

# MONITOR

Keeping you up-to-date with current occupational health and safety news and practice

## WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS HARMONISING LEGISLATION

A seminar, conducted by MARCSTA on 2 December to enable participants to be updated on the progress of the Model Work Health and Safety Act and its adoption at the State level, was well attended by OH&S professionals.

The first half of the morning focused on the progression of the WA legislation to mirror the content of the national Model Work Health and Safety Act with the Director, Policy and Education, WorkSafe WA, Ian Munns, providing an overview.

Key issues discussed included:

- the timetable for the release of the amended version of the Model Work Health and Safety Act and the draft model regulations
- specific elements which will not be included in the WA legislation:
  - union right of entry
  - power for HSR's to stop work
  - the level of penalties and categories of offence
  - reverse burden of proof for discrimination

Contentious issues likely to be included in the WA Act were also considered:

- the wider definition of 'plant'
- the duty of care to monitor the health of workers
- the duty to exercise 'due diligence' in relation to health and safety
- the duty to consult with workers on a range of issues including the monitoring of health
- the addition of 'reckless conduct' offences
- the increase in 'notifiable incidents' and the requirement for their immediate reporting
- the ability for representatives of a party to enter workplaces

It was recognised that although there had been initial agreement at ministerial level that states would each introduce legislation to harmonise with the Model Act, it was likely to be problematical when the time came to debate that legislation in the various state parliaments.

Despite these reservations the main thrust of the Model Act was expected to be maintained.

The second half of the morning addressed the likelihood of the major mining states reaching agreement on the additional elements of legislation beyond the main thrust of the Model Work Health and Safety Act.

The State Mining Engineer, Simon Ridge, commented on the difficulties of reaching agreement on the issues of certification of managers, the retention of existing regulatory structures and strategies for the management of mines. Despite the dissenting views of some mining bodies, agreement had been reached by NSW, Qld and WA on those issues and legislation would be drafted accordingly.

It was likely that finalisation of the mine specific elements to be added to the general legislation would take some time.

For WA, however, much of the existing structure was expected to be retained although some aspects were likely to be moved into regulations.

MARCSTA intends to conduct further seminars as the legislative process evolves. The final content will have ramifications for all professional personnel and it will be crucial that they have a full understanding of its ultimate consequences.

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The Monitor is the official publication of the Mining and Resource Contractors Safety Training Association

MARCSTA is a not-for-profit Association. All proceeds are reinvested into the industry for future development of safety and training.



L-R: Joe Maglizza, Ian Munns, Simon Ridge

Workshop attendees

# LEGISLATION

## OHS HARMONISATION LAWS UNDER THREAT

As predicted in the last Monitor, union pressure has forced the endangered NSW Government to back away from the previously endorsed draft Work Health and Safety Act.

The issue of reverse onus, which has given occupational health and safety a bad name in NSW and which has been overruled by the High Court in recent times, has been strongly objected to by employers.

Whether the Federal Government can convince the NSW Government to change its position before the next state election is doubtful and the legislation may be stalled until the Labor Party is no longer in power in NSW, which is highly likely with a March election looming.

At this time it appears that the timetable for progressing the Model Work Health and Safety Act and its regulations is slipping and it is likely that little will happen until 2011.

## SAFETY PROFESSIONALS AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS NEED TO SPEAK THE SAME OHS LANGUAGE

Insurance and risk advisors firm, Marsh Australia, has suggested that safety professionals need a broader depth of education in order to effect positive workplace change.

This suggestion follows the proposed changes in the Model Work Health and Safety Act that, in addition to executive directors and officers of a company, anyone involved in the financial standing of a company will be responsible for safety.

Rob Kosova, Principal at Marsh, claims that CFO's are the most likely among senior executives to be unaware of their own safety obligations and therefore safety professionals must have a solid grasp of their company's operational and financial structure so that they can bridge the gap of understanding in their own workplace.

Safety professionals may find this opinion both interesting and humorous. Most are likely to suggest the converse, that is, senior management should be required to undergo training in OHS as part of their position requirements. This would enable a level playing field when discussing OHS initiatives for the organisation.

