



CONN-OSHA QUARTERLY

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Addressing Indoor Environmental Quality Problems: Connecticut's School Indoor Environment Resources:

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The **Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools (TfS) Program** was developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce exposures to indoor environmental contaminants in schools through the voluntary adoption of sound indoor air quality management practices. The *IAQ Tools for Schools* Program is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. Poor indoor air quality can impact the comfort and health of students and staff, which, in turn, can affect concentration, attendance, and student performance. In addition, if schools fail to respond promptly to poor IAQ, students and staff are at an increased risk of short-term health problems, such as fatigue and nausea, as well as long-term problems like asthma. In Connecticut, a consortium of 23 agencies and organizations has formed the Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team (CSIERT). The CT DOL Conn-OSHA program is a member agency of CSIERT. This group assists schools with the implementation of the TfS program throughout the state. For more information about CSIERT and its members, go to: www.csiert.org

Since 2000, TfS has been implemented in hundreds of schools across the state. School districts that have implemented TfS find that there are common elements to successfully implementing the program:

1. **Organizing** a team with a committed group of individuals dedicated to ensuring good IAQ and with clear support from senior management.
2. **Assessing** current IAQ conditions and issues.
3. **Creating a Plan** outlining a strategic approach to identifying, resolving, and preventing IAQ problems.
4. **Taking Actions** to improve IAQ in the school that lead to increased student and staff health and productivity.
5. **Evaluating** the IAQ management program by tracking and assessing results.
6. **Communicating** the intent, results, and next steps of the IAQ management Program.

Reminder...

The Hazard Communication standard has been revised. Do you still need to train your employees?

December 1, 2013 is the training deadline.

The TfS Program provides materials and guidance at no cost to help schools implement and maintain an indoor air quality management program. In addition to the

IAQ TfS Action Kit, specialized fact sheets, brochures, and software programs are available to provide in-depth information on environmental topics.



In Connecticut, CSIERT provides a two part, five hour TfS implementation training to the TfS team members in school districts. Each school within a school district forms a five member team that consists of a teacher, nurse, administrator, custodian, and parent. The trainings are done free of charge by trained environmental health professionals. The first training includes basic IAQ information and the importance of good IAQ for schools as well the steps for successful implementation. Each school team completes checklists and compiles the data. At the second training the team learns how to conduct a building IAQ walkthrough. The teams then conduct a walkthrough at their school and combine this data with the checklist data to identify problem areas. A report is produced that provides recommendations and establishes priorities for the school administration and board of education. The next step is to act on the recommendations. The TfS program emphasizes low or no cost solutions to indoor air issues. Many small changes can often make a big difference in air quality. CSIERT also provides a refresher workshop to assist school districts in maintaining their program. This is a 2 hour workshop for TfS teams that have a combination of experienced and new members, and need to update their knowledge and skills.

Tools for Techs: Several CSIERT member agencies – the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Connecticut Technical High School System, the State Vocational Federation of Teachers / American Federation of Teachers and the UCONN Health Center launched a program based on TfS: “**Tools for Techs.**” The program addresses the unique indoor air quality issues found in Technical High Schools relating to the many trades areas in the schools. For more information, see: http://oehc.uchc.edu/CIEH_TfT.asp

Outcomes

Successful TfS programs have seen marked reductions in the number of visits to the school nurse, a decrease in school absenteeism (students and staff), and improved

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Indoor Air... (Continued from page #1)

health outcomes. The program also helps to open the lines of communication between staff, teachers, administrators and parents. More information about TfS can be found on the web at www.epa.gov/iaq or the CT Department of Public Health Healthy School Environments page (www.ct.gov/dph/schools)

To find out more about Connecticut's Tools for Schools program or arrange for a training workshop, contact the Connecticut Department of Public Health at 860-509-7740 or kenny.foscue@ct.gov).

Tools for Office Buildings is a program aimed at improving the quality of the indoor environment in office buildings by conducting a comprehensive building assessment. It is modeled after the successful Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) *Tools for Schools* Program. This is a practical, easy to do program.

Poor indoor air can contribute to multiple health problems that can result in lower productivity. Many of the contributing factors to poor indoor air in the office can be prevented before they begin by having a good maintenance program that identifies physical plant problems early, addresses them appropriately in an expeditious manner and engages the employees of the building as partners in maintaining space that is conducive to good housekeeping. *Tools for Office Buildings* is a proactive, preventive, team-

based program that looks for low cost/no cost solutions to indoor environment problems.

