

The Leader



WINTER 2010 >> VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1

CREATING AN **Ergonomics Program**

THAT WORKS

THREE TIPS
FOR A SUCCESSFUL
ERGONOMICS INITIATIVE

**FEELIN' GOOD,
WORKIN' GOOD**
ERGONOMICALLY AT
JOHNSON SPACE CENTER



Join the Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association, Inc. (VPPPA)

in Orlando, FL, for the **26th Annual National VPPPA Conference**.

We are making safety and health universal with a four-day conference that offers attendees countless opportunities to network, learn and advance as leaders in occupational safety and health. Mark your calendars for **August 23-26, 2010**, for two full days of workshops, over 200 vendors at the VPPPA Expo 2010 and a number of networking functions.

Saturday, August 21 EARLY REGISTRATION DAY

4:00pm–7:00pm Registration

Sunday, August 22 PRE-CONFERENCE DAY

7:00am–5:00pm Registration

7:00am–5:00pm VPPPA Board Candidate Information Counter

7:30am–8:00am Early Morning Coffee and Tea for Workshop Participants

8:00am–5:00pm Free Pre-Conference Workshop for DOE Employees:

» Managing Contractor Transition for DOE-VPP Sites

8:00am–5:00pm Skill Builder Workshops (additional registration fee):

» VPP Application Workshop®

» The Human Factor: Improve Safety Performance Using Four Simple Techniques

» Annual Self Evaluation Process

10:00am–10:30am Networking Beverage Break for Workshop Participants

12:00pm–1:00pm Lunch for Skill Builder Workshop Participants Only

12:00pm–5:00pm Exhibitor Installation

1:00pm–5:00pm Skill Builder Workshops (additional registration fee):

» Employee Accountability: A Path to Stellar Performance

» Strengthening Star Quality Workshop

» Reducing “Walking through Life” Injuries through Employee Awareness

» OSHA Recordkeeping

» Motion is Money – How Ergonomics Can Affect Efficiency and Productivity

1:00pm–5:00pm Free Pre-Conference Workshop for DoD Employees:

» DoD VPP Implementation Workshop

3:00pm–3:30pm Networking Beverage Break for Workshop Participants

5:00pm–7:00pm Chapter Welcome Reception

Monday, August 23

7:00am–5:00pm Registration

7:30am–5:00pm VPPPA Board Candidate Information Counter

8:00am–4:00pm Exhibitor Installation

7:30am–8:45am Labor and Management Open Forum

8:50am–10:00am Annual Meeting of the Membership

10:15am–11:30am Opening General Session, Part 1

11:45am–12:45pm Luncheon (open to all attendees)

1:00pm–2:45pm Opening General Session, Part 2

2:45pm–3:15pm Networking Beverage Break

3:15pm–4:30pm Regional Networking Meetings

4:00pm–6:00pm 2010 Onsite Exhibit Sales (by appointment only)

6:00pm–8:00pm Reception and Grand Opening of the Exhibit Hall

Tuesday, August 24

7:30am–5:00pm Registration

8:00am–5:00pm VPPPA Board Candidate Information Counter

9:00am–3:15pm Exhibit Hall Open

9:00am–3:15pm VPPPA Booth

7:30am–8:00am Early Morning Coffee and Tea

8:00am–3:30pm 2010 Onsite Exhibit Sales (by appointment only)

8:00am–9:00am Workshops

9:00am–10:30am Networking Beverage Break in Exhibit Hall

10:30am–11:30am Workshops

11:15am–1:00pm VPPPA Board Elections, Session 1

11:45am–1:00pm Luncheon

1:15pm–2:15pm Workshops

2:15pm–3:15pm Networking Beverage Break in Exhibit Hall

3:30pm–4:30pm Workshops

7:00pm–12:00am Poker Tournament (pre-registration required)

Wednesday, August 25

7:30am–3:00pm Registration

9:00am–1:15pm Exhibit Hall Open

9:00am–1:15pm VPPPA Booth

7:30am–8:00am Early Morning Coffee and Tea

8:00am–9:00am Workshops

8:00am–10:00am VPPPA Board Elections, Session 2

8:00am–1:00pm 2010 Onsite Exhibit Sales (by appointment only)

9:00am–10:30am Networking Beverage Break in Exhibit Hall

10:30am–11:30am Workshops

11:45am–1:00pm Luncheon

1:15pm–2:15pm Workshops

1:15pm–8:00pm Dismantle Exhibit Hall

2:15pm–2:45pm Networking Beverage Break

2:45pm–3:45pm Workshops

5:00pm–7:00pm Closing Reception

Thursday, August 26

8:00am–8:50am Breakfast

9:00am–11:00am Closing General Session

REGISTRATION FEES & DEADLINES

SUPER SAVER (BY 3/8/10)

REGULAR (BY 7/12/10)

LATE/ONSITE (AFTER 7/12/10)

VPPPA Member

\$485

\$585

\$685

Nonmember

\$685

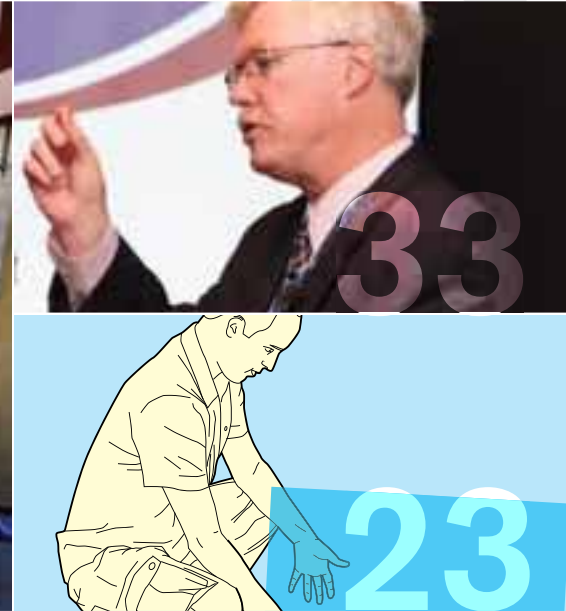
\$785

\$885


**BECOME A
MEMBER
AND SAVE!**












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EDITORIAL MISSION

The Leader (ISSN 1081-261X) is published quarterly for VPPPA members. *The Leader* delivers articles from members for members, safety and health best practices, developments in the field of occupational safety and health, association activities, educational and networking opportunities and the latest VPP approvals. Subscriptions are available for members as part of the membership benefits and at a 50 percent discount beyond the complimentary allotment. Nonmember subscription rate is \$25 a year.

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VPPPA, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, promotes advances in worker safety and health excellence through best practices and cooperative efforts among workers, employers, the government and communities.



“DON'T EMPOWER
A FEW TO TELL
OTHERS WHAT TO
DO, BUT EMPOWER
INDIVIDUALS TO
CONSTRUCT
THEIR OWN SELF-
BETTERMENT.”

[HERBERT HOOVER]

VPP Requires Character

With 2010 off to a fast start, this is my first opportunity to wish all our members a happy, safe and prosperous New Year. The past year has been one of challenges for many industries, small businesses and families. Challenging economic times and financial difficulties monopolize and weigh in on every decision we make in the business community and in our personal lives. It is during these difficult times that the true character of our convictions and our values for workplace safety and health are there to guide us.

Our convictions and the value we place on a safe and healthy workplace establish our character as individuals and, collectively, the character of our business – our “corporate character.” If our character is strong, then external influences such as lean economic times, world events and bewildering political rhetoric from Washington are acknowledged but do not dilute our values or convictions. The journey to VPP is a character-building exercise and its achievement is a sign of strong character.

VPP teaches us not to wait until a standard or requirement is established to regulate a hazard before we control it. Instead, we have a defined process in which all activities and decisions are analyzed to identify and control hazards. The process is a safety management system called VPP, which is established on the tenants of *Worksite Analysis, Hazard Prevention and Control, Employee Involvement and Management Leadership and Safety and Health Training*. In terms of the first two tenants, the focus is upstream of the actual work activity: in the planning stages; the selection of equipment; pre-bids of subcontractors; and training and qualification process of the workforce. Combined with an analytical attitude of the employees, this focus leads to an identification of all hazards, regardless of whether there are regulations for these potential hazards. All individuals in the company are aligned and share in the value of keeping the workplace safe and healthy, which defines the corporate character promoted by VPP.

Standards, regulations and enforcement all have their place, but they will never fully address all workplace hazards. What is required instead is a passion for safety and health and cooperation between management, workers and government to identify and control occupational hazards. Passion, partnering and commitment to workplace safety and health are not commodities that can be standardized or regulated by OSHA; yet they are attributes used to describe worksites that adopt OSHA's VPP, a program that voluntarily goes beyond compliance. As a result, VPP's impact reaches higher levels of success than mere enforcement.

In this edition of *The Leader*, you will read of VPP sites that understand that it's not about being regulatory-focused, but being character-driven, which leads to the pro-active elimination of hazards in the workplace. Several articles focus on ergonomics – currently an unregulated hazard in most of today's industry ... but not at VPP sites. Because VPP is an occupational safety and health management system that installs a process of hazard elimination, every worker has an identified role and carries a passion to deliver workplace safety and health.

I started my letter wishing all of you a safe and prosperous New Year. I'd also like to share my New Year's resolution regarding VPP: I will seize every opportunity to share the value that VPP brings to the workplace with our partners at OSHA and newly elected or appointed political leaders. Investments in VPP will far exceed all efforts in standard setting and regulatory enforcement to protect American workers, because it's achieved and sustained by the people it serves. VPP is best summed up by the words of our 31st President, Herbert Hoover, who said, “*Don't empower a few to tell others what to do, but empower individuals to construct their own self-betterment.*”

Sincerely,

DAVID L. JACKSON, CIH, CSP
VPPPA NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRPERSON
MISSION SUPPORT ALLIANCE, LLC

PRESIDENT RELEASES PROPOSED FY 2011 BUDGET

President Obama released the proposed FY 2011 budget February 1, 2010, which included adjustments for the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In the proposal, federal enforcement would receive an increase of \$10 million, while federal compliance assistance would see a decrease of \$3 million.

Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and Assistant Secretary Dr. David Michaels participated in a live Web chat to address questions over these changes, including how this would affect the Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP).

Solis stated, "OSHA is proposing to significantly reduce direct federal funding of the agency's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) while working closely with the Agency's stakeholders both to identify and secure alternative forms of funding. We plan to move 35 CSHO's [Compliance Safety and Health Officer] from cooperative programs to work directly on enforcement activities."

Dr. Michaels responded a similar way to these questions, adding that OSHA "will be working closely with our stakeholders, including VPPPA [Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association, Inc.], to identify new or alternative funding sources."

In response to the Web chat, VPPPA Executive Director R. Davis Layne released a video message February 4 for members and the safety and health community. In the video, Layne explains that the association appreciates the opportunity to work closely with OSHA in ensuring that this one-of-a-kind safety and health management system will continue to thrive and provide America with safer and healthier worksites. Furthermore, Congress has the authority to restore funding for VPP and many VPP sites have already contacted their congressional representatives to voice their concerns. This has received favorable responses and statements of support.

"During my 35 years with OSHA, I've seen this happen many times," said Layne. "Support for government programs comes and goes, but in the end, it all evens out. I'm confident that this will be resolved."

To view VPPPA's video message, please visit www.vpppa.org/Pubs/EDMessage.cfm.



Capitol Watch

COMPILED BY KOREY BELANGER >> GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
& COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, VPPPA, INC.

Senators Defend the Voluntary Protection Programs

Senators on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP) Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.) and Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) have contacted the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) heads in an effort to ensure the continued success of the OSHA Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP).

While OSHA has stated that it has no plans to remove VPP, there remains a growing concern for some members of the Senate and their constituents that reduced resources for VPP, as well as other compliance assistance programs, will impede on the success the programs bring to safety and health in the workplace.

"What [OSHA] is verbally telling us does not match up with what we see on paper," stated R. Davis Layne, executive director of the Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association, Inc. (VPPPA) "I can't make the connection."

In a letter to OSHA Assistant Secretary David Michaels on December 18, 2009, Senator Enzi urged that VPP not only continue, but also not be downsized. This comes in response to OSHA's plans to cut the number of VPP worksite evaluations from 172 in 2009 to 80 this year.

"[W]e need to continue using the Voluntary Protection Programs as well as

other effective, proactive approaches to workplace safety in order to continue this drop in workplace injuries and fatalities," stated Senator Isakson in an e-mail to the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. "We must emphasize compliance assistance and cooperative approaches to strong, fair and effective enforcement."

DOL Forms Alliance with Mexican Consulate

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Wage and Hour Divisions signed an alliance with the Consulate General of Mexico in New York in an effort to promote labor and human rights of Mexican and other Hispanic workers. The alliance also includes the New York State Department of Labor and the Catholic Migration Office (CMO) of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn.

Participants of the alliance plan to work together to support a call center, which will provide Mexican workers, as well as other Hispanic workers, in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut assistance, education and guidance for their rights in the workplace.

Those interested in getting assistance can call a toll-free number, 877-52-LABOR (525-2267), to receive information and guidance in English and Spanish. ★

Informal Hearings on Hazard Communication Rule Scheduled

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has scheduled to hold three informal public hearings in early 2010 to accept testimony and comments on the proposed rule to align the agency's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) with the United Nation's Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).

Several international organizations and countries, including the U.S., participated in the development of GHS to address inconsistencies in hazard classification and communication. The system is aimed at increasing the quality and consistency of information provided to employers, workers and chemical users by providing a single, harmonized system to classify chemicals, labels and safety information.

The first hearing is scheduled for March 2 at 9:30 am at the U.S. Department of Labor's auditorium in Washington, D.C. The second is scheduled for March 31 in Pittsburg, Penn., and the third on April 13 in Los Angeles, Calif. Details on these two subsequent hearings will be provided by OSHA in a future notice.

DOL MSD Column is not a Prelude to an Ergo Rule

During a live Web chat on December 7, 2009, Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis stated that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) plans to develop a separate column for recording musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) injuries on the OSHA 300 form, which is used by employers to record injuries and illnesses. However, when asked if this addition foreshadowed an ergonomic rule, Solis stated, "This is not a prelude to a broader ergonomic standard. We are simply putting the MSD column back on the OSHA log as was originally intended in the 2001 issuance of OSHA's record keeping standard. MSDs continue to be a major problem for American workers, but at this time, OSHA has no plans for regulatory activity."



In Brief

COMPILED BY KOREY BELANGER >> GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, VPPPA, INC.

However, others in the occupational safety and health field still expect OSHA to launch ergonomics rulemaking in late 2010.

"It's very curious," stated U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Director of Labor Policy Marc Freedman. "I think [the administration] appreciate[s] the sensitivity to the issue and don't want to be tipping their hand. But very clearly, it's all about collecting data on the question of ergonomics, and one presumes that they would use that data to support other actions in that area."

To read more about the December 7 Web chat with Secretary Solis, visit www.dol.gov/regulations/chat-solis-static.htm.

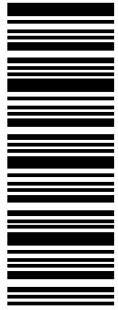
Mining Fatalities at All-Time Low

According to preliminary data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), mine fatalities in 2009 fell to an all-time low for a second straight year. Metal/nonmetal mines recorded 16 mining deaths, while coal mines recorded 18 mining deaths, resulting in a total of 34 deaths. This shows a significant drop from last year's 52 total mining deaths nationwide.

"No one should have to die for a job," stated Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. "Our nation's miners, like all workers, deserve jobs that allow them to provide for themselves and their families. No job is truly good unless it is safe, and the U.S. Department of Labor is committed to ensuring safety is priority one in our nation's mines."

A key contributing factor to the decrease, as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health Joseph A. Main pointed out, is the enforcement of both the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 and continued implementation of the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act of 2006.

"This decline in numbers is a testament to the commitment of miners, mine operations, MSHA, the Department of Labor and other members of the mining community in making safety and health our top concern," said Assistant Secretary Main. "At the same time, we are ever mindful that these numbers represent a tragic loss to the families and friends of the 34 victims. We will not rest until we reach zero fatalities in mining." ★



After the proverbial “long nap of Rip Van Winkle,” ergonomics is awakening and returning to safety and health consciousness. Whether you are creating a program from scratch or making sure you can survive an audit, there are very specific actions that you should take. This article will answer the following important questions:

- >> What are the elements that comprise a quality ergonomics program?
- >> How are they organized and implemented?
- >> And, how is value for the enterprise created and sustained?

There are common elements to quality ergonomics programs, and the ways to effectively implement them are described below. If you are seeking to weather an ergonomics audit, you can simply use this guide and check off the items you have completed and those that remain. The checkmarks will quickly tell you how well you are doing!

CREATING AN ERGONOMICS PROGRAM THAT WORKS

BY DAVID C. ALEXANDER, PE, CPE
>> AUBURN ENGINEERS

ELEMENTS OF QUALITY ERGONOMICS PROGRAMS

There are four major components of quality ergonomics programs. Each has a starting point and long-term (sustainable) status. The four components are (see chart at right):

- Corrective actions**
- Medical management**
- Preventive actions**
- Program management**

Corrective Actions

Corrective actions are designed to identify and then correct conditions that are likely to result in musculoskeletal disorders. Initially, the most serious conditions are identified and corrected and, eventually, a process is established which utilizes continuous improvement to routinely reduce risk and make job improvements. The steady-state situation should be integrated with other continuous improvement efforts, like those for quality, productivity, lean and, of course, sustainability.