*Source: Safety Solutions Online*





# SAFETY

## SEPARATING WORKPLACE INJURIES FACTS AND PREVAILING MYTHS

WorkSafe WA advise that a new methodology for deriving the total number of hours worked and the total number of workers used to calculate frequency and incidence rates has been introduced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

As a consequence WorkSafe WA has revised its data for the period 2000/01 through to 2007/08 (preliminary). They also advise that data included in previous publications are not comparable.

WorkSafe have produced useful and informative charts for each of the seventeen (17) industry sectors showing a time series of injury frequency and incidence rates for the years 2003/04 through 2007/08.

Figures for the year 2007/08 (preliminary) provide some interesting comparisons of performance for each industry sector. Recommended workers' compensation premiums for 2010/11 are shown which reflect prior safety performance.

Emerging from this data analysis is a relationship between injury incidence rates and recommended workers' compensation premium rates for most industry sectors. Although premium rates lag behind safety performance, improved industry sector safety performance should be reflected in premium rates reduction in subsequent years.

The mining industry features very favourably on both counts.

|                                 | Injury Incidence 1+days<br>2007/08 (per 100 workers) | Recommended Workers'<br>Compensation Premiums<br>2010/11 |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Manufacturing                   | 3.8  | 2.71   |
| Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing    | 3.5  | 3.97   |
| Construction                    | 3.2  | 2.96   |
| Transport and Storage           | 2.7  | 1.89   |
| Health and Community Services   | 2.1  | 1.53   |
| Personal and Other Services     | 2.0  | 2.16   |
| Wholesale Trade                 | 1.9  | 1.92   |
| Cultural, Recreational Services | 1.8  | 1.42   |
| Retail Trade                    | 1.4  | 1.47   |
| Accommodation, Cafes, etc       | 1.3  | 1.70   |
| Education                       | 1.2  | .83  |
| <b>MINING</b>                   | <b>1.1</b>   | <b>1.57</b>  |
| Electricity, Gas, Water         | 0.8  | .75  |
| Property and Business Services  | 0.7  | 1.03   |
| Communication Services          | 0.7  | 1.55   |
| Govt Administration             | 0.4  | .49  |
| Finance, Insurance              | 0.3  | .26  |



## FEMALE WELDERS GAIN RECOGNITION

To acknowledge the unique contribution made by women welders, 3M have designed a world-wide first:

The 3M™ Speedglas 100 Series Graphic Welding Helmets Women's Collection.

Four distinct designs each of which proclaims a characteristic personality, but with more feminine assertion.

3M have created a welding hood women in the welding industry can use to meet the challenges they face in comfort, safety and style.

The 3M Speedglas 100V filter can be used with most arc welding processes, including stick (MMA), MIG/MAG, and TIG greater than 10 amps.

Source: 3M

## EMPLOYER DUTY OF CARE EXTENDS TO CONTRACTORS

Two workers were injured during Cyclone George in March 2007. The principal and contracting company have both been fined for failing to provide adequate safety procedures to be followed by employees in the event of a cyclone. This sends a clear and strong message to employers about their safety and health responsibilities.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne has underlined the fact that responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe working environment can extend to employees of a contractor and has reminded employers that they need to have in place adequate plans and provide adequate training to protect workers in the event of a cyclone.

The Bureau of Meteorology has forecast a higher than normal risk of a cyclone before Christmas and a likelihood of a greater number of cyclones this season.

Source: Department of Commerce News Release October 2010

 **Speedglas™**



# The First Women Welders' Collection



## SAFETY STANDARDS FOR GLOVES

Safety standards for gloves have proved to be a valuable guide for ensuring worker hand protection for employers, risk managers and contractors acutely aware of the need for compliance in order to meet their duty of care to protect workers from a range of specific workplace hazards.

While compliance with AS/NZS2161 – Occupational Protective Gloves standard is not currently compulsory for glove manufacturers, safety managers view compliance with standards as a key issue.

Australia has a policy of adopting established international standards for its own use and has implemented a number of identical standards to those used throughout Europe.

Each of these standards is represented by a symbol and number stamped on gloves – the higher the number, the higher the level of protection.

To achieve these ratings appropriate testing is required to determine the level of protection. This provides a useful guide for those responsible for ensuring the safety of workers.

