

news & notes

CHOOSE THE RIGHT RESPIRATOR

Here's a quick primer:

Air-purifying respirators protect against many contaminants by filtering or chemically "scrubbing" them and are used when:

- There is enough oxygen present.
- Contaminants can be filtered or "scrubbed" out.
- Contaminants are not at Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) levels.

These respirators have color-coded cartridges or canisters to indicate the type of contaminant they protect against. Remember that cartridges and canisters get used up. Know how to recognize their end of life, and replace them if you're not sure!

Air-supplying respirators have a separate source of air—either an air line or self-contained portable air supply—and are used when:

- There is not enough oxygen present.
- Contaminants are at Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health levels.

Follow these other respirator safety steps:

- Always use the respirator that is assigned to you
- If you're unsure what respirator to use:
 - Read your organization's written respiratory protection program.
 - Check the MSDS for the hazardous substance, and the respirator manufacturer's written instructions.
 - Ask a supervisor.



"Anyway...to make a lung story short..."

EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

November 2011

Provided by Hierl Insurance, Inc

Breathe Easy

November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

This month consider these statistics:

- Lung disease is the number one work-related illness in the U.S. in terms of severity, frequency, and preventability.
- Occupational lung cancer is estimated to kill between 15,000 and 20,000 people each year.
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women in the U.S.

Occupational lung disease can be a killer. Many serious—even fatal—lung diseases can be traced to workplace hazards, including:

- **Lung cancer**—from inhaling carcinogenic chemicals, asbestos, and certain types of carbons
- **Asbestosis**—a progressive lung disease that results from inhaling asbestos fibers
- **Silicosis**—from inhaling silica dust found in stone, clay, and glass manufacturing as well as blasting operations
- **Occupational asthma**—from exposure to any number of vapors, gases, fumes, or dusts that can trigger an asthma attack
- **Certain industry-specific diseases** such as black lung (coal) and brown lung (textiles)

In addition, studies clearly show that smokers are more susceptible than non-smokers to developing occupational lung diseases. At any rate, make it a habit to always:

- **Read the labels and MSDSs** of hazardous substances to understand the dangers of inhaling the substance—and do it before using the substance.
- **Avoid or minimize breathing in any sort of dust, vapors, fumes, or gases.**
- **Make sure that engineering controls, such as ventilation and exhaust systems, are in place** and functioning properly.

Anyone who works in an area with high levels of hazardous substances in the air must wear an appropriate respirator and know how to use it properly.

Early detection is the key to treating lung diseases. The success of medical treatment for lung diseases usually depends on how early the disease is detected. So get a medical examination if you develop symptoms, such as a persistent cough, and if you have reason to believe the problem may be work-related.

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HELP CO-WORKERS QUIT

If you have co-workers who are trying to kick the habit during the **Great American Smoke-out**, do what you can to help. Here's why.

1. **You'll improve your own health.** The 2006 U.S. Surgeon General's report, *Secondhand Smoke: What it Means to You* states that secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer, heart disease, and raised cholesterol levels.
2. **You'll improve working conditions.** New nonsmokers won't be absent as much because of smoking-related illnesses. And when on the job, they won't be taking smoking breaks.

How can you help a smoking co-worker quit?

- **Be a cheerleader** for their decision to quit.
- **Be patient** if they're irritable.
- **Allow them to vent** their frustrations. Don't take it personally.
- **Be available** to spend time with them in smoke-free environments.
- **Invite them to smoke-free activities**, such as mini-golf or a movie, to help them keep busy.

AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

Help your kids develop good habits and lower their risk for diabetes by letting them use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) interactive website for children called "**The Eagle's Nest**" at <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/eagle/index.html>.



Globally Harmonized System

What you need to know

Q: What is the purpose of the GHS?

A: The purpose of the GHS is to provide a comprehensive international system for defining health, physical, and environmental hazards of chemicals; classifying chemicals based on their specific hazards; and communicating hazard information and protective measures consistently throughout the world.

Q: Why is the GHS necessary?

A: The GHS is necessary because of the global economy in which chemicals are imported and exported among different countries. With international trade in chemicals comes the risk that chemical suppliers in some countries might not do as good a job of identifying hazards of their products or of recommending precautions to prevent exposure to hazards.

Q: How will the GHS make workplaces safer?

A: Implementation of the GHS is expected to create a safer work environment and reduce chemical exposures for workers around the world. It is believed that consistent and simplified communications about chemicals and safe work practices provided by the GHS will create greater awareness of hazards, resulting in safer use of chemicals.

Q: Will chemical labels also change under the GHS?

A: Yes, there may be changes. But since many labels used in the United States already meet GHS standards, labels under the GHS will often look similar to the labels you are used to.

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Thanksgiving Day Tips

Enjoy the day the healthy way

Follow these food and fitness tips:

- **Eat a full healthy breakfast.** Don't "save" calories for the main meal. This is a particularly good practice for the cook to help keep him or her from grazing during food preparation.
- **Eat (and serve) fibrous appetizers,** such as veggie trays or sliced fruit with light dips. The fiber helps with digestion and fills you so you're less apt to overload your meal plate.
- **Drink plenty of water** to help with digestion. Limit high-calorie beverages, such as alcohol or sweet drinks.
- **Get some light exercise** before and after the meal. A brisk walk before and a leisurely one after—but before dessert!
- **Load your plate in sections.** Fill half of it with vegetables, one quarter with protein (turkey!), and one quarter with starch (potatoes, stuffing, bread).
- **Eat slowly.** Savor each bite, which also gives the food time to hit your stomach and give you that full feeling.
- **Limit dessert** to one sensible-sized serving.