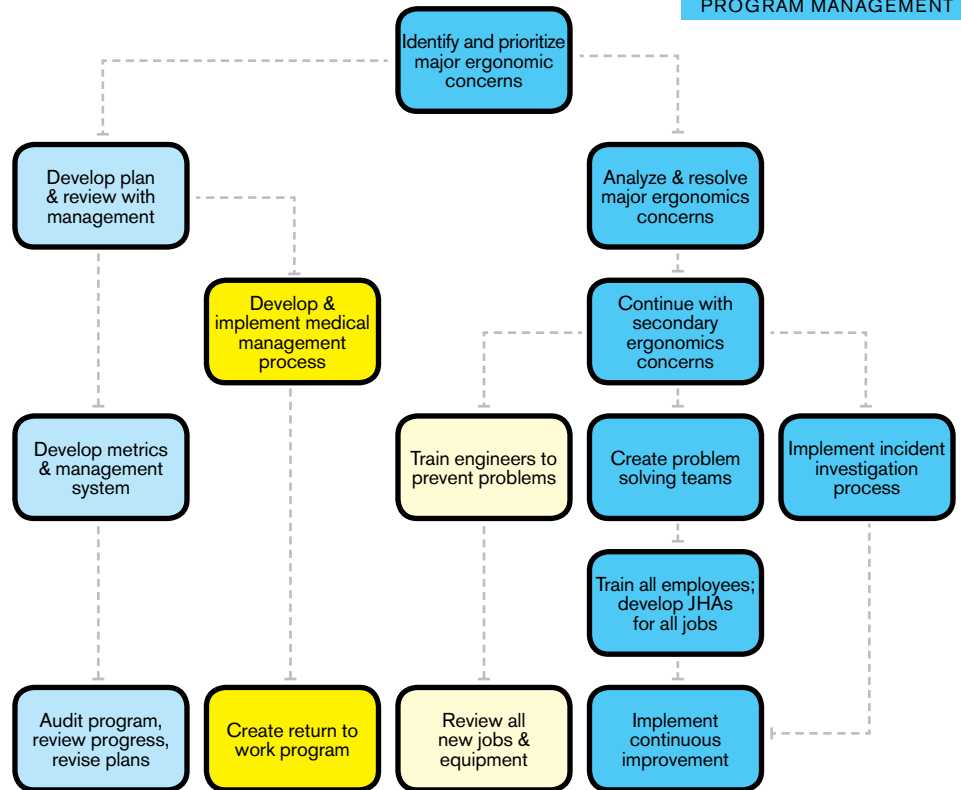
The steps that lead to an effective, productive, steady-state ergonomics corrective action program are as follows:

- 1. Identify and prioritize major ergonomics concerns.** Review your injuries and illnesses, examine your OSHA logs, look at your workers' compensation data and identify key performance issues that result from poor ergonomics situations. This should not be a long and arduous study but rather a quick look for major concerns and opportunities. This will be used both to plan the overall ergonomics program, as well as to plan the initial corrective action projects.
- 2. Analyze and resolve major ergonomics concerns.** These concerns are the ones that cause the most serious and expensive injuries and result in the greatest quality and operational performance problems. Resolve these problems with the use of teams, consultants, trainers,

FIGURE 1

A STRATEGY TO MANAGE YOUR ERGONOMICS PROGRAM

- CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
- PREVENTIVE ACTIONS
- MEDICAL MANAGEMENT
- PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

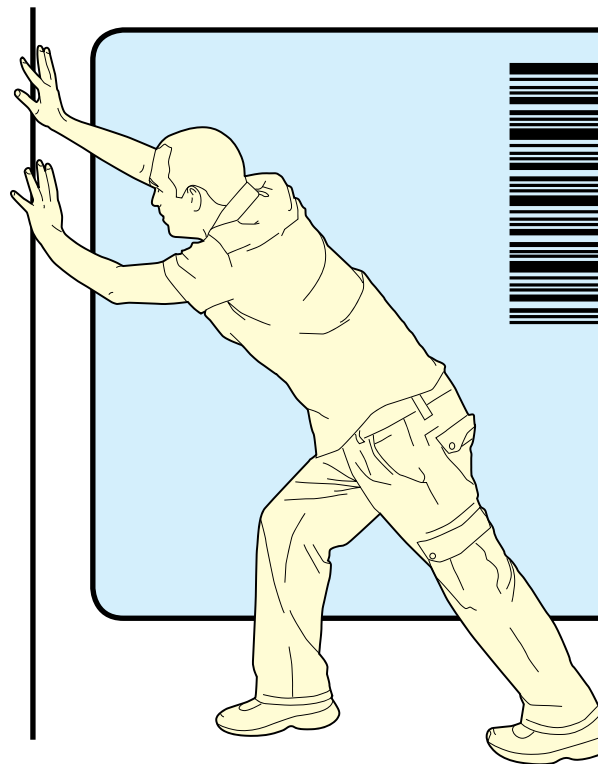


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internal engineers, etc.; whatever it takes to make the improvements and then get them implemented, demonstrate the effectiveness of ergonomics and start an ongoing process of workplace improvements. If you have done this right, ergonomics is already a success.

3. Continue with your problem solving initiatives with secondary ergonomics concerns. At this point, you have resolved problems, controlled risks of injuries, made improvements in performance and involved some key people with ergonomics. Now it is time to continue to do the same on problems with lesser degrees of severity. You should also involve more people in this process, which is a powerful step in creating a culture to support both ergonomics and safety.

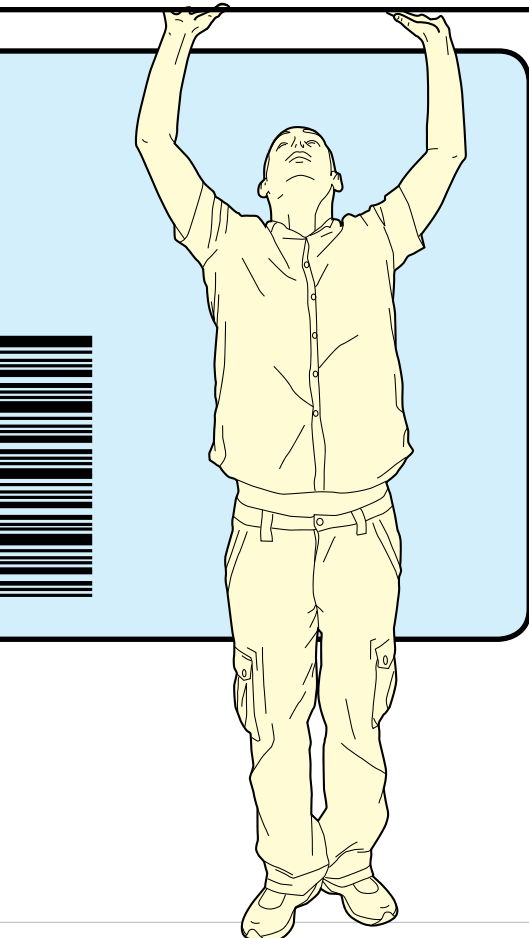
4. Create problem-solving teams to both identify jobs with ergonomics risks and to abate those risks. These teams can



have different memberships: operators; maintenance; safety and health; medical; engineering; and supervision. The point is to engage people proactively in the control and elimination of ergonomics risks and to get them talking with one another. As employee involvement grows, you will be able to engage all employees with training and then ask them to implement sound work practices and workplace controls.

5. Training of all employees is easy once you have actually made ergonomics job improvements and can show those as part of the “Do what we did and that will take care of ergonomics risks.” Once trained, these employees need to be engaged in an action task. The best one is to document Job Hazard Analyses (JHA) for the ergonomics aspects of their own jobs. This process permits widespread involvement as well as highly specific actions that protect personnel.

6. Implementing continuous improvement for on-going risk reduction and job improvements is the final step in the process. This steady-state situation should be integrated with other continuous improvement efforts, like those for quality, productivity, lean and sustainability.



Medical Management

Medical management is the key to obtain, when needed, appropriate and effective medical treatment so that an employee can return to productive work as soon as practical. Medical management is an encompassing term for medical diagnosis and treatment, early reporting of pain and discomfort, return to work and control of workers' compensation costs.

There are two major steps in the creation of a steady-state medical management program:

1. Develop and implement a medical management process. This process should include early reporting, rapid diagnosis, conservative treatment, return to productive work, follow-up and then prevention of repeated injuries. These processes and protocols are readily available from occupational health professionals and their professional organizations.

2. Create a proactive return to work process if not completed as part of the initial step. Each employee should return to work as soon as possible and return to fully productive (not make work) activities; ideally, this work is as similar as possible to his/her past work activities. The best medical management programs will return 90 percent or more of the workers to productive work the day following the medical visit.

Preventive Actions

Preventive actions are responsible for the elimination and/or control of future ergonomics injuries. Preventive actions include redesign of existing processes, work practices, equipment and machinery and even products. “Green Field” design changes are even more powerful because they permit all of the benefits of great design without the inevitable compromises that so often occur with redesign efforts.

Developing good ergonomics design practice requires training, design resources, experience and then a policy to review (and improve) all new jobs and equipment:

1. Provide training for engineering staff while you are actively engaging other employees to resolve existing ergonomics problems. By providing ergonomics skills,

design guidelines and standards and practical examples of sound design work, the engineers can rapidly learn to identify design opportunities and avoid future problems by using their new skills.

2. An ergonomics design policy is eventually needed to ensure that all new jobs and equipment have undergone proper ergonomics design. This is also a good time to engage procurement in purchasing only equipment with sound ergonomics features.

Program Management

Program management is the glue that keeps these pieces together. Like many safety and health programs, there are elements of planning, execution, evaluation and improvement built into an effective ergonomics program management system.

The driver for your ergonomics program starts with the assessment of your ergonomics concerns, the same thing that drives the initial correction of ergonomics problems. From that point, sound safety and health management practices are used to develop and sustain your ergonomics program:

1. The initial review of ergonomics problems (with associated lost time, compensation costs, operational problems, etc.) is an easy way to start a dialogue with management about the need for, and benefits of, an ergonomics program. A natural outcome of this process is the development of a plan, coupled with management review and approval. The action items in the plan should resemble those described in this article.

2. Metrics and management systems should be developed and installed as the overall ergonomics program is being implemented. The use of metrics coupled with management systems will ensure a smooth, effective program with desirable results.

3. Continual improvement is the final part of the program, in which progress reviews, program audits and updated plans are used to make the program more effective while using fewer resources. This will result in long-term sustainability.

ERGONOMICS PROGRAM AUDITS

There are several different types of ergonomics program audits. Knowing which type you are facing is the first step in surviving (or thriving) in ergonomics (see chart at right).

- Safety & health audits:**
 - + Compliance audits
 - + Exemplary audits
- Business performance audits:**
 - + World-class audits
 - + Pro-active audits

Safety & Health Audits

The most basic of audits is the compliance audit. Are you doing enough to protect your workers? To meet that test, you have to know where your problems are and address them. Controlling the major ergonomics problems is the minimum that you can do to perhaps survive this type of audit. The more issues you resolve, the more secure you will be when you get that “knock on the door.”

Many organizations have far higher standards when it comes to worker protection, striving for an exemplary level of safety and health performance. For this, the program should be controlling existing problems, preventing new problems, actively returning people to work and continually improving the ergonomics program. Basically, all of the boxes need to be checked in regard to ergonomics safety issues.

Business Performance Audits

Business performance audits are designed to encompass safety and health, as well as other aspects of business performance: quality; productivity; continuous improvement; cost control; lean; six sigma; and others. For years, ergonomists have known and stated that ergonomics is, in fact, a component of each of these improvement tools.

The business performance audit will demonstrate that workers are actively

FIGURE 2

FOUR TYPES OF ERGONOMICS AUDITS

Copyright 2009 Auburn Engineers

SAFETY & HEALTH AUDITS

BETTER	EXEMPLARY S&H AUDIT
	+ Self-sustaining + Management systems in place and functional

GOOD	COMPLIANCE AUDIT
	+ Minimal performance + Mandatory activities

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE AUDITS

BETTER	WORLD-CLASS AUDIT
	+ Best in the world + Self-sustaining and continually improving

GOOD	PRO-ACTIVE AUDIT
	+ Solid performance + S&H plus business performance activities

using ergonomics techniques to identify and then improve performance in all these areas. The proof is in the pudding and metrics for quality, cost, production and performance should verify these improvements. The difference between a pro-active business audit and a world-class business audit is sustainability and continual improvement. While making gains is good, making gains over and over again is better!

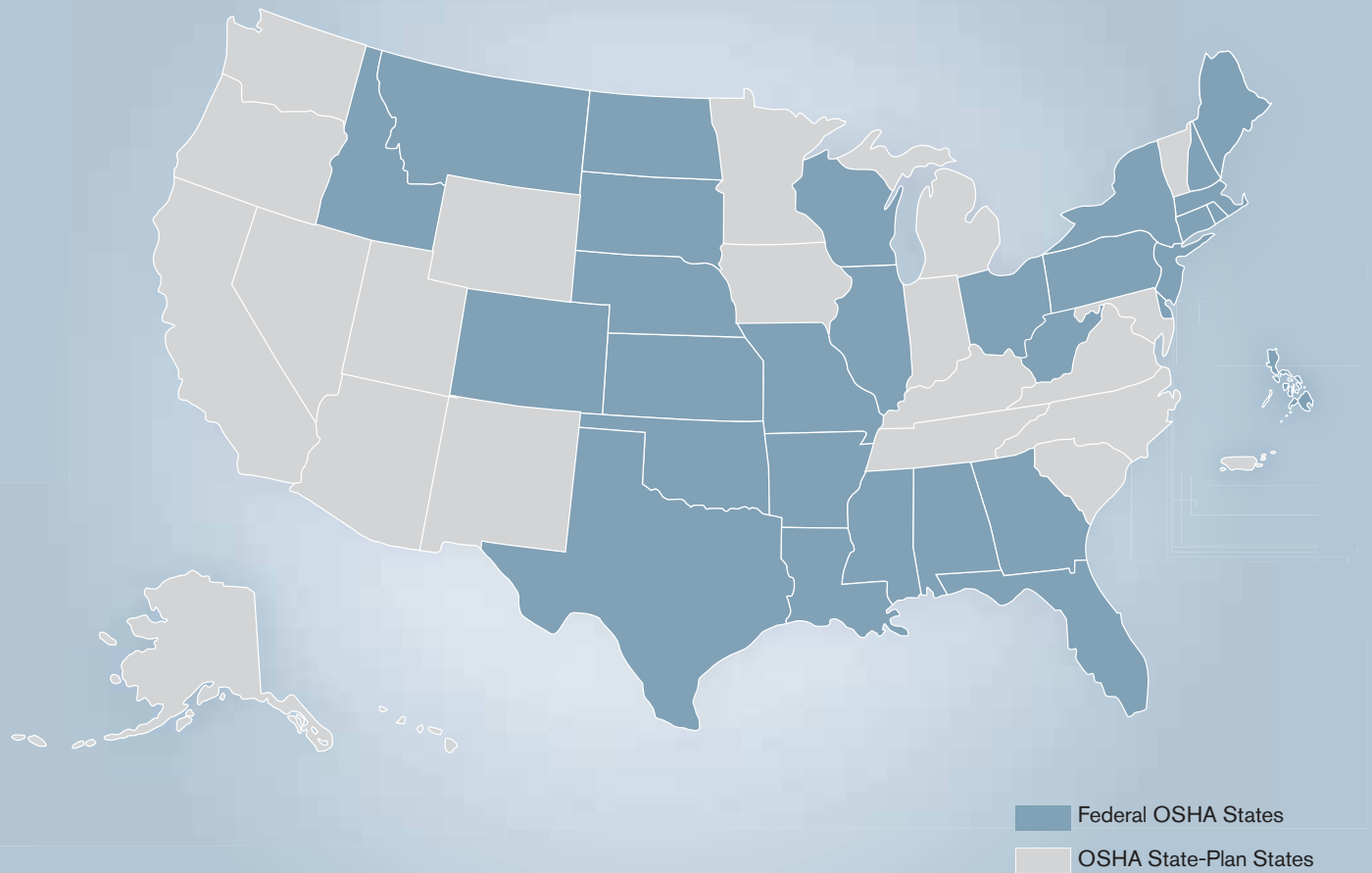
So how can the program description be used to prepare for the audit? Use Figure 1 and check off the items you have accomplished with a green marker, those you are actively working on with a yellow marker and those you have not yet initiated with a red marker. Too many red marks and you are in jeopardy of failing the compliance audit. On the other hand, if you are in the green, then you may well be a candidate for exemplary performance.

You can do the same thing for your business performance audits. If successful, you will become a shining star in the eyes of your Chief Financial Officer (CFO)! The difference here is that you have to be doing most of the items as they relate to worker protection as well as for business

improvement. In other words, you must identify and resolve ergonomics problems that affect musculoskeletal disorders as well as ergonomics problems that cause waste and inefficiency. To go from pro-active to world-class, you simply have to have processes in place that permit you to make improvements over and over again. Yes, self-sustainability and continual improvement will make you among the best in the world.

There are many ways to initiate and manage an ergonomics program. These elements are commonplace among the ones that are most successful. As you work through these elements and this process, note that injuries are the first thing you deal with, then will come business improvements and finally comes the culture of continuous improvement.

Many organizations make a start at the first and some are quite successful. Some achieve business improvement on an initial or long-term basis and only a special few make it all the way to changing their culture for sustainability and continuing improvement. ★



State-Plan Monitor

COMPILED BY KOREY BELANGER >> GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, VPPPA, INC.

Currently, 22 states in the U.S. run their own, complete state-plan programs (covering private sector, state and local government employees). These states developed and operate their own job safety and health program, as encouraged by Section 18 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The reported activity by state was submitted by state-plan OSHA representatives.

ARIZONA

The Arizona Division of Occupational Safety & Health (ADOSH) continues activities with respect to the Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP). Since the last issue of *The Leader*, we have re-approved the following sites:

- + TRW Automotive
- + Honeywell Aircraft Accessories and Landing Systems (formerly Honeywell Tempe)

In addition, we have approved Premiere Building Systems as our newest VPP facility, effective October 9, 2009;

congratulations to them. ADOSH officials are also excited about beginning discussions with several new companies interested in achieving VPP Star status. To name just a few of the companies who have expressed a desire to do more and get involved in the VPP process: Maricopa Integrated Health Systems and Forever Resorts. Both organizations have expressed a desire to seek VPP approval in the near future.

ADOSH just completed its first VPP onsite review for Yuma Cogeneration Associates in the Yuma area and has another onsite slated for January 2010 in the Prescott

area. This is evidence that the value and benefits of the VPP program and all that it brings continues to spread to areas throughout the state of Arizona.

The construction VPP program has generated a great deal of interest from the general contractor community and they are anxiously awaiting the termination of the pilot program in order to take part themselves.

Even with the downward economic trend, it has been our experience in Arizona that interest in VPP remains high. In fact, we receive more calls regarding this program now than we did at the same time last year, or the year before that. Since the beginning of June 2009, ADOSH has received three more VPP applications and we currently have 26 approved sites and another approval pending. Starting off the new year, there will be one new site visit.

Raytheon Missile Systems has submitted their second site application for review and that process is underway. ADOSH is currently working to schedule no less than nine re-evaluations for 2010.

As the VPP coordinator for the state of Arizona, I remain pleased with the progress of the program thus far. It continues to grow and we continue to see great benefits to employees and employers with respect to this program. In addition, we look forward to the upcoming regional conference as yet another way to demonstrate our collective commitment to the health and safety of employees throughout Region IX.

We commend those of you who have made the commitment to push forward with this endeavor and congratulate those who have obtained their VPP status.

Please remember, I am always available should you have a question regarding the VPP program in the state of Arizona. Do not hesitate to call me (Mark Norton) at (520) 628-5478 or the consultation supervisor, Babak Emami, in Phoenix at (602) 542-5795.

CALIFORNIA

The October 2, 2009, Cal/VPP Star workshop in San Francisco was a great cooperation between Cal/VPP Star sites, the Region IX VPPPA Chapter and the Cal/OSHA VPP team. Over 140 attendees learned about the Cal/VPP Star journey and implementation of the key elements at a site. Due to high requests, the California workshop will be presented again at the Region IX VPPPA Chapter Conference in Newport Beach and if you are working toward Cal/VPP Star, you and a few key staff from your site should attend.

A Special Team Member (STM) training was scheduled for February 9-11, 2010, in San Francisco. After completion of the training, attendees are now able to participate in Cal/VPP Star process activities such as mentoring, pre-visits and onsite evaluations. The state of California VPP team and STMs are engaged in preparing high quality new Star sites. For the most recent updated list of sites, please visit www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/cal_vpp/vppsites.html.