Harmonisation of OHS laws may inevitably lead to compliance with all national standards.

*Source: Safety Solutions*

## US WORKPLACE INJURY/ ILLNESS RATES REACH RECORD LOW LEVELS IN 2009

The total recordable injury and illness incidence rates among private industry employers, which have been declining since 2003, reached record low levels in 2009 with a decline of 11% over 2008.

Significant contributors to the continuing improved performance were the manufacturing sector (23%) and the construction sector (22%).

Whether these marked improvement resulted from the reduced employment following the economic downturn or improved safety performance, is debatable.

*Source: Department of Labor Statistics*

## FAILURE TO AVOID ADVERSELY AFFECTING SAFETY OF FELLOW WORKERS

In an incident involving inappropriate use of a forklift, a Regional Manager of an Osborne Park warehouse was fined \$2000 for failure to take reasonable care to avoid adversely affecting the safety and health of three other employees.

Three employees were put at risk of injury, and one did indeed sustain a serious hand injury.

The level of penalties proposed in the national harmonisation legislation can be expected to increase significantly for similar offences.



## MARCSTA training providers

Jayson Aveling  
Carl Berglin  
Danny Bognar  
John Christie (C) (O) (R)  
Stacey Clark  
Brian Cloney  
Jim Dandie  
Geoff Day  
Vlad Doguilev (C) (O)

Peter Dowding  
Duncan Edwards  
Linda Elezovich  
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Sheryl Kelly (C) (O) (R)  
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Katherine Montague  
John Preston  
Graeme Richards

Jason Roberts  
Victor Roberts  
Grant Shearwin (C) (O)  
Nugent Stiles  
Julian Strudwick (C)  
Peter Tynan  
Micheal White  
Paul Willoughby

The trainers listed provide the General Safety Induction program.  
C denotes Work Safely in the Construction Industry program  
O denotes OHS for Supervisors and Managers program.  
R denotes Conduct Local Risk Control program.  
S denotes Extended Working Hours program.  
U denotes Underground program.

## INNOVATIVE BACK SAFETY CAMPAIGN

In British Columbia an innovative campaign sponsored by WorkSafeBC and the Chiropractic Association to promote back safety is having a remarkable effect in the community.

Canada's largest distributor of industrial safety and fastener products, Acklands-Grainger – over a two month pilot period posted safety displays at their trading entrances and on their counters and inserted every imaginable promotion item inside each customer's parcel – from fridge magnets to brochures to safety stickers – all bearing the Think Twice Lift Once slogan.

But what was on the outside of each parcel was what got customers talking. Instead of using innocuous beige adhesive to tape their parcels, the campaign sponsors custom-printed rolls of brightly coloured Think Twice Lift Once masking tape and used it to fasten each one – a simple idea that triggered unexpected results.



Above: Christine Gildenstern, warehouse associate at Acklands-Grainger, displays the new tape that's making a statement on the shop floor

Acklands-Grainger found that when some customers came to pick up their taped parcels from the order counter they began talking to their staff and other store patrons about their experiences with injuries.

WorkSafeBC advise that back strains account for 24% of all work-related injuries and nearly 20% of all days lost to work.

Acklands-Grainger now intends to expand the campaign throughout British Columbia.

Source: "Back in Business" from the October issue of WorkSafe Magazine is ©WorkSafeBC and used with permission.