The *Tools for Office Buildings* Program will put procedures in place to maintain a healthy working environment that complement the existing maintenance procedures. The program emphasizes that maintaining a good indoor environment in the office is a shared responsibility between the occupants and the building management. It stresses the importance of communication and educates the building occupants on factors that can affect the office environment and how they can play a role in improving the workplace. This raises awareness of indoor environmental issues and leads to a positive partnership among the occupants of the office building. A successful program has the strong support of the office and building management.

To get a program started, call the Connecticut Department of Public Health Environmental and Occupational Health Assessment Program at 860-509-7740 to arrange for a presentation to the building management/administration. Once the program is outlined and support is received, a date for the first training can be scheduled.

For additional information, contact Joan Simpson at the Connecticut Department of Public Health Environmental and Occupational Health Assessment Program: joan.simpson@ct.gov; 860-509-7740.



Winter Reminders...

As the snow and ice of winter approach, it is important to review safe winter work habits with your employees and your families. The time spent in preparation will insure that equipment is available and in good repair. Depending on your situation some suggestions include:

- Stocking up on items such as sand, salt, and shovels. Stores often run out of these items during large storms.
- Reviewing vehicle maintenance including checking batteries, windshield wipers, and cooling systems.
- Ensuring that fleet vehicles are equipped with items typically needed in winter like ice scrapers and emergency supplies like food, water, and blankets.
- Make sure equipment such as snow blowers and plows are in good repair.
- Review safe winter driving techniques with all of your employees; not just your fleet drivers.
- Remind employees of the signs and symptoms of exposure to cold temperatures to avoid hyperthermia and other cold related illnesses.



The items mentioned address some basic preparation techniques. For additional information, OSHA has created a webpage to provide worker and employer guidance during winter weather. Visit it at https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_storm/index.html

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To receive the *Quarterly* electronically, contact gregory.grayson@dol.gov. In the subject line type "subscribe" and provide your e-mail address. You may also reach us by phone at (860) 263-6900 or visit our website at <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/osha.htm>

CONN-OSHA Breakfast Roundtable Discussion Group has its own Web Page!

After 10 years the Breakfast Roundtable is finally online!

For those not familiar with the CONN-OSHA Breakfast Roundtable Discussion Group, on the third Tuesday of every month, CONN-OSHA offers Breakfast Roundtable Meetings that cover subjects ranging from evacuation plans and fire extinguishers to air quality and ergonomics. The intent of these free 90-minute workshops is to discuss safety and health issues in a supportive and informal environment. The roundtable meetings are held from 8:15 am to 9:45 on the third Tuesday of the month at the Connecticut Department of Labor, 200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, CT 06109, in Conference Room A. Pre-registration is required.

Beginning with the monthly meeting notice dated November 19, 2013, notices will now be sent out during the first week of each month. The notice will include the subject of the month, a Draft Agenda and information on the numerous non-CONN-OSHA sponsored Low/No-Cost Training/Educational Opportunities that are being offered around the region. These opportunities will be accessed using hyperlinks.

In the past, if you could not attend the roundtable in person, the information on the Low/No-Cost Training/Educational opportunities was lost to you. Now, this information can be found under the News and Notices tab. In addition, we are now able to provide access to the archives of the Breakfast Roundtable meetings back to January 2013.

Go to <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/Breakfast/index.htm> to access the Roundtable's Home Page and for the current notice (November 19, 2013). To be placed on the e-mail distribution list, contact John Able at able.john@dol.gov.

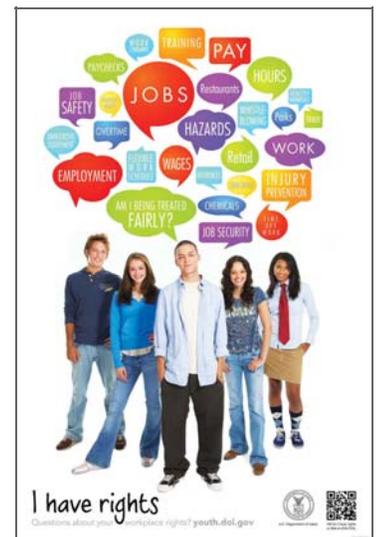
Another exciting feature of the CONN-OSHA Web Page is we now own the rights to the domains “.COM, .NET and .ORG”. Now, to get to our home page, simple type CONN-OSHA into any search engine and CONN-OSHA should be the top hit! Visit often, and check out the new Globally Harmonized System Web Page <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/HazComm/default.htm>.