INDIANA

Indiana is proud to announce the re-approval of AK Tube Columbus plant. The Indiana Department of Labor's Lori Torres stated, "Your re-approval to the Voluntary Protection Program is a strong endorsement of the continued dedication to the workplace safety and health demonstrated by you and your employees at AK Tube LLC in Columbus. As a participant in the VPP, you hold a position as an industry leader in workplace safety and health, and serve as a model for what a safety and health management system can be."

Chairman, President and CEO of AK Steel James L. Wainscott also commented on the site's achievement stating, "AK Tube's VPP Star designation speaks volumes about the professionalism of our employees in Columbus and their commitment to safety. We congratulate them for becoming re-certified, an achievement that reflects AK Steel's unwavering commitment to safety at all of our plant operations."

In addition to AK Steel, GE Healthcare in Aurora earned their OSHA VPP Star approval. "We are proud of this fine organization and the medical work they are performing for the world community," said Aurora Mayor Lynn McGill.

"Your qualification for OSHA's premier recognition program is a testament to the efforts you and your employees have made to develop and implement a VPP quality safety and health management system," stated OSHA's then acting Assistant Secretary Jordan Barab.

IOWA

The Iowa VPP program is pleased to announce the addition of two new Star sites since the last issue of *The Leader*. The Star site celebration at Larson Manufacturing facility in Lake Mills took place on December 3, 2009. The Lake Mills site has 176 employees and manufactures storm and security doors.

Pioneer Hi-Bred in Mt. Pleasant completed all items to become a Star site on November 24, 2009. The Mt. Pleasant site has approximately 42 employees and is a corn seed processing plant which processes 7.3 million pounds of seed from 175,000 acres.

Iowa currently has 43 VPP sites with additional growth expected over the next year. Management commitment and support in Iowa was evident over this period during the General Electric Industrial Systems Burlington facility's VPP Star re-approval on November 24, 2009, in addition to Georgia-Pacific Corrugated LLC, Monticello facility's VPP Star re-approval on December 16, 2009, and General Electric Rail Services facility's VPP Star re-approval on November 24, 2009.

MICHIGAN

Michigan currently has 29 VPP worksites (26 Star sites and three Rising Star sites). In 2009, three new companies were added to the program: United Water/Wixom Wastewater Plant in Wixom; DTE River Rouge Plant in River Rouge; and Marathon Petroleum in Detroit. Cascade Engineering in Grand Rapids made the leap from Rising Star to Star this year. Successful re-evaluations in 2009 included: Herman Miller Spring Lake; Occidental Chemical (formerly Dow); Herman Miller

[TOP] After a comprehensive onsite re-evaluation, the Stepan Co employees in Anaheim, Calif., celebrated their re-approval as a Star site on December 1, 2009. The facility is a leading manufacturer of surfactants and complies with the Process Safety Management, CCR Title 8; 5189 standards. The site has made significant improvements for workplace safety, specifically in fall protection systems.

[BOTTOM] Marathon Petroleum's VPP celebration in Detroit, Mich.



CONTACTING EACH STATE >>

ALASKA

Bill Nickerson
VPP Coordinator
Phone: (800) 656-4972
www.labor.state.ak.us/lss/oshhome.htm

ARIZONA

Mark D. Norton
Assistant Director/VPP Coordinator
Phone: (520) 628-5478
www.ica.state.az.us

CALIFORNIA

Iraj Pourmehraban
Cal/VPP & PSM Manager
Phone: (510) 622-1080
www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh1.html

HAWAII

Ellen Kondo
Manager
Phone: (808) 586-9130
www.hawaii.gov/labor/hiosh

INDIANA

Michael Gaskill
VPP Manager Labor
Phone: (260) 373-2860
www.in.gov/dol/

IOWA

Shashi Patel
VPP Coordinator
Phone: (515) 281-6369
www.iowaworkforce.org/labor/iosh

KENTUCKY

Joe Giles
VPP Program Manager
Phone: (502) 564-6896
www.labor.ky.gov/osh

MARYLAND

William Grabau
CIH, VPP Coordinator
Phone: (401) 767-2209
www.dlir.state.md.us/labor/mosh.html

MICHIGAN

Doug Kimmel
MVPP Specialist
Phone: (517) 322-1595
www.michigan.gov/mvpp

MINNESOTA

Dave Ferkul
MNSTAR VPP Coordinator
Phone: (218) 733-7832
www.doli.state.mn.us/mnStar.html

NEVADA

Stephen Coffield
Program Coordinator
Phone: (702) 486-9032
www.dirweb.state.nv.us

NEW MEXICO

Howard Gentry
Zia Star VPP Coordinator
Phone: (505) 222-9503
www.nmenv.state.nm.us/Ohsb_Website/index.htm

NORTH CAROLINA

LaMont Smith
Recognition Program Manager
Phone: (919) 807-2909
www.nclabor.com/osha/osh.htm

OREGON

Mark E. Hurliman, CSHM
VPP/SHARP
Program Manager
Phone: (541) 776-6016
www.cbs.state.or.us/osha/subjects/vpp.htm

PUERTO RICO

Ilza Roman
Director
Phone: (787) 754-2171
www.dtrh.gobierno.pr/osho.asp

SOUTH CAROLINA

Sharon Dumit
VPP Coordinator
Phone: (803) 896-7744
www.llr.state.sc.us

TENNESSEE

Jim Flanagan
TOSHA VPP Manager
Phone: (615) 741-5421
www.state.tn.us/labor-wfd/vppStar.html

UTAH

Holly Lawrence, Health Supervisor
Eldon Tryon, Compliance Manager
Phone: (801) 530-6901
<http://laborcommission.utah.gov/UOSH/index.html>

VERMONT

Daniel Whipple
VPP Coordinator
Phone: (802) 334-4367
www.state.vt.us/labind/Vosha/vpp.htm

VIRGINIA

Milford Stern
VPP Coordinator
Phone: (540) 562-3580
www.doli.virginia.gov

WASHINGTON

Tom Norris
VPP, WISHA
Phone: (360) 902-4792
www.lni.wa.gov/safety/topics/atoz/vpp/default.asp

WYOMING

Sam Whitney
Consultation Supervisor
Fran Ross
Cowboy VPP Coordinator
Phone: (307) 777-7710
<http://wydoe.state.wy.us/doe.asp?ID=7>

For additional information and up-to-date contacts, please visit www.vpppa.org/chapters/contacts.cfm.

Midwest Distribution; and West Michigan Air Care. Five applicants are awaiting their initial review.

With input from a focus group of construction companies, construction associations and interested parties, VPP application guidelines for construction were developed. Companies were invited to pilot the program and currently four construction entities are working on their application submissions. Similar to General Industry VPP, Michigan is planning to use consultants from the Consultation Education and Training (CET) division of Michigan OSHA to perform all onsite evaluations.

In addition to finalizing the Construction VPP program, 2009 was another active year for VPP activities and mentoring opportunities including:

- + two public workshops highlighting the benefits of VPP and providing application instruction;
- + several presentations targeted specifically to construction groups and conferences to introduce VPP for construction;
- + two new training courses developed for the MIOSHA Training Institute (MTI) using data from VPP companies to illustrate the benefits of a comprehensive safety and health management system; and
- + two member company meetings held to exchange best practices and provide learning opportunities on current safety and health topics.

A “Best Practice” idea from VPP companies will be a continuing feature in the *MIOSHA News*, which is published quarterly and provided to thousands of businesses throughout Michigan.

MINNESOTA

Minnesota currently has 45 Star sites and seven Merit sites within their MNSTAR (VPP) program. Of the 45 Star sites, 28 are classified as general industry sites, 15 are public sector sites and two are construction sites.

Two MNSTAR (VPP) pre-approval evaluations are in progress at two general industry sites. An additional pre-approval evaluation is scheduled for a contractor worksite.

Re-approvals were completed for three Star sites with two additional re-approval evaluations in progress.

Four additional applications are pending review with onsite evaluations tentatively scheduled during 2010.

Significant Projects

A MNSTAR pre-approval evaluation was initiated for sites within a school district comprised of twenty separate facilities that included the district’s Star-approved business office to assess the effectiveness of the district-wide safety management system.

MNSTAR Star re-approval was awarded to the business office and 14 of the 19 school district sites were awarded Star status. The remaining five sites were awarded Merit status.

A MNSTAR pre-approval evaluation was initiated at an oil refinery site. The evaluation involved three phases:

- + Phase 1: safety & health hazard evaluation and review of mandated programs
- + Phase 2: PSM program evaluation
- + Phase 3: safety & health management system evaluation & 300 log audit

The total evaluation team was comprised of seven MNOSHA consultants, one MNOSHA compliance investigator, one federal OSHA compliance investigator and two SGEs with oil refinery experience.

MNSTAR Program Change

A recent program change in the MNSTAR (VPP) pre-approval evaluation and re-approval evaluation process was the inclusion of a 300 log audit as part of the evaluation process. The OSHA Recordkeeping Audit Assistant (ORAA) software system will be used to determine a ‘sample size’ of employee records that will be reviewed to confirm accuracy in 300 log injury/illness reporting.

NEW MEXICO

After three years of excellence in employee safety and health, the Raytheon Mission Capability and Verification Center (MCVC) at the White Sands Missile Range has achieved VPP Star status. The site provides system operations and maintenance, as well as missile processing

for field surveillance, flight test and Patriot As A Target (PAAT) missiles.

“Raytheon’s MCVC has demonstrated excellence in effective safety and health management,” Dallas OSHA Regional Administrator Dean W. McDaniel stated. “The company’s outstanding efforts at this site include maintaining an injury and illness rate that is 76 percent below the national average for its industry.”

NORTH CAROLINA

Since the last issue of *The Leader*, North Carolina is proud to announce two new Carolina Star sites: Preformed Line Products, Inc., in Albemarle and ASMO North Carolina, Inc., in Statesville. Preformed Line Products manufactures non-current carrying wiring devices and ASMO North Carolina manufactures DC motors.

The state has five new three-year Star re-approvals: Person County in Roxboro; Glen Raven Custom Fabrics in Glen Raven; Davidson County in Lexington; Shaw Maintenance Energy Services in Castle Hayne; and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Raleigh. Jelliff Corporation in Maiden was given a six-year Carolina Star re-approval and E. J. Pope & Son, Inc., in Selma is a new Rising Star.

Congratulations to all!

OREGON

Oregon OSHA lost one VPP Star site in October, when GE Security in Tualatin closed its manufacturing operations. The end of October brought two new VPP sites: US Gypsum in Rainier was approved as a Star site on October 29, 2009, and Roseburg Forest Products’ Plant 6 in Coquille was approved as a Merit site on October 30, 2009.

Weyerhaeuser Company’s Coos Bay Timberlands was approved as a Star site on November 20, 2009, after they successfully completed their Merit goals. Also, Oregon received one new VPP application in early November.

Oregon SGEs have served on six of the nine onsite reviews Oregon has conducted in 2009. Three Merit evaluations were

done in the last quarter and each of those sites will be advancing to Star. Oregon currently has 24 VPP sites.

VIRGINIA

There were two successfully re-approved sites during the months since the last report:

- + Georgia-Pacific's Brookneal OSB plant
- + Ciba Specialty Chemicals Suffolk facility

We are proud to welcome the following new Star sites:

- + Cargill's Harrisonburg Turkey Hatchery in Harrisonburg
- + Tenaska Virginia Generation Station near Scottsville
- + CPFilms (Solutia) Fieldale Plant near Martinsville

There are now 44 active VPP sites in Virginia. Congratulations to these outstanding workplaces!

Thanks to Raytheon Technical Services for hosting the recent VPP Application Workshop® at their Reston headquarters.

We had 29 SGEs participating on the record number of 15 VPP evaluations conducted in the 2009 calendar year. A BIG thank you to all of these SGEs! I don't know how we could have completed this many evaluations without their help.

Following the recent SGE class in January in Virginia Beach, we are planning to have an additional SGE class later in 2010 in Region III.

Don't miss the Region III VPPPA Chapter Conference in Pittsburgh, Penn., in 2010 and the VOSH Conference in Leesburg, Va., June 1-4, 2010.

WASHINGTON

As of this report, the state of Washington has 27 Star sites. CH2M Hill was approved in November 2009. Another pre-approval onsite was scheduled for December.

Our newest site, PEXCO, celebrated their Star at a ceremony in Tacoma in October 2009.

Management leadership and employee involvement topped off by a strong safety culture earned PEXCO a WISHA VPP Star flag and a place in Washington's growing group of companies that have the designation of VPP Star worksite. PEXCO's Tacoma plant covers 135,000 square feet and employs approximately 105 employees operating 25 extruders, 24 hours per day, five days a week. The company services diverse markets such as traffic control products, fence products, construction, recreation, transportation and custom extruded products. In addition, their engineers design extrusion dies and their in-house machining capabilities fabricate the dies. Congratulations PEXCO Tacoma!

Mentoring works! In the last article, we had five VPP sites that were providing outreach and mentoring to other companies. PEXCO, our newest site, is working with two companies. ★

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VPPPA Chapter Round-Up

COMPILED BY LAURIE MONTANUS >> COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH COORDINATOR, VPPPA, INC.

REGION I

>> CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

The Best of the Northeast, aka VPPPA Region I Chapter, recently held its fourth quarter 2009 Chapter Meeting, hosted by Rogers Corporation in Rogers, Conn., in a beautifully renovated old mill building. Rogers Corporation's Gary St. Jean, EHS supervisor, Lurie R&D Center, did a nice job opening the meeting. Together with Frances Walsh, also with Rogers Corporation, he presented an overview of the company, its products (printed circuit materials, high performance foams and custom electrical components) and its vision for achieving VPP at additional Rogers Corporation sites.

VPPPA Region I Chair Jack Popp, Hasbro Games, presided over the chapter meeting. The Chapter Board of Directors was fully present. Following introductions of attendees, attending committee chairs provided updates on their respective chapter committees' activities and future plans.

Chapter Secretary Mike Avery, Lenox Saw, presented the minutes from the August 24 meeting in San Antonio, Texas, which were reviewed and approved. Treasurer Bob McKinley of L.L. Bean presented the treasurer's report, which was approved. There were no by-law changes to report or recommend.

[TOP] Region I VPPPA Mentoring Committee Chair Darwin Irish, Flexcon, Inc., updates the attendees at the VPPPA Region I Quarterly Chapter Meeting in Rogers, Conn.

[BOTTOM LEFT] Conference Committee Chair Mike Avery of Lenox Saw provides an update on the chapter's 2010 conference.

[BOTTOM RIGHT] Gary St. Jean and Rogers Corp. host the VPPPA Region 1 Quarterly Chapter Meeting on December 3, 2009, in Rogers, Conn.

Communications Chair Steve Gauthier, GE Riverworks, health and safety representative of IUE/CWA, updated everyone on chapter communications and Web site activity.

GE Energy's Kimberly Hill, our chapter vice chair and nominating committee chair, announced the previously communicated appointment of Bob McKinley as chapter treasurer. Kim also announced the newest board member Debra Bowie, a safety compliance coordinator at the Coca-Cola Northampton, Mass., bottling plant. Debra was appointed by the board as an hourly representative – non-union site. We look forward to Debra's participation and contribution.

Mark Hebert, Hamilton Sundstrand UTC and president of Local Lodge 743 of the IAMAW District 26, presented a union update. Attendees were informed that the chapter will seek and purchase, when feasible, American-made goods to support American jobs and VPP. Also discussed were VPP flags and conference banners with an updated list of union and company names.

Membership Committee Chair Toby Trebilcock, Covanta, provided an update on the chapter's membership and membership benefits.

Mentoring Committee Chair Darwin Irish, Flexcon, and Thomas Skinner, Hamilton Sundstrand UTC and chief



union safety rep. Local Lodge 743 of the IAMAW District 26, presented a mentoring update. A successful meet and greet session was hosted by the Region I VPPPA Chapter at the OSHA Training Institute in Manchester, N.H. The chapter will continue hosting the meet and greets going forward. Again in 2010, we will be seeking nominations for our Regional Mentor of the Year Award. We would like to see our member sites apply for the national awards and scholarships as well (see page 38 for more information).

Dominion Nuclear Power's Paul Ludington, the awards committee chair, reminded attendees of the chapter's two \$1,000 scholarships, which will again be available in 2010.

Conference Committee Chair Mike Avery, Lenox Saw, provided an update on our chapter's conference, taking place June 14-16, 2010, at the Sugarloaf Resort in Carrabassett Valley, Maine. The Region I VPPPA Chapter Conference is the premier safety and health conference in New England focusing on the Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) and VPP excellence. The conference will once again be an overall great value that you won't want to miss. Planning is well underway. Response to our Call for Speakers was very positive, as has been the vendors' response for exhibiting opportunities. Keep an eye on the chapter's refreshed Web site at www.vppregion1.com for additional conference information and announcements. Chapter work continues in preparation for the 2011 regional conference; the conference location has not yet been finalized but could potentially be in Massachusetts.

Jack Popp presented the Vermont state-plan update for Daniel Whipple, Green Mountain VPP (GMVPP) coordinator and VOSH CAS. Energizer's St. Albans' site is the 8th Vermont VPP site. Congratulations! Also, the GMVPP Challenge Program and revised GMVPP Construction Program are rolling out in the spring of 2010.

As a VPP site representative, Jack also requested that the employees from other VPP sites in the region contact their elected officials and ask for their support of VPP as the premier program focused on preventing workplace injuries. Much

progress has been made through VPP and we all need to ensure we continue advancing occupational safety and health going forward.

OSHA's Region I VPP Manager Bob Sands provided a Region I OSHA VPP update.

On behalf of the Region I VPPPA Chapter, please have a safe start into the new year. Let's all keep working together in 2010 to prevent injuries.

Submitted by Region I Board of Directors
Chairman Jack Popp, Hasbro, Inc., East Longmeadow, Mass.

REGION II

>> NJ, NY, PR, VI

The 18th Annual Region II VPPPA Chapter Conference will take place for the first time in The Trump Taj Mahal Casino and Resort in Atlantic City, N.J., June 7-9, 2010. The Trump Taj Mahal offers a meeting space combined with many exciting experiences including the Hard Rock Café and other renowned Zagat-rated eateries and entertaining night life – all within walking distance of the boardwalk and the shopping outlets. Rooms are available at a reduced conference rate of \$99 per night. To guarantee this rate, call the reservations department at (800) 825-8888. Just mention that you are part of the Region II VPPPA Chapter Conference to get this low rate.

The conference committee is presently working very hard to assemble another exciting educational and networking experience featuring outstanding keynote speakers from Region II and across the country. As you will see, there will be a full agenda in store with two and a half days of learning and networking experiences, an expanded exhibitor area and recreation time.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help at the conference by presenting a workshop, moderating, offering registration support or setting up conference rooms, please contact Brian Bennett at (732) 777-2275 or e-mail brian.bennett@ehs-excellence.com.

To register or for more information about the Region II VPPPA Chapter Conference, please visit www.region2chapter-vpppa.org or www.vpppa.org.

Elections

There are four Region II VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors positions up for elections at the upcoming conference:

- + Chairperson
- + Treasure
- + Director-at-Large #1
- + Director-at-Large #2

Contributed by Elisona Valle, Wenner Bread Products, Inc., Bayport, N.Y.