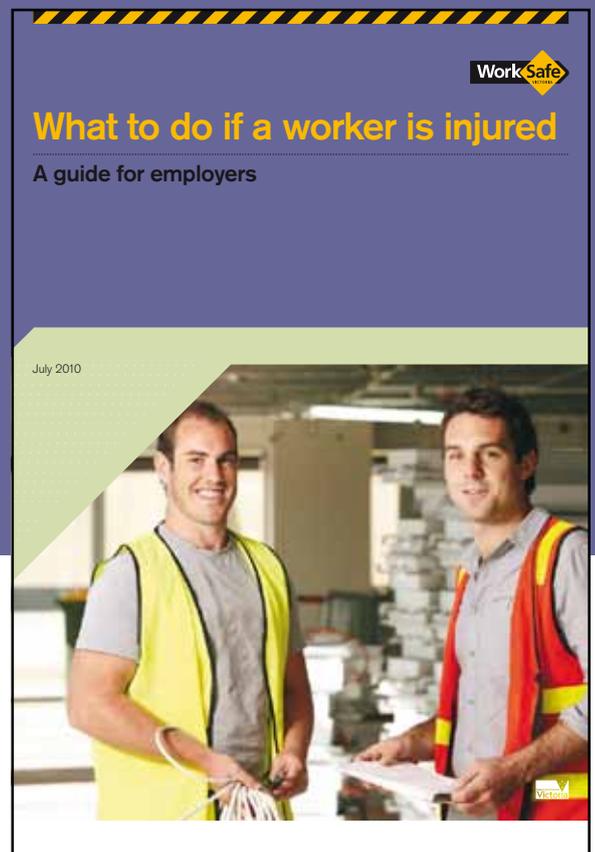
## NEW GUIDE ON WORKERS' COMPENSATION MARGINS

WorkSafe Victoria have released an informative guide for employers "What to do if a worker is injured".

It contains easy to read advice on what to do when a worker is injured, how to handle and process claims and useful information on helping injured workers return to work.

The document is another example of the leadership currently being demonstrated in OHS in Victoria and confirms the commitment in that State to improving workers' compensation management.

Source: WorkSafe Victoria July 2010



## SLIPS AND TRIPS A MAJOR COST FOR EVERY INDUSTRY

According to Liberty Mutual, a major US insurance company, 65% of all lost work days result from slips and falls affecting every industry which, in turn, results in 95 million lost work days per year.

In 2007 the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated 2.2 million Americans sought emergency room treatment for an accidental fall, making falls the leading cause of emergency room visits in America.

What can a company do to prevent them?

- Come to realise it is a joint effort on the part of corporate management and the employees. If any of these is not truly committed, slips and falls will continue to occur.
- Have your facility's floor audited by a qualified walkway auditor.
- Have a written floor safety program designed specifically for your company.

Key components that will work hand in hand:

- The walkway audit, followed by routine audits performed quarterly, or at least annually
- Training your employees in floor safety, which may consist of proper maintenance procedures, proper cleanup protocol, proper sign placement, and near-miss reporting
- Ensuring employees have the correct tools to complete the job, such as an adequate amount of "wet floor" signs, proper cleaning material, spill containment, and so forth
- Proper matting for entrances that will keep contaminants from entering the building and lowering the floors' traction
- A good slip-resistant shoe policy in your program; even though you can't require your customers to wear slip-resistant shoes, you can require this of your employees

Source: *ohsonline* September 2010



**10 seconds  
to take the stairs.**

**Or 10 weeks  
with a broken leg.**

worksafe.vic.gov.au/backonsafety Don't turn your back on safety. **Work Safe**

## POOR LADDER SAFETY BRINGS HEAVY FINE

Failure to provide and maintain safe systems of work resulted in a \$25,000 fine when a maintenance worker was seriously injured in a fall from a ladder at a Mandurah shopping centre.

The incident described represented a worst-case scenario in ladder safety and it was fortunate that the worker, although sustaining serious injuries, was not killed. It also raises the question of whether the worker received any safety training in working at height.

# HEALTH

## THE NATIONAL REPORT CARD ON HEALTH

Compared with other OECD countries, for 31 comparable indicators of health, Australia is in the top third and amongst the very best for life expectancy.

Death rates continue to fall for many of our major health problems, such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic lung disease, asthma and injuries.

There is, however, room for improvement and there are some serious areas of concern.

With rising rates of obesity and disease, an ageing population and a continuing gap between the health of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians, it is clear that, while we are doing well in some areas, many challenges lie ahead.

Problem areas:

- Obesity (in 2007/08 three in five adults and one in four children were overweight or obese)
- Mental illness (around one in five Australians aged 16-85 years has a mental disorder at some time in a 12 month period)
- Cancer (new cases are set to increase by 10% in 2010, compared to 2006)
- Dementia (over 200,000 Australians are estimated to have dementia in 2010 with the number predicted to more than double over the next 20 years)
- Indigenous health (estimated life expectancy is about 12 years less for men and 10 years for women)

Source: Australia's Health 2010

## EXPOSURE TO RESPIRABLE DUST TO BE REDUCED IN US COAL MINERS

The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) today announced the release of a proposed rule on lowering miners' exposure to respirable coal dust in all underground and surface coal mines. The proposed rule is the latest element of MSHA's "End Black Lung – Act Now" campaign.