Young Workers...You have Rights

In 2011, 331 teenagers were killed in workplace accidents. This is seven percent of the total workplace deaths of 4,693. Additionally, there is a teenage non-fatal injury every nine minutes.

In response to these frightening statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed a teen safety and health web page to raise awareness among workers and employers. In addition, the State of Connecticut reaches out to working teens in a variety of ways, one of which is the Connecticut Young Worker Health & Safety Team (The Team).

Since 1998, The Team has spread the safety and health message to teens, employers and parents. They are a nationally recognized group of professionals dedicated to promoting and protecting the health, welfare, and safety of our young workers as they enter the working world. They are currently working with the State Department of Education on integrating a curriculum into classroom lessons to promote workplace health and safety for teens and to prepare them for workplace learning experiences such as internships and apprenticeships as well as summer jobs and, eventually, careers.



For additional information visit The Team's new web site <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/YoungWorkerSafety/index.htm> or OSHA's teen worker safety web page <http://www.osha.gov/youngworkers/index.html>.

Fatality & Casualty Reporting

State & Town: CONN-OSHA (860) 263-6946 (local) or 1-866-241-4060 (toll-free)
Private Employers: Report to Federal OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA(6742)

Hazard Corner...Suffocated in a Grain Silo

In 2012, nineteen workers under 16 years of age died from fatal work injuries. Fourteen of these young decedents were employed as agricultural workers.

Two young workers (ages 14 and 19) were killed at a grain storage facility in the Midwest when they were sent into a grain bin to “walk down the corn.” The grain bin was being emptied, and the workers’ task was to break up clumps by walking on them to make the corn flow out of the bin. The workers were not provided safety harnesses, and the machinery used for evacuating the grain was running. The suction created by the flowing grain pulled them in like quicksand and suffocated them.

Safe practices at grain storage facilities include:

- Turn off, disconnect, and lock out all powered equipment associated with the bin.
- Provide each worker entering a bin with a body harness. The body harness should prevent a worker from sinking further than waist-deep in grain.
- Equip an observer to provide assistance and position him or her outside the bin or silo to maintain communication with employees.

For the full article, visit www.osha.gov/youngworkers/stories.html

OSHA has developed a webpage to provide workers, employers, and safety and health professionals useful, up-to-date safety and health information on grain handling facilities. For further information on grain handling, visit <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/grainhandling/index.html>



Connecticut-OSHA ~ Training Update...

Powered Industrial Trucks **November 21, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to noon** This workshop includes the basic requirements of the OSHA 29 CFR 1910.178 Powered Industrial Truck Standard which affects both General Industry and Construction material handling operations.

GHS Hazard Communication **December 2, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to noon** The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is now aligned with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The major changes of 29 CFR 1910.1200 are hazard classification, pictograms and safety data sheets.

Construction Site Safety **December 11, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to noon** Construction managers, first line supervisors, and construction employees will be provided with an overview of four areas of concern on the construction site. Program contents include: fall protection, scaffolding and ladder safety, electrical hazards, and excavation & trenching safety.

OSHA Recordkeeping **December 12, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to noon** At this workshop, you will learn how to fill out the OSHA 300 Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses accurately.

The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/tagout) **February 5, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to noon** This two-hour course will help to satisfy the requirements for training as detailed in the OSHA regulation for those who are working in areas where Lockout programs are in place, or whose job requires them to actually perform the Lockout and isolation of the energy sources.

Breakfast Roundtable This discussion group meets the third Tuesday of every month from 8:15 am to 9:45 am. Pre-registration is required. Visit our web page for more information: <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/DOLWORK/NewsNotes/2013/Roundtable.htm>
To be placed on the e-mail distribution list, contact John Able at able.john@dol.gov

Classes are free and are held at 200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, CT in Conference Room A/B (unless otherwise noted). To register, contact Catherine Zinsser at zinsser.catherine@dol.gov. Pre-registration is required. A Photo I.D. is also required to allow entry into a public building. For more training information, visit the CONN-OSHA web site www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/osha.htm