REGION III

>> DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV

We open this Chapter Round-Up with the news that our Chairman, Larry Shaffer, has decided to resign from his post on the Region III VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors. As reported in the last issue, Larry is currently undergoing treatment for a brain tumor and has been unable to participate in the activities of the board. In addition, Larry's company, International Paper, recently announced that it would be closing its Franklin Mill facility. Both of these events led to Larry's decision to resign from his post.

It goes without saying that the Region III VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors has felt the impact of Larry leaving the chairmanship. Larry brought the same strong commitment to everything the board accomplished that he did in his support of the VPP program. Larry has been an advocate for VPP as a result of the positive impact that it had on his workplace. All of the board members have learned much from Larry during his time with the chapter.

For now, Shelley Baber, Allegheny Energy, will serve as the chairperson for Region III. Shelley has already demonstrated that she is willing to do whatever is necessary to make the activities in the region a success. In addition, Phil Butcho, Allegheny Energy, will serve as the vice chair along with his duties as the treasurer for the chapter.

At our October board meeting, the directors voted to grant a lifetime board membership to all past chairmen of the board. This will give the past chairs the opportunity to attend the regional conference as board members and will give



[LEFT] Mike Viggezzi, global manager of VPP & Safety Programs for General Electric Co.

[RIGHT] James Powers, Jr., director of Homeland Security of the state of Pennsylvania

them the chance to continue to support the VPP effort. Jeff Wetzel, Rohm and Haas Company, who was our chairman prior to Larry's election, is serving as the focus point for the Region III VPPPA Chapter Web site. If you have had the opportunity to visit our site recently, you will see many of the improvements that Jeff has been instrumental in making. Jeff continues to show his commitment to making Region III better.

The board continues to progress in planning for the 2010 regional conference to be held April 7-9 at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh, Penn. The slate of breakout sessions that will be offered during the conference will allow participants to choose from thirty subjects ranging from "What Value VPP Brings" to "Conducting Effective On-the-Job Training." The board has worked very hard to assure that the topics available are varied, giving participants choices that will help them become a VPP site or become a better VPP site.

In addition to the breakout sessions, the board has scheduled three excellent keynote speakers for the conference. Odie Espenship will be the keynote speaker at the opening session. Odie is a former U.S. Air Force pilot and commercial pilot for Delta Airlines, Inc. He is now part of the Target Leadership team that presents Culture Leadership-Safety training to a number of Fortune 500 companies.

Michael Vigezzi, global manager of VPP & Safety Programs for General Electric Co.,

will speak to attendees at the luncheon on Thursday. Michael has overseen the growth of GE's Global Health and Safety Recognition program since 1999 with the program growing from 29 to over 200 sites during that time. Michael will talk about staying focused on leading toward safety excellence.

Finally, at the closing session, James Powers, Jr., Pennsylvania's director of Homeland Security since 2006, will be the keynote speaker. In his position, James is the point of contact on critical infrastructure protection in the Commonwealth. This promises to be a very informative closing session as attendees gain a perspective on what the Commonwealth is doing to protect its citizens.

Wednesday night, the Region III VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors will host a networking dinner event at the Sheraton Hotel. In addition to the dinner and the opportunity to network with others who share an interest in safety and health excellence, the board has arranged for entertainment by The Fabulous Hubcaps. The Fabulous Hubcaps are a much sought-after Oldies and Classic Rock show band on the East coast and in the Midwest. Performing since 1974, the group was inducted into The Southern Legends Entertainment and Performing Arts Hall of Fame in 2005. This promises to be the best networking event that the region has ever held.

In addition to the conference breakouts, the board is planning a full slate of pre-conference workshops. On Tuesday,

April 6, 2010, we will be offering a VPP Application Workshop® along with NFPA 70E Arc Flash Compliance Issues with Michael Wright. On Wednesday, April 7, 2010, we will be holding four workshops. They will include Ergonomics and the Aging Workforce, Beginning VPP, Strengthening Star Quality and Media Relations. These workshops will offer attendees the added opportunity to learn more about specific safety issues.

If all of that is not enough, the Pittsburgh area has more to offer. The conference will be held at the base of Mount Washington. Attendees will have the chance to take the trip up one of the inclines at night to view what has been called the 2nd most scenic view in America. A short walk across the river will take you into downtown Pittsburgh and Point Park. Only a fourth of a mile away is the newly opened River Casino for those looking for another diversion. And, the Pittsburgh Pirates have two home games during the week of the conference at the stadium next to River Casino.

While the planning is still going on for the 2010 conference, the board is also working on preliminary plans for the conference in 2011. By the time the next issue of *The Leader* comes out, we expect to be able to report on the location for that conference.

Finally, the chapter was happy to host a class for prospective Special Government Employees (SGE) January 26-28, 2010, in Virginia Beach, Va. We look forward to welcoming those who successfully completed the two-and-a-half-day course supporting VPP in our region as new SGEs.

Elections for the Region III VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors will be held at the conference and currently we have five director-at-large positions open. These positions include representatives from both union and non-union sites, hourly and salary workers.

Contributed by Region III Board of Directors
Chairperson Shelley Baber, Allegheny Energy,
Greensburg, Penn.

REGION IV

>> AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

2010 Conference

The 2010 Region IV VPPPA Chapter Conference will be at the Beau Rivage Hotel and Casino in Biloxi, Miss. The hotel has been completely rebuilt since it was hit by Hurricane Katrina two months after our conference in 2005. A contract for the closing speaker Richard Hawk is currently being finalized. This year, we will have an increased emphasis on ergonomics, which is a nation-wide safety "hot topic."

Elections

Region IV VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors elections will be held in June at the Region IV conference. At this point, one vacancy exists with the possibility of two other board members resigning in 2010. Further information on open positions will be made available soon.

New VPP Sites

- + ASMO North Carolina, Inc., Statesville, N.C.
- + DTE Petcoke, LLC, Vicksburg, Miss.
- + Entergy Mississippi - South Trans & Substation Group, Brookhaven, Miss.
- + Hospira Worldwide Atlanta Distribution Center, Stone Mountain, Ga.
- + Unison Industries, Jacksonville, Fla.
- + CSC John C Stennis Space Center, Stennis Space Center, Miss.

Upcoming SGE Classes

- + March 2-4, 2010, at Kimberly-Clark in LaGrange, Ga.
- + May 11-13, 2010, at MYR Group/Le Meyers in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Other Activities

Construction Committee member Evan Todd, an employee of LE Meyers Co., made arrangements to speak at the Atlanta ASSE Chapter meeting during the first quarter of 2010 about the VPP process. He also spoke at the Chattanooga ASSE Chapter meeting in January about the VPP process.

Contributed by Region IV Chairperson Jack Jamba, United Space Alliance, Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

REGION V

>> IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

New Board Member

The Region V VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors welcomes William Linneweh to the position of director-at-large. Bill works for Hendrickson Truck Systems Group and the board is excited to have him join.

2010 Region V Conference

Remember, the 2010 Region V VPPPA Chapter Conference will be held June 2-3 at the Sheraton Hotel in Bloomington, Minn.

Contributed by Region V Board of Directors Secretary Tamara Reiter, GE Healthcare Technologies, Waukesha, Wis.

REGION VI

>> AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

Region VI Conference

Region VI is excited about our upcoming conference scheduled for March 9-12, 2010, in Corpus Christi, Texas, at the American Bank Center Convention Center and the Omni, our host hotel. We are on pace to have a great conference this year with some top quality educational workshops from some of the best safety programs in the country, many opportunities for sharing and networking and of course we will have some special surprises that will make it fun Region VI style. We expect another great turnout so register early to reserve your place. Please visit Region VI's Web site at www.regionvivpp.org to register online and find more details. Come join us on the bay at the Omni.

Sponsorship Opportunities

This truly is a win-win situation for both you and the region. Sponsorships help VPPPA to continue to provide the most innovative safety and health practices to its attendees in order to improve workplace conditions for the American worker. Please see our Web site for details on this excellent opportunity. Sponsorship forms are located under the 2010 conference link on our Web site. Reserving your sponsorship can be done online or by contacting us, whichever you prefer. There are several levels of sponsorship available. For more information, please contact Patti Wilson at (409) 989-6502.

Board of Directors' Nominations

The 2010 Region VI Nominating Committee is soliciting nominations for five Region VI VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors' positions. Positions up for election are:

- + Chair
- + Secretary
- + Employee Representative from a Represented Site
- + Director-at-Large Position #2
- + Director-at-Large Position #4

[LEFT] From right to left: Kathy French, Jon Alexander, Carol Schwartzkopf and Randie Mendez (Region VII).



Visit the Region VI VPPPA Chapter Web site at www.regionvivpp.org for more details.

Thank You

The Region VI VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors would like to thank all of our members for the tremendous support throughout this past year and a very special thanks to all of the volunteers, SGEs, mentors and conference committee members that keep Region VI among the best. Your hard work and dedication to making our workplaces safer do not go unnoticed and are truly appreciated by the board.

Contributed by Region VI Board of Directors
Director-at-Large Jeffrey Delaney, Monsanto
Company, Luling, La.

REGION VII

>> IA, KS, MO, NE

Hello to everyone from your Region VII VPPPA Chapter Board of Directors! We hope you and your families enjoyed a safe and healthy start into 2010!

The Region VII VPPPA Chapter is busy planning some exciting activities for your participation this new year. Please continue to refer to our Web site for our schedule of activities at www.regionviivpp.org. To those of you who attended the national VPPPA conference in San Antonio this past summer, it was nice to have such great attendance supporting our region! We also want to thank all of you who participated in the SGE program. Two of the recent SGEs voted "SGE of the Year" by OSHA have been representatives from Region VII: Mike Pendergrass in 2007 and Bob Sander in 2009. Congratulations to both Mike and Bob for their great work and we thank you for your representation!

Your Region VII VPPPA Conference Planning Committee is busy planning the 17th Annual Region VII VPPPA Chapter Conference, "Safety on the Horizon," which is scheduled for May 24-26, 2010, at the Embassy Suites in the western Omaha suburb of La Vista. Watch for detailed information on our Web site at www.regionviivpp.org. The conference will begin with the usual two pre-conference workshops: the VPP Application Workshop®, for those who are preparing to apply for VPP, and the Maintaining Star Quality Workshop, for those who have an

interest in networking and sharing ideas for continuous improvement of their VPP Star site. In addition, there will be two concurrent sessions with two workshops in each session. These two workshops are free to anyone who would like to attend.

We will again be awarding a \$5,000 scholarship during our Region VII VPPPA Chapter Conference for continuing education. Please check our Web site for details. The annual golf outing will be held in Omaha with proceeds going to our scholarship fund. The challenge is still out there by Vee-Jay Cement to match their donation of \$1,000 to this special cause!

The call for workshops closes on March 13, 2010. If you would like to present at our breakout sessions, please see our Web site at www.regionviivpp.org for contact information.

At this year's conference, we will be holding elections with four open chapter board positions:

- + Labor Representative from a Site with a Collective Bargaining Agreement
- + Director-at-Large 1
- + Director-at-Large 5
- + Director-at-Large 6

Our exhibitors are a vital part of our annual conference, so we would like to thank all of them for their continued support of the Region VII VPPPA Chapter. If any of our members know of vendors who may have an interest in exhibiting, please forward our Web site and contact information to them.

As always, your board looks forward to providing a quality conference with many educational and networking opportunities. We are always looking for volunteers who help make the conference a success! Please visit our Web site at www.regionviivpp.org for information. If you would like to help make 2010 a success, please let us know.

The 17th Annual Region VII VPPPA Chapter Conference, "Safety on the Horizon," will be held in Omaha, Neb., May 24-26, 2010.

Contributed by Region VII Board of Directors
Director-at-Large Rod Swager, Clow Valve
Company, Oskaloosa, Iowa.

REGION VIII

>> CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

Three months to the conference? Already? This year marks the 9th Annual Region VIII VPPPA Chapter Conference. That's right – we are in the last year of single digits! Our conference theme this year is "When You Care Enough to Be the Very Best – VPP!"

In 2010, we are adding a Strengthening Star Quality Workshop to our pre-conference workshops and we are also in the process of developing a half-day advanced ergonomics workshop with Rick Olderman, Z-Line Training, one of our popular breakout session presenters.

In addition to our pre-conference workshops, we are excited to again bring you 24 breakout sessions to choose from, including a construction/mobile workforce track and VPP 101 for Healthcare. There will be three guided networking sessions to choose from to allow you to interact with others facing similar issues within your industry. There will be a Labor/Management forum and a Construction forum and we are still working on the third. If you have suggestions, please contact Kelli Heflin, Scott's Liquid Gold, Inc., at kheflin@slginc.com. If you have a great breakout session idea, please let Kelli know as well.

We are again asking our membership to help us out with donations to our giveaway bag, door prizes and sponsorship fund. We have several sponsorship opportunities, including our popular relaxation station, keynote speaker, meals, conference wireless, conference program and scholarship auction. Please contact board members Staci Cannady, Simmons Manufacturing Company, at scannady@simmons.com or Tom Gallegos, Lockheed Martin, at thomas.p.gallegos@lmco.com for additional information. We are so thankful for the donations we received last year and we hope you can help us out again this year.

Our keynote speaker will be Karl Mecklenburg, a former Denver Bronco. We are also working on something fun for

the opening reception on May 5, 2010, since it will be Cinco de Mayo!

There will be four positions up for election in 2010: vice chairperson, secretary, site representative non-union site and director-at-large #1. Please submit your nomination and letter of support from your management to Nomination Chair Ray Cartwright, Tri-State Generation & Transmission, at rcartwright@tristategt.org by March 15, 2010. He will also have a nomination form for you to fill out. Requirements for each position are listed at www.region8vpppa.org.

Because we are tracking conference costs a bit more diligently, please register early for the conference. It really does help us cut down on unnecessary expenses. We are looking forward to a great conference for our last year at the Sheraton. Please take some time to thank the hotel staff while you are at the conference.

Simmons Manufacturing will be hosting an SGE class April 13-15, 2010. If your company is interested in hosting a future class, please contact Brad Baptiste, Region VIII VPP manager, and he will get you the information you need.

Check out the Region VIII Web site often for conference information and other important announcements! It's not too early to start thinking about the 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference in Orlando and the fantastically fun Chapter Welcome Reception!

In the meantime, stay warm, be safe and we will see you in May in Lakewood, Colo.

Contributed by Region VIII Board of Directors
Chair Kelli Heflin, Scott's Liquid Gold, Inc.,
Denver, Colo.

REGION IX

>> AZ, CA, HI, NV

I am writing this update from the San Francisco State Building. Right now, there is a Cal/OSHA VPP workshop, titled "How to move your workplace safety to the next level," taking place. The Region IX VPPPA Chapter has teamed up with

the Cal/OSHA VPP team to put on this seminar. Over 140 people are registered for the seminar. This is the largest turn-out for a Cal/VPP seminar! In this economy, this is a fantastic sign that many companies are still focused on employees' safety and looking at ways to take their safety programs to the next level.

Sure there are companies that are still looking to reduce overhead, but the turn-out at this seminar is a hopeful sign that many companies realize one of the key ways to reduce cost is to have a solid safety and health management system and a low incident rate. We all know that statistics have shown that those companies with a strong safety program more often than not have higher production numbers and a higher level of quality for the products they produce.

In California, the Cal/OSHA VPP team has been busy: there are 10 new applications, 10 sites have received VPP approval and 12 sites have been re-approved. All of this activity could not take place without strong Special Team Members assisting the Cal/OSHA team in completing these onsite evaluations.

Peter Wilsey, Compliance Assistance specialist for federal OSHA, reported to me that two new applications are pending. Pete said that he has conducted one re-evaluation of USPS Midway in San Diego, Calif., and one corporate evaluation of Jacob Engineering in Pasadena, Calif. Pete is also preparing for a VPP evaluation at DCK Pacific in Guam.

Leading indicators is a term we often use in the safety profession when we are looking at what is driving performance. Based on what we have seen in recent months, the leading indicators around the region is the VPP process, which is both holding steady and in some states continuing its growth with more sites obtaining VPP site approval.

There is a great deal of upcoming activity in the region such as the 2010 Region IX VPPPA Chapter Conference in Newport Beach in March. You can find more

information on this and other training sessions on the Region IX VPPPA Web site at <http://regionixvpppa.org>. Check back regularly for updates on what is happening in the region.

Contributed by Region IX VPPPA Board of Directors member Morgan LeBlanc, CHMM, West Coast Operations, Constellation Wines US, Madera, Calif.

REGION X

>> AK, ID, OR, WA

The 16th Annual Region X VPPPA Chapter Conference will be held at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska, May 11-13, 2010. The theme is "VPP – North to Alaska!" This will be the first time the regional conference will be held in Alaska and we are all very excited about it! What a beautiful location! We have many great workshops and sessions planned, as well as pre-conference activities. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend! For more information about the Region X VPPPA Chapter Conference, please visit our Web site at www.regionxvpppa.org or contact the conference section at Oregon OSHA at (503) 378-3272, oregon.conferences@state.or.us or www.orosha.org.

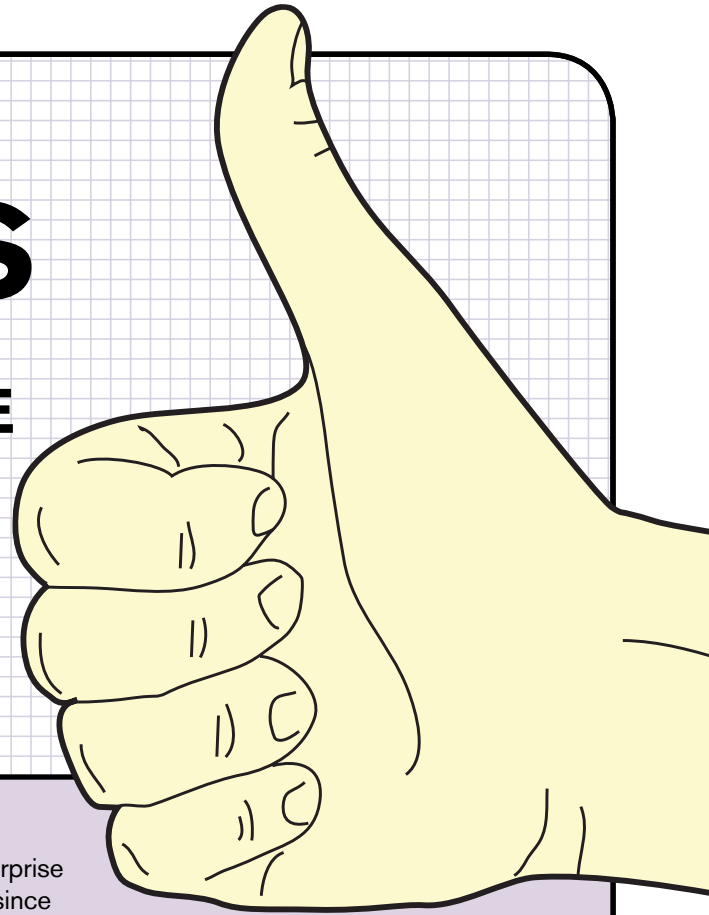
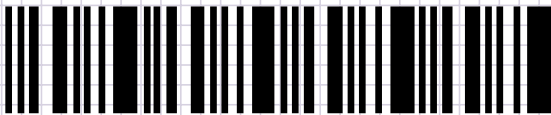
Federal OSHA

Region X has done two re-evaluation visits in the last couple of months and one new site is in the process of national office review. We are working with three employers who are in the process of submitting applications. We had two VPP Star sites withdraw in December. The first of the year will bring more re-approval visits. Federal OSHA has a goal of using SGEs on every re-evaluation and initial visit for fixed establishments, mobile workforce and corporate sites. For information about federal OSHA VPP in Region X, contact Steve Gossman, Consultation Program manager, OSHA, at (206) 553-5930 or Gossman.Steve@dol.gov.