The proposed rule would lower the existing concentration limits for respirable coal mine dust from 2 milligrams of dust per cubic meter of air, or 2 mg/m<sup>3</sup>, to 1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> over a 24-month phase-in period; require the use of a continuous personal dust monitor; provide for the use of a single, full-shift sample to determine compliance; address extended work shifts; and redefine normal production shifts. In addition, the proposed rule would require expanded medical surveillance so that miners can take proactive steps to better manage their health.

Based on recent data from NIOSH, cases of black lung are increasing among the nation's coal miners. Even younger miners are showing evidence of advanced and debilitating lung disease from excessive dust exposure. Over the past decade, more than 10,000 miners have died from black lung. The federal government has paid out more than \$44 billion in compensation for miners totally disabled by black lung since 1970, according to the Labor Department's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

Source: US Department of Labor News Release 10-1440

## MARCSTA members

### ORDINARY MEMBERS

Alpha Safety Management  
Ausdrill Ltd  
Barmenco Limited  
BGC Contracting Pty Ltd  
Bucyrus Mining Australia P/L  
Cape Skills  
Downer EDI Engineering

GFR Group  
GR Engineering Services  
GRD Minproc  
Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd  
Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd  
Roche Mining Process Engineering  
Skilled Group Ltd  
Westrac Equipment Pty Ltd

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

AVELING  
Jako Industries Pty Ltd  
Mandurah Safety and Training Services Pty Ltd  
Mine SafeGear  
Strudwick HR

## NOISE AND HEART DISEASE

Research published by the University of British Columbia has shown that excessive noise exposure in the workplace is an important occupational health issue in relation to heart health.

Persistent, loud workplace noise more than doubles the risk for heart disease.

For the study, data was collected on 6,307 people aged 20 and older who took part in the U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey between 1999 and 2004.

The association between a noisy work environment and heart disease was particularly strong in those under 50 years of age, who were three to four times more likely to have angina or coronary artery disease or to have had a heart attack, according to the research results. Men and smokers in this age group were also at higher risk.

Diastolic blood pressure (the second number in a blood pressure reading) was higher than normal, a condition linked to serious heart problems, the researchers stated.

Employees exposed to loud noise at work were twice as likely to have a higher-than-normal diastolic blood pressure, a phenomenon known as isolated diastolic hypertension, the researchers found. Higher than normal blood pressure (the second number in a blood pressure reading) is a condition linked to serious heart problems.

The authors speculated that stress caused by loud noise could resemble that sparked by sudden, strong emotion, which over time can lead chemical messengers to constrict blood flow through the coronary arteries.

Source: *ISHN* October 2010

## ALMOST ONE THIRD OF AUSTRALIAN WORKFORCE AFFECTED BY NOISE

SafeWork Australia's Worker Surveillance Survey has found as follows:

- approximately one-third of the workforce are likely to work in an environment where they are exposed to non-trivial loud noise
- male workers are more likely to report exposure to loud noise than female workers
- young workers are more likely to report exposure to loud noise than older workers
- night workers are more likely to report exposure to loud noise than day workers
- manufacturing and construction are the main industries in which workers reported exposure to loud noise
- only 41% of exposed workers reported that they had received training in noise injury prevention.

Source: *SafetyUpdate* Edition 19

The graphic features a blue header with the text "NATIONAL HAZARD EXPOSURE WORKER SURVEILLANCE (NHEWS) SURVEY: 2008 RESULTS". Below the header are three photographs: a worker in a white protective suit, a worker in a yellow safety vest operating a machine, and a worker in a white lab coat. To the right of the photos are four purple downward-pointing chevrons. Below the photos, it says "UPDATED MARCH 2009" and includes the Australian Government Australian Safety and Compensation Council logo.

