA has not weighed in on legislation that was introduced that would codify the VPP program, OSHA continues to expand the program. With a current participation of approximately 875 employers, Assistant Secretary Henshaw has announced a very optimistic effort to increase the number of participants in the program to 8,000, although no timeline was mentioned.

One way Henshaw hopes to do this is by expanding the program to include more small business and create some sort of entry-level program. AIHA supported the legislation codifying this program and has offered our assistance to OSHA in any way possible to assist with expanding the program.

Enforcement

According to Assistant Secretary Henshaw, enforcement remains as one of the three top issues at OSHA, along with outreach and partnerships. With that in mind, John has announced that the agency expects to end the 2002-year having conducted more inspections than in 2001, and pledges to conduct even more in 2003.

OSHA is using a site-specific targeting program. OSHA is pleased that injury and illness rates continue to decline, but is concerned that there are still some alarming trends. Among these is the fact that OSHA is discouraged that they have to visit the same workplaces year after year and issue the same citations.

Compliance Assistance / Partnerships

The agency continues to increase outreach and assistance. Part of this effort involves alliances with several industries and organizations, including AIHA. AIHA is in the process of scheduling the first implementation team meeting with OSHA to begin work on our OSHA alliance to decrease injury and illness in the workplace, with an additional focus on ergonomics.

What is also interesting within the OSHA effort is how some of their alliances are addressing an issue long supported by AIHA. For several years, AIHA has supported and attempted to convince both Congress and OSHA that some sort of third-party workplace review program could be successful in improving occupational health and safety. One of the keys to this program would have to be some sort of incentive for employers to participate.

Notwithstanding our unsuccessful efforts to date, OSHA has developed what one could call a partial approach to this concept. A good example is a recent OSHA alliance with the Idaho construction industry. OSHA safety audits with Idaho general contractors have been expanded. In exchange for increased efforts with this industry in Idaho, the alliance partners have a reduced chance of undergoing a full OSHA inspection.

A similar approach is being tried in Rhode Island, where incentives can include OSHA's not issuing citations for nonserious violations that are corrected during an inspection, providing penalty reductions, and exemptions from programmed OSHA inspections. Sounds to us like the start of an excellent approach - one we would like to see expanded.

Regulatory Agenda

Everyone is awaiting the semi-annual regulatory agenda that will shortly be forthcoming. Assistant Secretary Henshaw has drastically pared down the agenda from more recent agendas because he feels it should be a "realistic to-do list" rather than a list of issues that will never be concluded. He states that OSHA will be accountable for any of the milestones on his list.

While one can only wait to see the new agenda, word has it that several issues will remain off the list, including indoor air quality and updating of the permissible exposure limits. One additional item many expect to be dropped from the agenda is plans to update the tuberculosis regulation.

Professional Certification

Finally, one of the most important issues of interest to AIHA and many others is the OSHA effort to strengthen the professionalism of compliance officers working for OSHA. According to insiders, there has been a surge of applications to professional occupational health and safety associations from OSHA personnel interested in becoming professionally certified.

AIHA supports this effort and has offered our assistance to OSHA.

NIOSH

Dr. John Howard, the recently appointed director of NIOSH, has also announced some of his priorities for the coming year.

At the top of the list is expanded research within the agency on several fronts. At the top of this research agenda are the many facets of “emergency preparedness”. Dr. Howard believes that research must be conducted because of the changing workforce and a changing workplace.

Insiders agree that NIOSH should play an expanded role on “emergency preparedness” issues.