Contributed by Region X Board of Directors
Director-at-Large Bill Rippon, Georgia-Pacific
Gypsum LLC, Tacoma, Wash. ★

THREE TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ERGONOMICS INITIATIVE

BY JOSH KERST >> CPE,
VICE PRESIDENT OF HUMANTECH



Leading companies have historically developed comprehensive ergonomics programs well before they considered entering the Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) management system, but the degree to which they have been able to successfully sustain ergonomic excellence through the years varies widely. The simple reality is that it's often much harder to sustain your goals over time than it is to initially attain them (think weight loss). In my previous VPPPA conference workshop, we addressed the basic question, "What common elements have successful companies utilized to make their ergonomics initiatives really work?"

To help answer this question, our organization, Humantech, conducted a benchmarking study targeted at companies with established, mature ergonomics initiatives. The review focused on those activities that were standardized across participating businesses and we identified the common threads that companies used in achieving ergonomic excellence. Four criteria were used to define ergonomic excellence within the study. First

was that the company's enterprise goals are regularly met; but since goals can vary from company to company, our definition also included a second criterion for ergonomics effectiveness (significantly reduces ergonomics-related injuries); a third element focused on efficiency (gets the job done with reasonable use of resources); and the final criterion evaluated sustainability (gains are lasting, not just one-time improvements).

Overexertion: The Leading Cause of Disabling Injuries

In 2006, Liberty Mutual identified overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying) and work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSD) as the leading causes of the most serious disabling injuries (i.e. those injuries resulting in six or more days away from work). Overexertion accounts for more than a quarter of all injuries and costs U.S. organizations over \$13 billion annually. With statistics like these, it seems hard to believe that companies wouldn't want to create a lasting program to address ergonomic risks and

protect their workforce. In addition, it's well documented that designing a safe work environment can also provide the added benefits of greater productivity, reduced employee turnover and higher product quality.

Many organizations have started down the path of implementing an ergonomics process but few have had continual success throughout the journey. The results obtained from the benchmarking analysis found that truly successful organizations get measureable results. WMSD injury rates and lost workdays were typically reduced an average of 80 percent from the time of program inception. These companies were also able to simultaneously drive their workers' compensation costs down by an average of 70 percent while improving productivity by double digits and retaining employees. The key to their success lies in their preparation toward that journey.

1

KNOW WHERE YOU ARE BEFORE YOU PLAN YOUR JOURNEY

A key activity that companies used to ensure success was to first develop a clear understanding of the present state of ergonomics at their site. Three broad categories were created to describe their perspective of the current ergonomic condition:

REACTIVE: Implementing ergonomic improvements when an employee is injured or specific complaints are received.

PROACTIVE: Identifying opportunities to reduce ergonomic risk factors, either through continuous improvement activities or more systematic risk-reduction efforts.

ADVANCED: Removing barriers to performance and safety when selecting tools, equipment, organizing work areas and designing products.

We use the term “Ergonomics Maturity Curve” to help categorize these conditions and emphasize the primary communities involved during each phase. The net effect of this step is that organizations are able to share this analysis with top management, ask for endorsement for a preferred course of action and subsequently develop a clear roadmap for success. That roadmap typically includes: who should be involved; what should be done; when their involvement is needed; and how the organization will measure advancement along the curve. These actions should all be completed before ever starting the ergonomics initiative to best ensure effectiveness.

Another important ingredient in this planning phase is the concurrent development of a communication strategy that proactively answers why the company is doing this, forecasts the activities and communities that will be involved and expected timing and, lastly but most importantly, answers the “what’s in it for us” question.

2

UTILIZE YOUR COMPANY'S STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

Another identified common thread is that successful initiatives utilize management systems or improvement processes that were extremely familiar and comfortable to people within the organization. Too often, ergonomics activities involve unique or isolated efforts within engineering, safety or human resources and are not integrated into regular business operations where the organization’s competencies reside. Ergonomics is an improvement process and, like many processes, success can occur if they are systematically driven and aligned within ongoing activities. The benefit from this approach is that leaders (managers, team leaders, supervisors, union personnel or other committee leaders) and employees are usually more engaged when proven methods and known systems are used.

The most common integration of ergonomics within existing systems involves blending continuous improvement activities (Kaizen), ergonomic risk management and design for assembly as a harmonized approach. Benchmarked companies that leveraged ergonomics in this manner combined existing problem-solving skills (Six Sigma – DMAIC, 5S, etc.) with best ergonomics practices in order to maximize efficient use of resources.

3

DEPLOY TEAM-DRIVEN WORKPLACE IMPROVEMENTS WITH A DATA GUIDED APPROACH

People tend to resist change if they are not involved in the process. Many companies have created a pull for ergonomic improvements by using a team approach that includes the beneficiaries and stakeholders in the outcome. Ergonomics is a hands-on, eyes-on activity that primarily occurs at the shop floor or 30" level and represents the area where we regularly interact with parts, equipment and other people. Remember that ergonomics is an improvement process, not an assessment process. Successful organizations have avoided the trap of assigning one group of people the task of completing ergonomic risk assessments and another group of people the task of reducing risk.

Noted business guru W. Edwards Deming emphasized the value of employee input by saying, "Remove barriers that rob the hourly worker of his right to pride of workmanship." Good ideas don't come from machines, they come from people, and by engaging the "improvers" in assessing ergonomic risk from the start, they can help transform the shop floor into a compelling place to work.

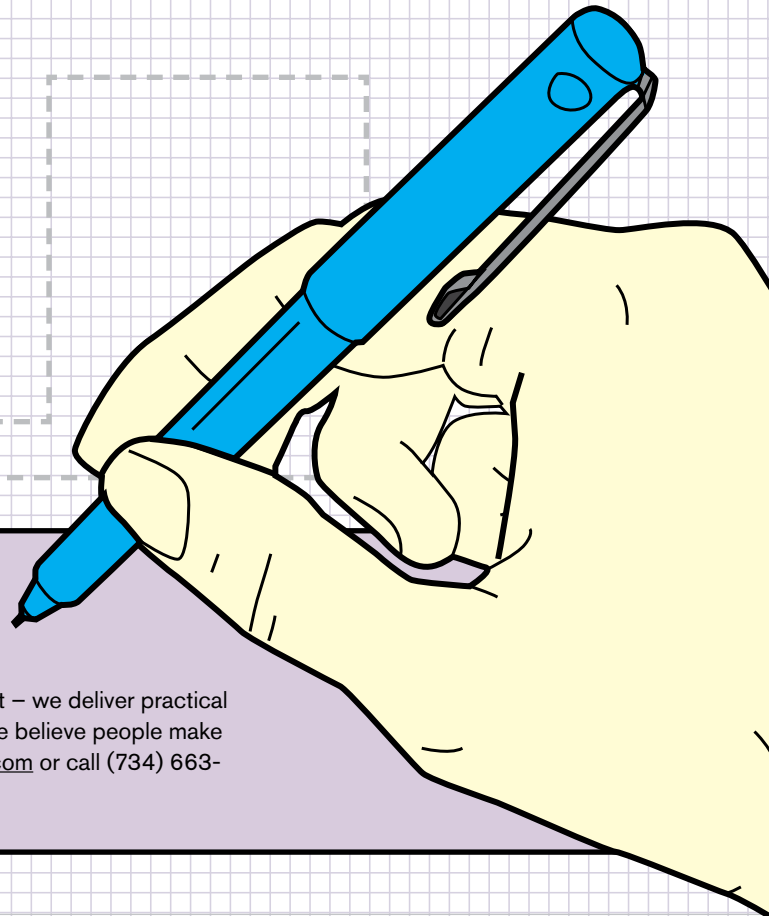
Team-driven workplace improvements should be guided by data (presence of risk factors, discomfort, injuries, etc.) in order to avoid a hit-and-miss approach. Resources should be focused on quantified data-based problems that look for the root causes of the situation. Once a problem is identified and analyzed, specific potential solutions should be evaluated objectively for their effectiveness and for the team engaged in evaluating and selecting the best solutions using problem-solving tools (see Tip #2). When people are directly involved in the ergonomics process, the likelihood of sustaining it also increases.

In Conclusion

Successful companies embrace ergonomics as a business process, not a program. The three tips that were identified in our benchmarking study should help to ensure that your initiative process is effective, efficient and sustainable. There should be no finite starting or end points of the ergonomics effort, rather it should be a deliberate, smooth integration within your existing systems to minimize stress on the organization and improve buy-in. This integration can help improve the perception that ergonomics is the way business is done – rather than this year's focus, a flavor of the month – and ultimately it will yield better results and support. ★

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Josh Kerst, CPE, is an ergonomics engineer and vice president with Humantech. By combining the science of ergonomics and our unique 30-Inch View® – where people, work and environment intersect – we deliver practical solutions that impact safety, quality and productivity. At Humantech, we believe people make productivity happen. For additional information, visit www.humantech.com or call (734) 663-6707. Josh Kerst can be contacted directly at jkerst@humantech.com.



FEELIN' GOOD, WORKIN' GOOD ERGONOMICALLY AT JOHNSON SPACE CENTER



BY PENNEY STANCH, MPH >> OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SPECIALIST, NASA/JOHNSON SPACE CENTER, CLINICAL SERVICES BRANCH; AND SHEILLA GOLDBERG, MS >> MANAGER, HAZARD COMMUNICATION/TRAINING DEPARTMENT, NASA/JOHNSON SPACE CENTER, CLINICAL SERVICES BRANCH

We didn't know it in years past, but few things bolster productivity, employee well-being and, yes, good spirits, as much as ergonomically sound practices and Johnson Space Center (JSC) has been a real proving ground for their value. So, how did we get there?

The Big Picture

Ergonomic issues may be addressed in several ways: compliance-driven, expert-driven or culture-driven. At JSC, we've found that a combination of expert-driven and culture-driven approaches have worked best.

The ergonomics program at JSC began in 1994 and since that time, the Center has sought to aggressively address ergonomic issues. The JSC ergonomics program uses a three-pronged approach: education and training; workstation evaluations; and medical intervention.

Attention is given to education and training. Two instructor-led classes and two computer-based training classes on computer and occupational ergonomics are available to employees. These classes teach employees how to adjust their own workstations or where to go for assistance.

One of the most helpful forms of assistance is the ergonomic evaluation staged by either Occupational Health Department (OHD) staff or by a contractor ergonomics specialist. Evaluations of personal workstations use design principles to minimize ergonomic risk factors. Many contractors at JSC have their own ergonomics teams, who may be either dedicated ergonomists or a volunteer team of employees who have undergone training to perform evaluations. Evaluations by

the OHD ergonomists may be requested by the employees themselves, the employee's supervisor or the employee's safety professional. Employees may also be referred by the JSC Clinic or by their personal physician.

As a result of the evaluations, the OHD may recommend ergonomic accessories to be purchased by the employee's management. OHD also helps supervisors and facility managers to obtain needed equipment and offers a "Try Before You Buy" option to computer users. Since each directorate across JSC purchases their own accessories, this program helps prevent employees from requesting equipment that, when it is put in use, doesn't address their needs. Although accessories are provided by the employee's management, most furniture at JSC is provided by the JSC Furniture Department. This allows the OHD to obtain the proper workstations and seating for employees. Not only does this approach offer expert assistance to employees and their managers, but the ergonomics culture at JSC has concurrently become quite robust – exceptionally so.

JSC employees also have the advantage of an exceptionally aggressive "Clinic First" policy, which encourages employees to come to the JSC Clinic at the first sign of discomfort that might be related to the design of their workstations. In cases of a musculoskeletal disorder, the JSC Clinic may refer employees to their personal physician or specialist for further evaluation and treatment.

Needs of a Changing Workforce

Today, not only is our equipment changing, our workforce is changing as well. Statistics show that our workforce is aging. As the

baby boomers reach their 60s, the impact on the workplace is evident. Today over 40 percent of the workforce is 60 years of age or older and this percentage will only increase in the future.

More women than men are represented in these numbers because more women have entered the workforce and because they statistically live longer. Another factor is that, as baby boomers retire, they are replaced by a smaller number of employees born between the early '60s to the late '70s. Understandably, this "graying" of our workforce is creating many challenges for employers.

The traditional office setup, including keyboards, monitors and mice can pose additional issues for older employees. The "comfortable" position of the monitor can be affected by decreased visual acuity. Employees who have difficulty seeing may need to move their monitors closer to view them comfortably. Employees wearing bifocals may require that their monitor be positioned lower since using the monitor at normal height, or eye-level, may lead to neck and shoulder discomfort. The old assumption that the monitor should be higher than the keyboard is no longer true in this case. Older employees may also find that they need additional lumbar, arm and shoulder support. Moreover, as workers age, they may need better lighting in their work areas to be able to comfortably read documents without eyestrain.

While the aging workforce is an obvious consideration, have you thought about the size of employees? That has changed dramatically since the 1950s. Men are getting taller. While a number of the women are taller as well, many are still 5 feet and shorter.

Another aspect not to be overlooked is the increased girth of people. Obesity is not just a subject of medical news – it exists in the workplace and puts new demands on furniture accommodations. Now chairs must be purchased that work not only for the employee who is shorter than 5 feet tall and weighs less than 120 pounds, but chairs must also be available that can support employees who are taller than 6 feet and weigh more than 250 pounds. Work surfaces must accommodate this huge range of employees as well.

As we get older, we often develop medical conditions that increase our susceptibility to cumulative trauma disorders. These conditions may include arthritis, thyroid conditions, previous injuries and increased body weight. Maintaining a healthy body can help reduce the effects of these conditions.

JSC encourages fitness through its very aggressive Wellness Program. This program boasts a state-of-the-art exercise facility with dedicated staff to provide exercise classes, as well as individual exercise prescriptions. In addition, the program includes a full-time nutritionist who conducts classes on eating healthy, as well as offers individual nutrition consultations.

Changes in Equipment

At JSC, an increasing number of employees are using laptops as their primary workstation, which creates a number of new ergonomics concerns. With a laptop, it is impossible to position both the keyboard and monitor at levels that will encourage neutral postures. For this reason, laptop users at JSC are encouraged to use external keyboards, mice and monitors that can be positioned independently, at the appropriate heights and distances from the user.

Environmental vs. Ergonomic

A new issue coming up at JSC is the push to move to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for all new construction. Five buildings at JSC have either been recently renovated or are in the process of being renovated, using the LEED criteria. As use of furniture that is low-emitting and/or made of recycled materials will contribute points toward the LEED certification, this has created the need to purchase new, environmentally friendly furnishings for these buildings.

The JSC Occupational Health Group has traditionally worked closely with the Furniture Department to meet ergonomic requirements in the field. Recently the group began working with the JSC Procurement Office to incorporate ergonomic requirements when developing specifications for furniture being purchased for these LEED buildings. As a result, ergonomics are incorporated as early as possible in the process to ensure that workstations can be adjusted to accommodate the widest range of employees. A side benefit is that

this will also save money not only for the purchase of furniture but also in the need for rework of problems arising when work surfaces are either too high or too low to accommodate employees comfortably.

JSC also tries to work with the Logistics Group when planning new construction on installations of electricity, telephone lines and computer leads to ensure that all equipment is placed in locations that will offer the greatest comfort to employees.

Being proactive and meeting with all stakeholders, including Information Technology (IT) and the final users, has the positive benefits of addressing ergonomics concerns in the design stages rather than trying to correct existing problems. The ultimate goal of course is to avoid an MSD injury altogether instead of trying to make an injured employee healthy again.

Benefits of Ergonomic Equipment

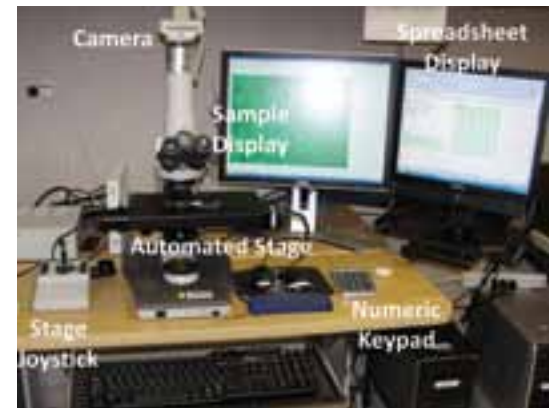
Keyboard trays with articulating arms have proved to be an easy way for many employees to adjust the heights of their keyboards and mice themselves. Adjustable monitor risers and monitor holders with articulating arms are also very helpful in allowing employees to position their monitors at the correct height to encourage neutral head/neck postures. Equipment orders for LEED buildings will include both of these items for workstations.

Ergonomics Issues at Non-Computer Workstations

Although most of the 10,000 civil service and contractor employees at JSC work only at office workstations, JSC does have other types of work that create ergonomics issues.

Work at NASA facilities at Ellington Field includes aircraft repair and maintenance. In addition, mock-ups of equipment used on the International Space Station and Space Shuttle are constructed and used in buildings at JSC. There are also a number of small labs and machine shops across the Center. These operations offer some unique opportunities for innovative ergonomics solutions.

Another challenge is found in the many microscopy workstations used for research and sampling operations at JSC. Unfortunately, in one case an employee developed an MSD from extensive use of a



microscope to repeatedly perform an intense type of analysis. The analytical method required fine movements of the stage and analysis of multiple fields within a single sample. The knobs for both advancing the stage and for focusing forced both arms into unsupported positions. The analyst had to repeatedly pull away from the microscope to record readings from each field on a notepad. Review of the analyst's procedure and the equipment resulted in several upgrades. The manual stage was replaced with an automated one driven by controls consisting of buttons and a joystick. A camera was added to the microscope to display the field on a computer monitor. The notepad and pencil were replaced with a numeric keypad and a spreadsheet to record the readings. The spreadsheet is displayed on a second monitor adjacent to the microscope's monitor. This allows the analyst to view the sample, focus and advance the stage using the automated controls and record the results with the keypad using the two monitors side by side, without having to repeatedly move between the eyepiece and the notepad. These modifications should prevent future injuries and have already helped to streamline the processing of samples.