## SAND BLASTING OF JEANS TO BE STOPPED

Leading jeans manufacturers Levi's and H&M have decided to discontinue the practice of sand-blasting in their worldwide production of jeans in order to protect the health of workers.

Scientific studies have shown the tragic link between sandblasting and silicosis, a process used to give jeans a "fashionable" look.

In Turkey since 2005 more than 50 workers have died as a result of the practice and although now prohibited in Turkey, several companies simply moved production to other less restrictive countries.

The Monitor reported on this situation in its June 2009 edition.

Source: *HSU* September 2010



## CPR GUIDELINES AGAIN SIMPLIFIED

While everything else in this world seems to be getting more complicated, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) keeps getting simpler, according to the Harvard Health Letter.

The American Heart Association says you should forgo airways clearing, breaths and pulse checks and just concentrate on pushing on the chest- a procedure called "hands only" CPR.

The Association says just call the emergency number and then start pushing hard and fast on the person's breastbone – 100 times a minute – until emergency medical technicians or paramedics arrive.

Administering hands-only CPR before professional help arrives is just as effective as traditional CPR at helping someone survive a sudden shutdown of the heart. People with "non-cardiac" arrest, which usually means they had breathing problems before their hearts went haywire, benefit from traditional CPR.

*Source: The Simplification of CPR, Harvard Health Newsletter*

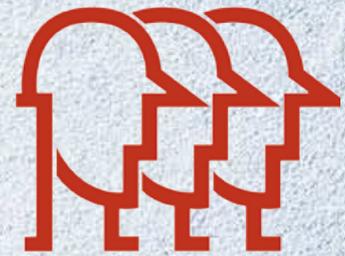


## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE PREDICTS JOB PERFORMANCE

An analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance which will appear in a future issue of the Journal of Organizational Behavior indicates that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of job performance.

By analysing the numerous studies of emotional intelligence that have been conducted over the last decade, researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University provide an evidence-based account of emotional intelligence – where it works and where it doesn't.

*Source: EHS Today, November 2010*



**MARCSTA**

Mining and Resource  
Contractors Safety  
Training Association



Joe Maglizza



Kim Stewart

### MARCSTA who's who?

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Ross Graham  
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**Monitor Editor**

Geoff Taylor

# SLEEP/FATIGUE

## SLEEPING WITH TOO MUCH LIGHT LEADS TO WEIGHT GAIN

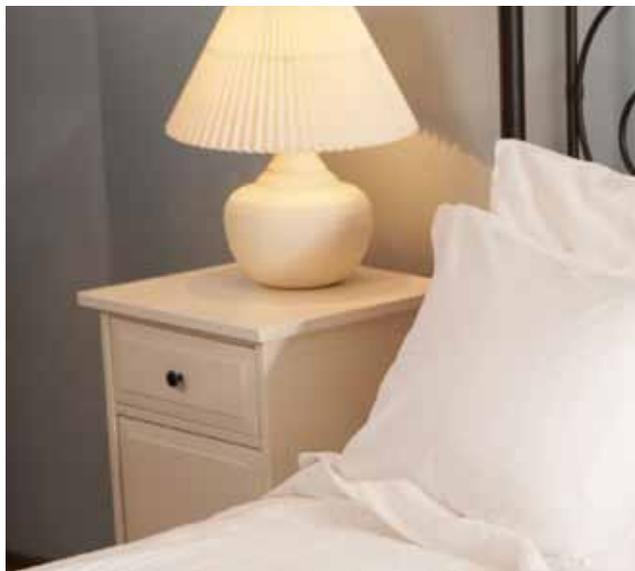
Research conducted at Ohio State University has found that too much light at night appears to lead to weight gain, which may provide fresh clues on obesity.

The researchers found that mice exposed to a dim light at night over eight weeks had a weight gain that was about 50% more than mice that lived in a standard light-dark cycle.

Dr Randy Nelson, co-author of the study and professor of neuroscience and psychology, reported that something about light at night was making the mice in the study want to eat at times which didn't allow for properly metabolizing their food.

He concluded that if these results are confirmed in humans it would suggest that late-night eating might be a particular risk factor for obesity.