A Commitment to Improvement

JSC Center Management, from the center director to line management and supervisors, are completely committed to eliminating ergonomic risks to the greatest extent possible. Working in tandem is a NASA-wide ergonomics group composed of safety and health professionals from all NASA Centers throughout the country that meets through video teleconferences to discuss ergonomics issues at the different Centers and what solutions have been effective. ★



IMPLEMENTING ERGONOMICS IS NOT IMPORTANT... IT'S CRITICAL

BY GARY ORR, PE, CPE >> ORR CONSULTING



In the early 1990s nearly every article and presentation on ergonomics started with a definition. Everyone who had an interest must have seen the definition of ergonomics repeated again and again, over and over. After almost a decade since the OSHA ergonomics standard was rescinded, maybe starting with the definition of ergonomics is relevant again: Ergonomics – the study of work.

The definition of work is simple: work = force x distance. A job is harder to define, but it makes no more sense to define a job without considering ergonomics, than to design a plane without considering aerodynamics. There are research ergonomists who have spent a career

defining the spine at work or the shoulder, wrist, muscles, etc. The practitioner uses the research to define the workplace, tools, methods, equipment, work hours, training, maintenance and work organization for a particular job. Defining the right workplace is not easy. Consider Dr. John White's right definition of the material handling aspect of a job:

Right definition of material handling – providing the right amount of the right material, in the right condition, in the right sequence, in the right orientation, at the right place, at the right time, and at the right cost by using the right methods.

– Dr. John White

Ergonomics practitioners use the best available research and overlay it on the culture of the organization to create safe, efficient jobs. Applying the science of ergonomics to a job and company culture takes time and patience. There are some maxims ergonomics practitioners use to successfully apply the principles of ergonomics.

MAXIMS FOR ERGONOMICS PRACTITIONERS

- 1. Implementation of ergonomics** is successful when you work with people as opposed to doing ergonomics to people. Workers who do the job know what they want and with ergonomics information they can explain what they need.
- 2. Design jobs for the user;** the design team is not the user.
- 3. The science of ergonomics is not common sense,** but the application of ergonomics should be common sense.
- 4. Ergonomic changes fit the job to the person,** not the person to the job. The smell of analgesics, bottles of anti-inflammatories and body braces are signs that ergonomics is lacking.

SUCCESSFUL ERGONOMICS
PROCESSES ARE MORE LIKE
WASHING YOUR HANDS TO PREVENT
THE FLU VERSUS A FLU SHOT

5. Design jobs for the workers you have, not the workers you wish you had. Ergonomics is critical to sustaining a diverse and aging workforce.

6. The job the supervisor did two years ago is not the same job the employees do today.

7. People modify their jobs and improve the ergonomics – listen to them. Look for and improve worker modifications.

8. The work set-up for a pilot project is not right for production volumes. Folding chairs are for waiting rooms, not jobs.

9. Think macro, act incremental. Develop a plan that includes ergonomics at an organization level, but each ergonomic change, no matter how small, improves the job.

10. Ergonomics is a process, not a program.

Designing the job right takes a lot of effort, so organizations want to do it once and move on to other issues. The demands on business are constantly changing, so businesses can not stay put for long. As business changes, jobs change too. People who do the job are the best source of information on necessary changes; nothing new there. However, the people who do the job can only discuss appropriate changes if they know the rules of work – ergonomics.

In Scenario 1 of the example above, several groups in the organization review the data, survey the job, review the alternatives and issue recommendations. The steps consume time and money before anything changes on the job. Often the review does not involve the worker and there are no lasting changes to the job. In Scenario 2, the person who does the job and supervisor discuss what is needed, find something that can be implemented and move on.

Both scenarios are used to apply ergonomics to the job, but only the second scenario is sustainable for large organizations. Organizations that find themselves repeating Scenario 1 over and over usually decide ergonomics is too resource intensive. Organizations in Scenario 2, find that ergonomics is transparent and jobs change as demands change, which improves efficiency and minimizes musculoskeletal disorders.

FOR EXAMPLE...



TASK BEFORE



TASK NOW

TASK BEFORE: Printed inserts came to the worker in a hamper with a bottom that would come up as the inserts were unloaded.

TASK NOW: The printing department was closed and the inserts now come from another facility on a pallet.


SCENARIO 1: Without ergonomics information: The person who does the job describes how the pallets are causing back pain and suggests that the supplier should use the old hampers.

SCENARIO 2: With ergonomics information: As the pallets arrive, the worker alerts the supervisor that the inserts need to be at waist height, options include the old hamper, pallet lift and pallet stand.

The elements of an ergonomics program were identified in the 1980s. What makes ergonomics successful is commitment to a process and participation of the people who do the work. Consequently, successful ergonomics processes are more like washing your hands to prevent the flu versus a flu shot. It has to become a habit if it is going to work. There is nothing wrong with a shot in the arm to increase awareness of ergonomics and to demonstrate management leadership, but after a year the effort has worn off and needs another shot. People at all levels of the organization want to work smarter and they can if they are taught how to apply the rules of work and have the opportunity to make ergonomic changes to their jobs.

Can a person step in the same river twice?
No. It is neither the same river nor the same person. ★





Measured Accountability

BY DAVID LYNN >> CSP, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER, CORPORATE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL, FLUOR CORPORATION

An exceptional game plan gives you the insight to win, but you don't know who won without a score. Build the scorecard for individual contributors. A strategic system to evaluate people will drive improvement and instill accountability. A score gives you a method to integrate urgency into an individual's daily expectations. A scorecard measures on a scale of good to bad.

My three sons Caleb, Jacob and Luke provide an example of the importance of keeping score. If you ask them how they are doing in school, what response do you think I get from little boys? They communicate in one word sentences: good, fine, okay. What does that tell me? Does that give me a good description of their performance in school? No. If I want to know my boys' performance in school, I have to look at their work. Every test has a score. Every project has a grade. Every report card has a final outcome. Their true performance is captured in their grades and their grades reflect their effort. My urgency and expectations about their grades influences their performance. The rewards and consequences I provide for grades motivate my boys to perform and I can't accept vague general answers. I have to care about the details if I want Caleb, Jacob and Luke to reach their potential.

Weak safety cultures rely on inadequate responses to define safety success. When I worked with OSHA as a compliance officer in the early 1990s, I inspected over 200 sites and I experienced inadequate descriptions of safety performance. When I asked sites to describe their safety performance, I received vague responses: fine, okay, good. Superficial descriptions of safety performance are common because we do not always measure the detailed leading indicators that promote

success. Strong safety cultures avoid these traps. They keep score on critical leading indicators and they take an interest in the active details. Successful safety cultures do not accept mediocrity.

Accountability is essential to prevent injuries but what does it mean to hold someone accountable for safety and keep score on their performance? This is often a deficient part of safety programs because leaders wait until something bad happens before they feel the need to hold anyone accountable. A negative event is too late to hold someone accountable for safety. The answer to accountability is simple: Set standards for the people and track the results.

For example, if audits are required, track audit participation and measure the quality of audits. If an organization values sustained corrective action, track the number of repeat observations on each audit. If a program requires supervisors to perform pre-shift safety meetings, track the quality and participation in the process. The records become a performance measurement. Tracking prompts rewards for achievement and consequences for failure to meet standards. True accountability means that if you do not meet your standard, you use progressive motivation to drive your desired results. The consequences can include termination. Remember, this is life or death. You cannot have a soft reaction for leaders that do not meet safety standards. This is a perfect opportunity to instill expectations, urgency and discipline into your program.

If your organization does not keep detailed individual scores for safety, you will experience an adjustment period when you introduce the idea. I learned this lesson the hard way. At a previous employer, I developed a scorecard that

tracked management participation in four categories. I tracked audit participation, safety team support, safety meeting completion and safety procedure reviews. Each supervisor and manager had responsibilities and I documented their performance. I gave them a score for each item and I rolled up the scores into a final score. Then, I stack-ranked each leader from the best to the worst. I highlighted the top 10 percent in green and the bottom 10 percent in red.

After the report was complete, I distributed the report to the leadership team. The process sounds reasonable, right? The score showed who followed through with their responsibilities and who did not. That is the type of accountability you need because it tells you who deserves a reward and who needs motivation. After all, safety is a condition of employment. You have to know the score and the score has to mean something.

The problem I encountered was my manager was in the red! How do you hide your boss's performance? The system was awesome because it measured management commitment with visible tools that are proven to drive safety success. You could not hide behind vague performance answers: good, fine, okay. However, the backlash was dangerous. When my manager reviewed the results, he came to my office in a bad mood! Needless to say, he expressed his urgency with my approach. He was not happy and my scorecard had a short lifespan. Somehow, I managed to keep my job.

Where did I go wrong? Is scoring real safety performance bad? My mistake was I did not communicate the purpose and intent of the scorecard well and I embarrassed important people. The moral of the story is: You have to develop your scorecards as a team to gain the greatest value. Your team cannot fear the score. The goal is for leaders to embrace measurement techniques and play to win. The prize is a quality of life for your employees.

Since my initial scorecard experience, I have implemented similar systems with success. Buy-in from the appropriate parties is the key to success. Stack-ranking performance in critical safety systems identifies your weaknesses and it sparks a sense of responsibility in those that do not want to finish in the red. ★

Safety Performance Scorecard

✓	STEP 1 (WEEK ONE)		
	Where does an organization start?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 	<p>Assemble a Rapid Deployment Team (RDT) to develop your scorecard.</p> <p>Choose three processes with the greatest potential to drive performance.</p> <p>Develop a scorecard that differentiates the good from the bad.</p> <p>Set acceptable and unacceptable standards.</p> <p>Determine what the uncompromised rewards and consequences are for personal scores.</p> <p>CRITICAL INFORMATION POINT: Your accountability scorecard will succeed if you gain buy-in from your leadership team.</p>
✓	STEP 2 (WEEK TWO)		
	How do you communicate accountability?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 	<p>The RDT will communicate the purpose and intent of the scorecard to all leadership employees.</p> <p>Communicate the content of the plan, start dates, measurable goals, intent and value. No excuses and no explanations.</p> <p>The RDT will develop a methodical communication strategy to promote the scores.</p> <p>Treat the scores like you would treat any other site measurement.</p> <p>CRITICAL INFORMATION POINT: Leaders will not take the scorecard seriously until they understand how you score their performance.</p>
✓	STEP 3 (WEEK THREE)		
	How do you institute accountability?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 	<p>Measure your leadership performance in this phase.</p> <p>Post the performance and re-communicate the process.</p> <p>Use this period to coach slow learners and prepare them for the rewards and consequences.</p> <p>Answer questions about how scores are calculated.</p> <p>Managers should explain why employees are at the bottom of the list and help deficient employees put together a plan to improve.</p> <p>Managers should have a serious one-on-one counseling session with all employees in the bottom 10 percent each month.</p> <p>CRITICAL INFORMATION POINT: Establish the authority of your scorecard with clear consequences for substandard performance and rewards for excellence.</p>



VPP INNOVATION A Bright Idea

[PICTURED] Steven T. Anderson, project manager, James L. Spruill, Jr., SGE, plant manager, and Brian K. Wallace, maintenance technician (from left to right); pictured with VPPPA Chairman Dave Jackson, represented GE Water Technologies Mobile Plant and accepted the VPP Innovation Award at the conference.

BY LAURIE MONTANUS >> COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH COORDINATOR, VPPPA, INC.

Behind every solution to a new problem there is a key ingredient: innovation. Without innovation, we would have a hard time trying to solve a difficult problem that requires a creative solution. The field of occupational safety and health also needs new, innovative ideas to keep America's workforce safe. This is why VPPPA recognizes those who think outside the box with the VPP Innovation Award, one of the three prestigious VPPPA Annual Awards.

The VPPPA Annual Awards consist of the VPP Innovation Award, VPP Outreach Award and the Safety and Health Outreach Award. They are designed for member sites and individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the mission of VPPPA during the previous year. The VPP Innovation Award goes to those who have developed an innovation, encouraged others to adopt new approaches or used a creative solution to a safety and health problem.

When General Electric Co. Water Technologies, Mobile Water, in Saint Peters, Mo., was faced with a difficult and hazardous problem, they pooled together all of their resources to come up with a creative, technical solution.

The problem evolved from the site's water treatment equipment, which included small pressure vessels (five feet diameter by six

feet tall) with elliptical manways. This tight space forced workers to enter and exit the tanks hands-first and their old harnesses were not conducive to this activity.

The use of rescue wristlets was a better choice for entering/exiting the tanks and would be safer for GE employees. Yet, there was still the problem that these traditional rescue wristlets did not quite work with the confined space. "When we tested them, we found out that wristlets of this design basically have the entrants arms tied together, which significantly affected their ability to perform the work that we needed to do inside the tank," said James Spruill, plant manager of the site. This not only impeded the work process, but also led to safety concerns.

At this point, Spruill worked with Yates Gear to come up with prototype samples that could be used in the small tanks. The maintenance crew then tested the prototypes and identified a need to contain the ropes so as not to interfere with the work they were performing. As a result, Spruill designed a breakaway Velcro strap that would keep the rope out of the employees' way. Once the new design was figured out, all the plant needed to do was find somebody to manufacture the wristlets.

"If you instill a culture of 'boundary-less' behavior at your site – where idea

submission from every level is not only encouraged, but sought after – you will be surprised at the innovative ideas that will surface," related Spruill of his site's emphasis on allowing everybody to share ideas. "They may or may not be award-winning ideas, but they will certainly enhance the performance at your site and give the employees something of which they can be proud." It is this encouragement that allowed the plant to develop their award-worthy wristlets.

Members of the GE Water Technologies Mobile Water Plant received their award during the Opening General Session at the 25th Annual National VPPPA Conference in San Antonio, Texas, and were honored at the Awards Reception for their innovation in keeping workers safe. When asked about the awards application process, Spruill commented that the experience was "easy and trouble free."

Information on the Innovation Award, VPP Outreach Award and Safety and Health Outreach Award can be found on the VPPPA Web site at www.vpppa.org/Programs/awards.cfm. The Annual Awards' submission deadline is May 3, 2010. For further questions, please contact the Membership Department at (703) 761-1146. ★



ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN CONSTRUCTION: **Ready for VPP?**

BY CHRIS MATTHEWSON, CHST >> COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE
SPECIALIST, U.S. DEPT. OF LABOR, OSHA, REGION VIII



A Special Government Employee (SGE) on a VPP team, a company safety director or a sub-contractor safety director observe an electrician at work. How do they know if the electrician is working safely? What questions should they ask? What should they pay attention to as part of their observation?

I have worked for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for 17 years as a compliance officer and in outreach as a compliance assistance specialist. Before that, I was an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) electrician for 14 years. I have participated in VPP evaluations for nine years. The combination of these job experiences helps me assist others in the VPP evaluation process, especially in the electrical field.

The biggest change I have encountered over the last 30 plus years is the culture change of “working energized.” Did I work on energized parts as an electrician in the 1970s? Yes, it was the culture. An electrician was expected to work on energized parts until the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 70E began to address the hazards of arc flash, arc blast and electrical shock. OSHA standards state that electricians shall work de-energized unless it is not feasible or a greater hazard.

OSHA Standards 29 CFR 1910.333

+ **Note 1:** Examples of increased or additional hazards include interruption of life support equipment, deactivation of emergency alarm systems, shutdown of hazardous location ventilation equipment, or removal of illumination for an area.

+ **Note 2:** Examples of work that may be performed on or near energized circuit parts because of infeasibility due to equipment design or operational limitations include testing of electric circuits that can only be performed with the circuit energized and work on circuits that form an integral part of a continuous industrial process in a chemical plant that would otherwise need to be completely shut down in order to permit work on one circuit or piece of equipment.

I always stress the value of wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) if it is necessary to work energized. Examples of working energized are lockout/tagout and trouble shooting of energized circuits. For me, a big safety concern is electricians who work on energized parts because it is convenient and less time-consuming.

When I am a member of a VPP team and I have been assigned to review the company's and the contractor's electrical programs (ESWP – Electrical Safe Work Practice), reading them is my first step. As I review their ESWPs, I write short bullet points about the two programs and then compare them. Are there any differences (i.e.; level of clothing protection, lockout/tagout procedures)? If there are differences, I ask the company and the contractor if

and how they have addressed them. Then I confirm if the field matches the written program. Observation and interviews can determine that what is stated in the ESWP is what is being followed in the field.

It also helps to determine the relationship between the parent company and the electrical contractor. There has to be true oversight; someone from the parent company must be in charge of overseeing the contractor. This person may be the maintenance supervisor, an electrical engineer or a safety director, who has proper training in order to tell if the electrical contractor is following their ESWP. Training and instructional seminars should be listed in the ESWP along with the contractor's training requirements and disciplinary procedures. The overseeing person has to have knowledge of PPE and needs to ascertain that the contractor addresses PPE. If the electrical insulating gloves are in a clean bag and in pristine condition, one would question if they are being used. Does he or she know if or when the contractor is working energized? Is this person knowledgeable about the ESWP of his own company and that of the contractors? Is the work finished in a "workmanlike manner"? That would mean that the finished work is level, plumb, well thought out and looks like there was a plan.

I look at the ESWP program requirements. The basic sections should include policy, purpose, scope, training and procedures. I observe how the equipment is used and its care. I look at the testing equipment (instruments used to test voltage are normally a category three in an industrial environment), documentation (i.e.; energized work permit, rubber goods) and determine who is responsible for the ESWP's requirements.

Questions should be asked of the company's safety director to ensure that he/she has the necessary technical knowledge, networks with experienced people and has resources available to accomplish the goal.

Safety is the key for all workers. OSHA's regulations must be followed when

deciding what parts can be worked energized. Remember, if any part needs to be worked on while energized (i.e. lockout/tagout and trouble shooting), protect employees from the three electrical hazards of shock, arc flash and arc blast by utilizing the properly rated PPE. And remember: inconvenient does not equal infeasible.

When working around exposed energized parts, workers who do not have the proper training and the properly rated PPE must stay at least four feet away to protect themselves. That also includes VPP team members. Stand to the side of uncovered panels and disconnects because this gives greater protection from potential electrical failures. Always assume that panels and disconnects are energized.

Remember: work deenergized, no matter how inconvenient it may seem. It is not IF there will be an accident while working energized, it is WHEN it will happen. If it is necessary to work on an energized part, then follow an ESWP program, having the proper training and wearing the properly rated PPE will protect workers from horrific accidents.

This article is based on "Electrical Safety in Construction: Ready for VPP?" as presented at the 25th Annual National VPPPA Conference. Please refer to the "Presentation Sharing Page" on VPPPA's Web site for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. The presentation contains 13 pictures showing electrical problems. These are electrical problems that VPP team members, sub-contractors and safety directors will be able to recognize as a problem. There are also four pictures depicting work finished in a "workmanlike manner." The PowerPoint also lists two reference books and the "OSHA General Industry Electrical Regulations" found in 29 CFR 1910 Subpart S – Electrical. ★

Important questions to ask the company's safety director:

- + Who is in charge of your ESWP?
- + Who is in charge of your contractors' ESWP?
- + How did you merge the two programs (i.e.; how do you handle lockout/tagout?)
- + Do your electricians work energized?
- + Do the contractors work energized?
- + Do you have/utilize a discipline program?



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YOUR ASSOCIATION AT WORK >>

MEET YOUR VPPPA EXECUTIVE OFFICE

R. DAVIS LAYNE >> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

How long have you been with VPPPA?

I came to work for VPPPA in January 2005. Prior to that, I worked for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) beginning in June of 1971. I started as an OSHA compliance officer in Houston, Texas, and finished my government career as OSHA's Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor. During that time, I had the opportunity to conduct VPP evaluations and see the many benefits of the program for both employers and employees. I became an enthusiastic supporter of VPP and promoted its growth to enhance worker safety and health.



★ DAVIS ★

What is your primary function?

I serve as VPPPA's Executive Director.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

Being associated with a community of workers and employers who have such a high level of commitment to workplace safety and health. Also, working with a National Office staff who has a strong commitment to VPPPA and who wants to be the best for the best has been very rewarding.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Anything related to water. I have been on many cruises, sailing on the Chesapeake Bay, sitting on the stern of my boat watching the sun go down with a refreshment in my hand, thinking, "It don't get no better than this."

What do members have to look forward to from VPPPA?

Our members can look forward to greater opportunities to access the latest in safety and health training through our national and regional conferences, publications like *The Leader*, webinars and new media.

ADAM K. PAWLUS >> ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

How long have you been with VPPPA?

I joined VPPPA on February 18, 2002, as the Communications & Outreach Coordinator. Having received my Master's degree from the University of

Georgia at Athens in Journalism and Mass Communications, I felt that the position would provide me with a well-rounded experience in communications; and that it did! Over the years, I had the opportunity to learn the nuances of many different areas, which allowed me to help during times of transition. Beyond communications, I've been able to serve the association in many capacities, including: transitioning each department, serving as the onsite conference planner, heading the budget process for two years and serving as the acting Executive Director between Paul M. Villane and R. Davis Layne.

What is your primary function?

As the Assistant Executive Director, I report to, and act on behalf of, the Executive Director Davis Layne. I am responsible for the guidance, direction and day-to-day operations of the VPPPA National Office. I support the Executive Director by supervising the VPPPA National Office staff and serve to



maintain and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of VPPPA's business efforts.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

There are too many to count! First and foremost, it's the members of the association. VPPPA supports worksites in attaining and maintaining VPP; therefore, I interact with everyone at a worksite from hourly workers to top-level management. Here is a group of people truly committed to keeping one another from harm's way. This dedication and energy can be felt at every VPPPA conference, both regional and national. I absolutely love traveling to the VPPPA regional conferences, which I find rejuvenating and they always remind me why I work for the association.



I also truly enjoy working with Davis. Beyond being an amazing boss, he is an amazing person – a mentor in the truest sense of the word. Of course, there is also our Executive Assistant Carla Esteva. Davis always points out that “Carla is the glue that holds this office together.” I completely agree and would add that she is the one that keeps us out of trouble! Hmmmm ... I might want to officially add that to her position description. I am also fortunate to work with a supportive national board of directors, dedicated chapter boards and an amazing staff.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I am proud to call the D.C. area home for the past eight years. Living in Arlington, Va., the Iwo Jima Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery are right in my backyard (figuratively, of course); Georgetown is right across Key Bridge; and on a clear day you can see the Washington Monument from my neighborhood. Over the years, I have developed great friendships with amazing people from all across the U.S. and the globe because of living here, proving to me that we are more similar than we are different.

In my free time, I love meeting up with my friends to take advantage of the social opportunities in D.C., eating at the many amazing restaurants the area has to offer and taking mini-trips to visit family and friends when I can. Since eating is one of my favorite things to do, I have also been making the gym part of my routine.

What do members have to look forward to from VPPPA?

Only the best for the best! The National Office, board of directors and chapter boards are all committed to providing the best networking and educational opportunities for our members. Despite the challenging economic times over the past two years, VPPPA continues to grow, both in membership and conference attendance, which is the true testament to the dedication of VPP sites and those worksites working toward VPP.

If I had a word of advice for our members, it would be to get involved in the association. VPPPA has many opportunities for members to shape the association: serving as a mentor, joining a committee, hosting a workshop at a VPPPA conference, contributing articles to *The Leader* magazine and running for a national or regional board position, just to name a few.

**CARLAS. ESTEVA >>
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

How long have you been with VPPPA?

It has been five years! I was hired on November 22, 2004.

What is your primary function?

As the Executive Assistant, I serve the Office of the Executive Director through the coordination of the daily operations and administrative procedures for the VPPPA National Office and by coordinating meeting logistics for the VPPPA National Board of Directors. My background in international relations opened the door for me to act as the primary contact for international VPP/VPPPA activities. Because our office is small (but mighty) and the membership continues to grow, I lend a helping hand by processing regional and national

conference registrations and answering questions regarding registration when the registrar is on travel. Last but not least, I serve as the staff liaison to the VPPPA Puerto Rico Conference Committee and the National Board of Directors Bylaws Committee.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

The most rewarding aspect of my job is working with our members; it is truly amazing to see how passionate our members are about occupational safety and health, VPP and the association.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I'm a “foodie” and everything that I do outside of work involves great food, which is my passion! In the future, my dream is to move to Europe to attend culinary school. It would be wonderful to have my own restaurant or work as a personal chef for someone with amazing taste.

I also feel fortunate because I live in one of the most beautiful cities in the world: Washington, D.C. When I was little, I had the opportunity to visit D.C. and I fell in love with the city. Now that I live here, I enjoy every second of it. Driving by the Lincoln Memorial every afternoon on my way back home from work; visiting ethnic restaurants to try new things; and having amazing conversations with total strangers about world politics are things that I don't take for granted. I enjoy everything that D.C. has to offer and I am proud to be an adopted Washingtonian!



What do members have to look forward to from VPPPA?

At VPPPA, we all keep working on ways to improve the services that we offer to our members: regional and national conferences, webinars, *Leader* issues, communications, etc. But our main goal is to keep providing the best customer service that we can to our members. After all, we're here because of the members, so they deserve the best from us. ★

Member Info Corner

>> NEWS & HOT TOPICS FROM THE LEADER
IN SAFETY AND HEALTH EXCELLENCE

IMPORTANT DEADLINES:

Conference Registration Deadlines

Super Saver: by March 8, 2010
Regular: by July 12, 2010
Late/Onsite: after July 12, 2010

VPPPA National Board of Directors

Nominations Deadline:
April 30, 2010

VPPPA Recognition Programs Deadlines

VPPPA Annual Awards:
May 3, 2010

VPPPA Safety & Health Achievement Program:
May 3, 2010

VPPPA Scholarships:
May 3, 2010

7th Annual Site-Get-a-Site Campaign

Submission Deadline:
June 30, 2010

VPPPA Conference

Join the best of the best this year in Orlando, Fla., for the 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference. We're making safety and health universal by bringing together sites with the best occupational safety and health programs to network, learn and advance as professionals in this industry.

There will be over 120 workshops on topics such as VPP, best practices, construction, ergonomics, management commitment, lockout/tagout, employee involvement, hazard prevention and control, worksite analysis and training.

Not only is there a wealth of educational opportunities, there is also an exhibit hall featuring the best new products and programs in safety and health.

The early registration deadline is right around the corner so visit www.vpppa.org to register now to receive the lowest possible registration rate.

VPPPA Recognition Programs

VPPPA is committed to providing our members with quality programs and services to recognize the extraordinary efforts of member sites and individuals through select awards and scholarships.

The **VPPPA Annual Awards** recognize association member sites and individuals that have made outstanding contributions to the mission of VPPPA during the previous year through the following awards:

- + VPP Outreach Award
- + Safety and Health Outreach Award
- + VPP Innovation Award

The **VPPPA Safety & Health Achievement Program** recognizes VPPPA members for their outstanding contributions to the safety and health arena. The program was created for hourly, non-safety and health professionals who spend no more than 25 percent of their time on safety and health related activities.

If you are interested in participating in the VPPPA Safety & Health Achievement Program, please visit www.vpppa.org/Programs/index.cfm now to find out more about the application process and get started on the workbook and the program criteria.

The **VPPPA Scholarship Program** recognizes outstanding students who are

leaders and role models in their schools and communities through the following scholarships:

- + The VPPPA June Brothers Scholarship
- + The VPPPA Stephen Brown Scholarship
- + The VPPPA William "Sully" Sullivan Scholarship
- + The DELTA/VPPPA Safety, Health and Environmental Scholarship

The deadline for the 2010 Recognition Programs is **May 3, 2010**.

Open Positions on the VPPPA National Board of Directors

Each year, in conjunction with VPPPA's annual national conference, elections are held for VPPPA National Board of Directors' positions whose terms are ending.

This year, at the 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference, there will be six open positions:

- + Chairperson
- + Treasurer
- + Labor Representative from a Site without a Collective Bargaining Agent
- + Representative from a VPP Contractor/Construction Site
- + Director-at-Large (two positions available)

Each position has a term of two years, beginning at the end of the 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference in 2010 and terminating at the 28th Annual National VPPPA Conference in 2012.

To be elected or appointed to the VPPPA National Board of Directors, a nominee must be an employee of a Full or Corporate member site in good standing with the association. Nominees must

have management commitment, which includes support to attend meetings and financial support.

For more information, please visit www.vpppa.org.

Stretch Your Brand through VPPPA Marketing Opportunities Advertising

The Leader, VPPPA's quarterly magazine, is the premier vehicle to reach the VPPPA membership and showcase your achievements as well as your products and services. Members receive 15 percent off advertising rates.

VPPPA's E-Newsletters: Stretch your brand without stretching your budget. With four e-newsletters to choose from, target your message frequently to a wider audience.

- + *Conference E-Blasts*
- + *Safety News Network*
- + *Washington Update*
- + *On the Wire*

Conference Program Advertising

Advertise in one or both of VPPPA's conference programs, featuring detailed workshop descriptions, conference agenda, speakers, VPPPA Expo 2010 directory and registration and hotel information.

E-mail Advertising@vpppa.org for additional information, availability, reservations and rates.

Sponsorship Opportunities

VPPPA invites you to become a sponsor at our 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference. Sponsorship opportunities are available to fit any budget. Visit www.vpppa.org/Conference/sponsors.cfm for more information. This is your chance to show your support of VPP and VPPPA to your fellow leaders in safety and health excellence. ★

VPPPA

QUICK REFERENCE >>

To reach the VPPPA National Office, call (703) 761-1146 or visit www.vpppa.org. To reach particular staff members, please refer to the contact information below.

R. Davis Layne Executive Director	rdlayne@vpppa.org
Adam K. Pawlus Assistant Executive Director	apawlus@vpppa.org Ext. 308
Carla S. Esteva Executive Assistant	cesteva@vpppa.org Ext. 307
Sanna Raza Communications & Outreach Director	sraza@vpppa.org Ext. 311
Laurie Montanus Communications & Outreach Coordinator	lmontanus@vpppa.org Ext. 316
Korey L. Belanger Government Affairs & Communications Specialist	kbelanger@vpppa.org Ext. 303
Sara A. Taylor Conference & Education Director	staylor@vpppa.org Ext. 306
Carlena Ford Registrar	cford@vpppa.org Ext. 304
Marisa K. Connaughton Membership & Development Manager	mconnaughton@vpppa.org Ext. 309
Katie Bendoraitis Membership & Development Coordinator	kbendoraitis@vpppa.org Ext. 315
Richelle Kelly Database & Processing Manager	rkelly@vpppa.org Ext. 312
Marianne Trinh Bookkeeper	mtrinh@vpppa.org Ext. 313



THE VPPPA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

BY KELLI HEFLIN >> VPPPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS SECRETARY,
AWARDS COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR, SCOTT'S LIQUID GOLD, INC.

College is expensive and scholarships are almost a requirement now to meet expenses. The Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association, Inc. (VPPPA) offers eight scholarships, five of which are sponsored by Delta Airlines, Inc.

The secret to getting your application past the initial screening is simple – know the requirements and purpose of the scholarship and submit a complete application package to be received by the VPPPA National Office by the deadline (this year: May 3, 2010).

There are a few general requirements for each scholarship:

- ✓ All applicants must have a GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. This GPA will be on your official transcript. If it is not at least 2.5, your application will be rejected. Please black out any information, like social security number, prior to sending.
- ✓ The application form must be completed in its entirety.
- ✓ Each application must be accompanied by a biographical statement or a current resume. If you choose to submit a biographical statement, review each scholarship to understand what we are looking for as each scholarship requires different information in this statement.
- ✓ The June Brothers, Stephen Brown and Delta Scholarships are open to both employees of a VPPPA Full member site and children or grandchildren of employees. This does not include nieces, nephews, cousins, etc.
- ✓ The Sully Sullivan Scholarship is open ONLY to employees of VPPPA Full member sites.

A FEW OF PREVIOUS YEARS'
WINNERS: BRADLEY GREEN,
LASHAUNDA GARRETT, THOMAS
BLATNIK, JEFFREY J. HOLDER,
ASHLEY HALL

June Brothers SCHOLARSHIP

The June Brothers Scholarship is for students pursuing a degree (undergraduate or graduate) in the safety/health/environmental field. This includes careers in occupational health and safety, occupational medicine, industrial hygiene, etc. In addition to the previously listed requirements, applicants are asked to provide:

- ✓ A reference letter from the VPPPA site employee to whom you are related (not their supervisor), if applicable.
- ✓ A reference letter from a high school teacher, university department head, professor or your work supervisor at your current job.

William “Sully” Sullivan SCHOLARSHIP

The William “Sully” Sullivan Scholarship is only for employees of VPPPA full member sites who have made significant contributions to the VPP program at his/her site. It is open to students (employees) pursuing a degree at a vocational school, college or university. In addition to the previously listed requirements, applicants are asked to provide:

- ✓ A reference letter relating to your VPP involvement at your site from the VPP site coordinator, operations manager, site EHS staff, OSHA, etc.

Stephen Brown SCHOLARSHIP

The Stephen Brown Scholarship is for students pursuing a degree in the trades, which is defined as an occupation requiring manual or mechanical skills. This would include electricians, plumbers, machinists, heavy equipment operators, pipefitters, etc. This scholarship is not for students pursuing degrees in the arts and sciences. In addition to the previously listed requirements, applicants are asked to provide:

- ✓ A reference letter from the VPPPA site employee to whom you are related (not their supervisor), if applicable.
- ✓ A reference letter from a high school teacher, university department head, professor or your work supervisor at your current job.

Delta SCHOLARSHIPS

The Delta Scholarships are for students who actively engage in occupational safety, health and/or environmental outreach in their schools, communities and/or workplace. Applicants may be attending a vocational school or pursuing a degree in the environmental, occupational safety and/or health field. Applicants may be from a VPPPA Full, Corporate or Associate member site. In addition to the previously listed requirements, applicants are asked to provide:

- ✓ A reference letter relating to your safety, health and/or environmental outreach activities from the VPP site coordinator, operations manager, site EHS staff, community contact, OSHA, etc.

VPPPA scholarships are generous. The 2010 scholarships are \$2,500 each and Delta will award up to five scholarships of \$2,000 each.

Attention to detail in the scholarship application process will increase your chance of making it through the preliminary selection process; and in this day and age, every bit of extra money is welcome!

Good luck to all the applicants! ★

Being Neighborly in Kentucky

BY JULIE SOBERMAN >> DEPARTMENT OF STATE, KENTUCKY CONSULAR CENTER

Adherence to the highest safety standards has been a primary focus and source of pride at the Department of State's Kentucky Consular Center over the last several years. Pride can have a tendency to spill over and it did recently when a groundswell of interest on the part of employees, the safety committee and Facility Director John Coe and Deputy Director Virginia Combs led to a decision to share safety awareness in the local community by participating for the first time in the Old Fashioned Trading Days celebration in Williamsburg, Ky. This annual September event in the foothills of Daniel Boone country brings people together for three days of good old fashioned hospitality and friendliness while showcasing Appalachian arts and crafts, food, music and culture.

The Kentucky Consular Center knows a thing or two about safety. In 2007, it became the first State Department facility – and one of the very few federal buildings – to receive the prestigious Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Star safety certification from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for excellence in worker safety and health programs. This achievement was the result of two years of close collaboration between the Office of Facilities Management Services and Consular Affairs and included making numerous safety upgrades and documenting all activities in the building's safety program in support of the VPP application process and onsite evaluation. Today, safety is a mantra throughout the facility and ongoing training programs and upgrades continue to keep workplace injuries to a minimum.

The plan for joining the Old Fashioned Trading Days festivities was to set up a small tent "theater" with wide-screen television and folding chairs to show safety videos and serve popcorn fresh

from a popcorn machine to the young and the young-at-heart who gathered round. The entertaining videos were from the Disney Education Series and included two featuring Bill Nye the Science Guy ("Safety Smart – Fire" and "Safety Smart – Electricity") and two more featuring Timon and Pumbaa from *The Lion King* geared toward a younger audience ("Safety Smart at Home" and "Safety Smart Goes Green"). There was no shortage of employee volunteers to help plan for, set up and staff the theater booth.

This year's Safety Show was a hit as evidenced by the number of goodies handed out to visitors over the course of three days: 2,300 bags of popcorn and over 200 safety flyers. The Safety Show fit in quite well with the nearby Quilting Show, Youth Talent Show, Pet Show and Vegetable Show. Aside from the good times had by all, it was a chance for a secure federal facility in a far-off place to strengthen its ties to the local community and also show its face to a broader group of visitors drawn to this popular event from neighboring communities and states. ★

What the neighbors are saying...

"Had a great time. Enjoyed interacting with the community. Met a lot of wonderful people. Looking forward to next year."

[MARGARET HILL]

"Enjoyed interacting with the community and meeting the children within the local schools."

[BRANDI CHILDERS]

"I enjoyed giving back to our community. Getting a chance to let the community know about The Kentucky Consular Center Safety Program."

[JANE HAMPTON]

"Being able to reach out to our community and the children was worth the hard work and effort."

[VICKIE CROLEY]

"Hopefully we left an inspiring thought on general safety to all who visited our booth. Looking forward to next year being bigger and better."

[RANDALL MEADORS]

[LEFT] From left: Tom Bosley, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Region IV; John Coe, director of Kentucky Consular Center; Virginia Combs, deputy director; Samuel Hudgins, facilities management Services Building Manager holding Voluntary Protection Programs recognition plaque in 2008 ceremony.

[TOP] A packed theater.

[BOTTOM] A Kentucky Consular Center volunteer who works for Serta, Inc.





CONGRATULATIONS Hunt Construction Group, Inc.

On June 8, 2009, Hunt Construction Group, Inc., became Arizona's first and only general building contractor to become a part of the Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health (ADOSH) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP). Hunt's CityScope Project for RED Development was designated as a Star site.

Getting ready for VPP included the submission of a comprehensive VPP application and over a year's worth of extensive reviews conducted by ADOSH, such as detailed examinations of Hunt's overall safety policies and programs, safety records as well as onsite evaluations of Hunt's and subcontractors' specific safety procedures at RED's CityScope Project located in downtown Phoenix.

Special guest, Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon, was in attendance during the site celebration to congratulate the Hunt team on this extraordinary honor.

[ABOVE] Hunt Construction Group achieves Arizona VPP Star.



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New & Continued Leaders

VPP Indicates a VPP site that is also a VPPPA member

NEW LEADERS* *as of print date

Congratulations to the following sites that have been honored as models of safety and health excellence through acceptance into VPP since the last issue of *The Leader*.