*Source: ABC Science October 2010*



## NEW RESEARCH PROVIDES A SOLUTION TO NIGHT WORKPLACE LIGHTING DILEMMA

One of the most important scientific breakthroughs in shiftwork and fatigue shows that just filtering out certain light wavelengths at night could mitigate many of the adverse safety and health effects of bright light on night workers.

For instance, groundbreaking research from the University of Toronto on shiftworkers, including nurses and nuclear power plant operators, showed that wearing light-filtering eyewear (called Zircs™) increased alertness and performance and decreased memory lapses and errors on the night shift.

In these studies, simply filtering out a narrow 10nm band of the light spectrum by wearing the Zircs™ eyewear allowed these nurses and power plant operators to experience better alertness during the night shift and better sleep at home.

Circadian® is now partnering with the developers of Zircs™ to conduct real-world trials in a wide variety of shiftwork operations to help confirm the potential for workplace light-filtering.

*Source: Circadian 24/7 Workforce Solutions*

## IS THERE AN ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SHIFTWORK AND METABOLIC SYNDROME?

A recent cohort study reported in the Journal of Health Safety and Environment provides strong evidence that metabolic syndrome (such as high triglyceride and low/high density lipoprotein [HDL] levels, obesity, hypertension and diabetes) may be caused by shift work exposure.

The author concludes that clinicians should monitor shiftworkers and provide them with counselling and skills to reduce the impact of shiftwork on their metabolic and cardiovascular risk. He suggests employers should also be informed and they should endeavour to minimise employee exposure to shiftwork.

*Source: Journal of Health Safety and Environment 2010, 26(4): 303-310*



# AROUND THE GLOBE

## MAJOR EUROPEAN RESEARCH PROJECT TO EVALUATE SAFETY SYSTEMS FOR COMMERCIAL TRUCKS

Major manufacturers of commercial trucks have joined forces in a research initiative to collect data on how truck drivers behave in different traffic situations and how safety technology in their trucks can help them.

Volvo Trucks has 30 vehicles involved, while the British company DHL Tradeteam and the Dutch company Nijhof-Wassink have 30 of their trucks participating. Each truck is equipped with five video cameras that record drivers' braking and response to traffic.

The head of Traffic and Product Safety at Volvo Trucks said that it is an opportunity to evaluate the benefit of accident-prevention systems and develop new systems in the future. He said analysing drivers' eye movement can provide important information about what can distract drivers.

*Source: OHS online September 2010*

## FOCUS ON YOUNG WORKERS AT US NATIONAL SAFETY CONGRESS

During a session at the 2010 US National Safety Council Congress and Expo common contributing factors to young worker fatalities and what employers can do to protect their younger employees were discussed.

Using case studies of youth fatalities, speakers identified that the workers had limited experience and had been employed for only a short time. Their employers did not have formal safety and health programs, designated safety staff members, adequate supervision or an owner/user manual for the equipment involved.

Vulnerabilities common to younger employees and strategies to protect young workers were discussed and documented.

*Source: EHS Today, October 2010*

## NIOSH'S COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH ON NANOTECHNOLOGY

US regulators and scientists mindful of past disasters – from lead to asbestos – are conscious that super-small nanoparticles represent a huge challenge.

Charles Geraci, co-ordinator of the Nanotechnology Research Centre for NIOSH, describes their task as using the newest toxicology research to educate and advise nano manufacturers about safeguarding workers, even as novel applications keep emerging for the miniscule particles with often amazing capabilities.

He said that NIOSH has 52 active projects involving the safety of technology as the agency works to concurrently study elements of a risk management process that is traditionally done sequentially. He offered the example of carbon nanotubes which scientists know can cause fibrosis in the lungs of mice. Certain types of the multi-walled tubes can reach the same spaces in the lungs where mesothelioma shows up.

While that is alarming news for pathologists he says more research needs to be done.

It doesn't mean that this substance will cause cancer; however, it is prudent to shield workers who are manufacturing nanotubes as much as possible.

The US approach to research is in stark contrast to the European Union whose strategy aims chiefly to catch up the lag behind the US and Asia.

*Source: European Trade Union Institute*

**MARCSTA**  
*Management and staff wish readers of the Monitor a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.*