New Star Sites

Accurate Dispersions

HOMEWOOD, ILL.

- + 67 employees
- + Nature of Operations: manufactures water-based colorants, which are used in latex and architectural coatings

BlueLinx Co.

NEWTOWN, CONN.

- + 26 employees
- + Nature of Operations: wholesale trade of lumber and building products

BlueLinx Corporation

YAPHANK, N.Y.

- + 16 employees
- + Nature of Operations: distributes building products and cut-to-size engineered lumber

VPP Bobcat Company

BISMARCK, N.D.

- + 615 employees
- + Nature of Operations: manufactures construction machinery

Corporate Maintenance Management Services

SAINT LOUIS, MO.

- + 101 employees
- + Nature of Operations: manages contract building maintenance

VPP DTE Petcoke

VICKSBURG, MISS.

- + 8 employees
- + Nature of Operations: petroleum coke and coal pulverizing mill

VPP Electronics System Center

HANSCOM AFB, MASS.

- + 2,500 employees
- + Nature of Operations: provides facilities support services

Florida Power and Light (FPL), Boca Raton Distribution Service Center

BOCA RATON, FLA.

- + 54 employees
- + Nature of Operations: electrical utility

VPP Fred Weber, Inc., O'Fallon Asphalt Plant

O FALLON, MO.

- + 3 employees
- + Nature of Operations: produces different mixes of asphalt

Fred Weber, Inc., South Asphalt

MARYLAND HEIGHTS, MO.

- + 6 employees
- + Nature of Operations: produces different mixes of hot asphalt

General Electric

BLOOMINGTON, ILL.

- + 5 employees
- + Nature of Operations: manufactures enclosed motor starting solutions, miscellaneous relays and switches and definite purpose contactors

VPP Georgia Pacific Consumer Products (Northwest) LLC

WOODLAND, CALIF.

- + 13 employees
- + Nature of Operations: A merchandise warehouse and storage facility

Hospira Worldwide, Atlanta Distribution Center

STONE MOUNTAIN, GA.

- + 43 employees
- + Nature of Operations: delivers specialty pharmaceutical and medication globally

IBM Corporation Almaden Research Center

SAN JOSE, CALIF.
+ 875 employees
+ Nature of Operations: research on science and technology, computer science, service science and storage systems

VPP J.J. White, Inc.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.
+ 1,000 employees
+ Nature of Operations: building equipment contractors (plumbing, heating and air-conditioning)

Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC

LYNN, MASS.
+ 11 employees
+ Nature of Operations: hazardous waste, industrial cleanings and emergency response

New Merit Sites

Coors Distributing Company

DENVER, COLO.
+ 265 employees
+ Nature of Operations: malt beverage distribution

Engineered Polymer Solutions, Inc., Dba Valspar Coatings

MOLINE, ILL.
+ 139 employees
+ Nature of Operations: manufactures paints and coatings

New Star Demonstration Sites

Computer Sciences Corporation

STENNIS, MISS.
+ 151 employees
+ Nature of Operations: information technology services contractor

CONTINUED LEADERS* *as of print date

Congratulations to the following sites approved for continued VPP participation since the last issue of *The Leader*.

VPP Akzo Nobel Polymer Chemicals – Battleground Site

LAPORTE, TEXAS

Ashland Aqualon Functional Ingredients

KENEDY, TEXAS

Berry Plastics Corporation

COVINGTON, GA.

Brock Maintenance, Inc., at Wood River Refinery

BORGER, TEXAS

VPP Cargill Corn Milling North America

BLAIR, NEBR.

VPP Ciba Specialty Chemical Corporation

NEWPORT, DEL.

VPP Covanta Energy Delaware Valley

CHESTER, PA.

VPP CraftMaster Manufacturing, Inc.

TOWANDA, PA.

VPP Croda Atlas Point Plant

NEW CASTLE, DEL.

DAL Global Services

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.

DAL Global Services

COLUMBUS, OHIO

Delta Air Lines, Inc.

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.

VPP Delta Airlines – Passenger Service

COLUMBUS, OHIO

VPP DuPont, Circleville Plant

CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO

VPP Diamond Innovations, Inc.

COLUMBUS, OHIO

VPP EII, Inc., Infineum Bayway Chemical Plant

CRANFORD, N.J.

VPP E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Company

CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO

VPP E&K of Omaha, Inc.

OMAHA, NEBR.

VPP Entergy Gulf States, Inc – Sabine Plant

BRIDGE CITY, TEXAS

VPP Entergy Operations Bastrop Service Center

BASTROP, LA.

VPP Entergy Operations Terrebonne Service Center

HOUMA, LA.

VPP Entergy Operations Winnsboro Service Center

WINNSBORO, LA.

VPP Evergreen Packaging

PLANT CITY, FLA.

VPP Evonik RohMax USA, Inc.

HORSHAM, PA.

VPP Frito-Lay, Inc.

CANTON, OHIO

VPP Frito-Lay, Inc.

ORLANDO, FLA.

VPP Hendrickson Trailer Suspension Systems

CANTON, OHIO

High Steel Structures, Inc.

LANCASTER, PA.

VPP Honeywell Aerospace Sarasota Cabin Products

SARASOTA, FLA.

VPP Honeywell International, Inc.

OLATHE, KAN.

VPP International Paper

AMARILLO, TEXAS

Jacobs ESCG Facilities at NASA-JSC

HOUSTON, TEXAS

VPP Kimberly Clark Corporation
Neenah Nonwoven Facility

NEENAH, WIS.

VPP KRAFT Foods, Inc.

KIRKSVILLE, MO.

VPP National Semiconductor Corporation

ANNAPOLIS JUNCTION, MD.

VPP Norfolk Naval Shipyard

PORTSMOUTH, VA.

VPP NSA Manufacturing Operations Division

FORT MEADE, MD.

VPP Occidental Chemical Taft Plant

HAHNVILLE, LA.

VPP Paper Magic Group, Inc.

DANVILLE, PA.

VPP PPL Corporation

ALLENTOWN, PA.

VPP Sabic Innovative Plastics,
Washington Site

WASHINGTON, W.V.

VPP SKF Sealing Solutions

SENECA, KAN.

Sturgeon Electric Commercial
and Industrial Construction

HENDERSON, COLO.

Sturgeon Electric Transmission
and Distribution

HENDERSON, COLO.

VPP The Bluffs

COLUMBIA, MO.

VPP US Ecology Texas

ROBSTOWN, TEXAS

VPP USPS Gainesville Processing
and Distribution Facility

GAINESVILLE, FLA.

VPP USPS Montgomery Processing
& Distribution Center

MONTGOMERY, ALA.

USPS Tampa Processing &
Distribution Center, Air Mail Center

TAMPA, FLA.

VPP Valero Refining Co. –
Texas City Refinery

TEXAS CITY, TEXAS

VPP West Fraser, Incorporated

AUGUSTA, GA.

VPP Wheelabrator Frackville
Energy Company

FRACKVILLE, PA.

VPP Zachry Industrial Inc.,
Wood River Refinery

BORGER, TEXAS



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Winter Weather Safety:

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM FIRES AND CARBON MONOXIDE DANGERS

CONTRIBUTED BY THE HOME SAFETY COUNCIL

Everyone looks forward to relaxing after the busy holiday season, but the Home Safety Council is encouraging families to make time for one more activity before lighting a fire in the fireplace and retreating to the couch. Create a winter home safety checklist of things to do to keep your family protected against fires and carbon monoxide (CO) – two of the most common winter safety hazards.

“In January and February, fires caused by heating appliances overtake cooking fires as the leading cause of home fires, and carbon monoxide dangers rise as families turn to alternative heating sources to keep warm,” said Meri-K Appy, president of the Home Safety Council. “Taking a few minutes today to inspect your heating equipment and put proper precautions in place to protect against home heating dangers can pay off in a big way for your family’s safety.”

Start by having a professional inspect your home heating equipment and installing at least one CO detector at home. Heating equipment and fuel-burning appliances can emit dangerous levels of CO and cause home fires if they aren’t properly maintained.

Known as the “silent killer,” CO is a colorless, odorless and tasteless poisonous gas that claims the lives of 300 people at home each year, according to the U.S.

Consumer Product Safety Commission. Despite the risk, recent Home Safety Council research found that only 41 percent of families surveyed have installed a CO alarm at home.

Home Heating Safety Tips

As the temperatures drop, the Home Safety Council offers tips and advice to help families stay warm and safe at home this winter when using portable space heaters, fireplaces and other heating appliances.

Portable Space Heaters

- + Make sure your heater has been tested for safety. Look on the bottom for a label such as ETL, UL or CSA.
- + Place space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including furniture, people, pets and curtains.
- + There should always be an adult in the room when a space heater is on.
- + Turn off space heaters before leaving a room or going to sleep.
- + Never use space heaters to dry clothing or blankets.

Fireplaces and Wood Stoves

- + Burn only seasoned hardwood like oak, ash or maple. Do not burn trash, cardboard boxes or Christmas trees because these items burn unevenly and may contain poisons or cause a home fire.

- + Have a professional chimney sweep inspect chimneys every year.
- + Open flues before fireplaces are used.
- + Use sturdy screens or glass doors to keep embers inside fireplaces.

Prevent CO Dangers

- + Install at least one CO alarm near sleeping areas.
- + Have a trained professional inspect, clean and tune-up your home’s central heating system and repair leaks or other problems.
- + Keep gas appliances properly adjusted and serviced.
- + Never use an oven or range to heat your home.
- + Never use a gas or charcoal grill inside your home or in a closed garage.
- + Portable electric generators must be used outside only. Never use them indoors, in a garage or in any confined area that can allow CO to collect. Follow usage directions closely.

For more information on how to prevent and prepare for winter weather dangers, visit the Home Safety Council Web site at www.homesafetycouncil.org. ★

denver,
colorado

may
22-27

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- The always popular MSA/AIHA® Opening Cocktail Reception in the Expo, now co-sponsored by AIHA®

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first selection of PDCs
before they sell out,
and
savings up to \$200.

Register at www.AIHce2010.org

SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (SGE) TRAINING COURSE

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has confirmed the following Special Government Employee (SGE) training courses. The course schedule is projected through September 2010.

The training course must be taken prior to assisting OSHA with Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) onsite evaluations. To participate in the course, the applicant must meet the SGE safety and health qualifications. Interested applicants can contact Chantel Sollers, SGE coordinator, U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs, Office of Partnerships and Recognition, at (202) 693-2213. For more information, please also visit www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/sgc.html.

If you are interested in becoming an SGE, meet the qualifications and would like to attend one of the following courses, an application must be submitted by the application deadlines below.

DATES	HOST/LOCATION	REGION	APPLICATION DEADLINE
April 13-15, 2010	Simmons Manufacturing, Aurora, Colo.	VIII	1/15/10
April 20-22, 2010	Pro-Tec, Leipsic, Ohio	V	1/15/10
April/May 2010	NASA Ames, Sunnyvale, Calif.	IX	1/15/10
May 11-13, 2010	Raytheon, Portsmouth, R.I.	I	1/15/10
May 11-13, 2010	MYR Group/LE Meyers, Chattanooga, Tenn.	IV	1/15/10
July 13-15, 2010	Monsanto Headquarters, St. Louis, Mo.	VII	4/15/10
August 3-5, 2010	Eli Lilly Training Center, Indianapolis, Ind.	V	4/15/10
September 14-16, 2010	United Space Alliance, Houston, Texas	VI	7/15/10

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Mentoring Matches



The VPPPA Mentoring Program matches current VPP Star sites with sites interested in pursuing VPP approval or improving their safety and health management system. Mentors can offer assistance and insight into personal experiences with VPP. They can also share techniques on conducting annual evaluations and help mentees effectively communicate the benefits of VPP to management, employees and unions.

MENTEE	MENTOR
Portland General Electric Boardman, Ore.	Parsons Constructors & Fabrication, Inc. Pasco, Wash.
NRG Montville Montville, Conn.	Flexcon Company Spencer, Mass.
HyperTech Hanover, N.H.	Flexcon Company Spencer, Mass.
Mass. Institute of Technology (MIT) Cambridge, Mass.	General Electric Lynn, Mass.
Acushnet New Bedford, Mass.	WNA Chelmsford, Mass.
Cargill Salt Grantsville, Utah	Battelle, Tooele Operations Stockton, Utah

VPPPA would like to recognize the companies striving toward overall safety and health excellence and thank the mentors that are facilitating the process for their efforts and dedication. If you are aware of any VPP mentoring activities or would like to receive information on the program, please contact the VPPPA National Office at Mentoring@vpppa.org or (703) 761-1146.

Outreach

Throughout the year, VPPPA is represented at safety and health related conferences and exhibits. If you are planning to attend any of the conferences, please feel free to visit with association representatives at the VPPPA booth or participate in the VPPPA workshop to network with presenters and attendees who are interested in learning more about VPP and the association.

Upcoming Outreach Events

FEBRUARY 16-18

- + Construction Safety Conference and Expo
Rosemont, Ill.
Booth 617

MARCH 15-17

- + Texas Safety Conference and Expo
The Woodlands, Texas
Booth 513

[WORKSHOP]

VPP: Leaders in Safety and Health Excellence

MARCH 23-24

- + 13th Annual Applied Ergonomics Conference 2010
San Antonio, Texas
Booth 109

MAY 18-20

- + Clean Atlantic Conference and Exhibit
Baltimore, Md.

MAY 22-27

- + American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo
Denver, Colo.

JUNE 13-15

- + ASSE Safety 2010
Baltimore, MD

[WORKSHOP]

VPP: Leaders in Safety and Health Excellence

7TH ANNUAL

Site-Get-a-Site CAMPAIGN

The association is asking its members to hit the recruitment trail for 2010 by participating in VPPPA's 7th Annual Site-Get-a-Site Campaign.

As VPPPA continues to broaden its base and expand its network of active, involved VPP participants or sites looking to improve their safety and health management systems, retaining and attracting new members is crucial for the association. With your help, a wider audience is reached every year simply by word of mouth. For 2009, almost 50 members were recently recognized for having recruited more than 100 new member sites.

Recruit a site for VPPPA membership and help share best practices with other sites that have the potential to become "the best of the best" in occupational safety and health. Any site you recruit to join the association not only grows your network, but also helps support and improve your local chapter with five percent of the membership dues going back to your regional chapter. Additionally, you are eligible for a chance to win a complimentary membership for your site in 2011 and receive recognition at the 26th Annual National VPPPA Conference and in VPPPA's quarterly magazine *The Leader*.

RECRUITMENT TIPS

1. Identify potential members, which are any sites interested in maintaining or improving their safety and health management systems.
2. Know your member benefits and highlight the benefits that the potential member will find most useful.
3. Share your experiences from VPPPA events and convey the networking and educational opportunities offered by the association.
4. The VPPPA Web site has valuable information for prospective members. Refer them to www.vpppa.org/Membership for additional information and to fill out their membership application online.
5. Be sure your name, site name, city and state are included on the new members' application at the time it is submitted.
6. Everyone gets busy and your prospective member could simply have forgotten to send in their application. Follow up by calling or sending an e-mail.

For more information on the 7th Annual Site-Get-a-Site Campaign, please visit us online. You can also contact our membership department directly at (703) 761-1146 or Membership@vpppa.org to find out more about recruiting new members.

Continue to spread the good news about the benefits of VPPPA so we can continue to build a strong network of peers.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS >>

MARCH 9-12, 2010

Region VI VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

Pre-Conference Workshops:
March 8, 2010

American Bank Center Convention
Center & Omni Bayfront & Marina,
Corpus Christi, TX
Hotel Reservations: (800) 843-6664

MARCH 30- APRIL 2, 2010

Region IX VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> AZ, CA, HI, NV

VPP Application Workshop®:
March 30, 2010

VPP Best Practices for Advanced
Star Sites: April 2, 2010
Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa,
Newport Beach, CA
Hotel Reservations: (866) 440-3375

APRIL 7-9, 2010

Region III VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV

Pre-Conference Workshops:
April 6-7, 2010

Sheraton Station Square Hotel,
Pittsburgh, PA
Hotel Reservations: (800) 325-3535

MAY 5-6, 2010

Region VIII VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

Pre-Conference Workshops:
May 4, 2010

Sheraton Denver West, Lakewood, CO
Hotel Reservations: (303) 987-2000

MAY 11-13, 2010

Region X VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> AK, ID, OR, WA

VPP Application Workshop®:
May 11, 2010

Sheraton Anchorage, Anchorage, AK
Hotel Reservations: (907) 276-8700

MAY 24-26, 2010

Region VII VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> IA, KS, MO, NE

Pre-Conference Workshops:
May 24, 2010

Embassy Suites Omaha – LaVista/Hotel
& Conference Center, La Vista, NE
Hotel Reservations: (800) 362-2779

JUNE 2-3, 2010

Region V VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

VPP Application Workshop®:
June 4, 2010

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel,
Minneapolis South, MN
Hotel Reservations: (800) 325-3535

JUNE 6-10, 2010

Region II VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> NJ, NY, PR, VI

Trump Taj Mahal Hotel,
Atlantic City, NJ
Hotel Reservations: (888) 224-4586

JUNE 14-16, 2010

Region I VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

Sugarloaf Resort & Conference Center,
Carrabasset, ME
Hotel Reservations: (800) 643-8231

JUNE 23-25, 2010

Region IV VPPPA Chapter Conference

>> AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

Beau Rivage Resort & Casino,
Biloxi, MS
Hotel Reservations: (888) 567-6667

AUGUST 23-26, 2010

26th Annual National VPPPA Conference

Pre-Conference Workshops:
August 22, 2010

Expo: August 23-25, 2010

Orlando World Center, Marriott Resort
& Conventions Center, Orlando, FL
Hotel Reservations: (800) 228-9290

DECEMBER 6-8, 2010

13th Annual Safety & Health Congress

*Sponsored by VPPPA, Inc., OSHA, PR
OSHA and the Puerto Rico Federal
Safety & Health Council*

Conrad San Jan Condado Plaza,
San Juan, PR

Hotel Reservations: (888) 722-1278

Dates are as of print date. For more information, please refer to the
Calendar of Events at www.vpppa.org or call the VPPPA National Office
at (703) 761-1146.

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7600-E Leesburg Pike, Suite 100
Falls Church, VA 22043-2004
Tel: (703) 761-1146
Fax: (703) 761-1148
Web site: www.vpppa.org

VPPPA is a nonprofit, charitable organization devoted to improving worker safety and health protection through best practices and cooperation among employees, management and government.



We invite you to join us at the **26th Annual National VPPPA Conference**

Plan your trip for this year's conference, August 23-26, 2010, and experience cutting-edge education and a memorable VPPPA experience while enjoying the sunshine in exciting Orlando, FL.

// **Orlando World Center
Marriott Resort and Convention Center
8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821
Reservations: (800) 228-9290**

Refer to VPPPA's calendar of events at www.vpppa.org/Calendar/index.cfm for regional educational events and future national conferences.



BECOME A MEMBER AND SAVE!

26TH ANNUAL NATIONAL VPPPA CONFERENCE // WWW.VPPPA.ORG