

End of the Year Record Keeping

Just a reminder about end of the year reporting and recordkeeping: Hazardous waste management reports are due for all but Hennepin County (those were due in December).



TIP: When you calculate the hazardous waste you generated, remember to subtract what you reported as on site at the end of 2008 from what you shipped during the year, and add what you had on-site at the end of 2009. It is a good idea to keep a record of how you reached your numbers as reference for next year.

Air Quality Permit Reports

For any company with an air quality permit, reports are due by April. It may be easiest to request your VOC purchases report from your supplier now and do the report for the MPCA as soon as you have all your numbers.

TIP: You can deduct the amount of waste shipped from your VOC purchases to arrive at your air quality permit purchases.



OSHA 300

If you have 11 or more employees at any time during the year, you must complete your OSHA 300 log of workplace injuries and illnesses. Even if you had no recordable injuries, you must complete the summary that includes the average number of employees and total hours worked.

TIP: The OSHA log must be signed by a company executive. This is usually an owner, general manager, city manager or similar position.

TIP: You have to record injuries that required medical treatment, restricted duty or lost work time (not counting the day of the injury). Injuries that only required first aid do not have to be recorded.

TIP: Post your OSHA 300A (only the summary page) from February 1-April 30.

Respirator Medical Evaluations

Employees who are required to wear respirators must have medical approval to do so. Wearing a respirator puts additional stress on the heart and lungs and you want to make sure employees are in physical condition to safely wear one. Respirator medical evaluations should be done when the employee starts work and roughly every two years (depending on the health care providers' recommendations). The evaluation may be as simple as having the employee complete a respirator questionnaire and having that reviewed by a licensed health care provider. We recommend you use an occupational health clinic that specializes in occupational medicine. They will better understand the requirements of the respiratory standard.



If you need information on occupational health clinics or are not sure if your employees need respirator medical evaluations, contact us at 651-481-9787 or carkey@chess-safety.com.

New Services From CHES

We've told you about the CHES Tournament—our blog. We post new information every week. CHES has two other new services, available to most maintenance clients free of charge or on a subscription basis to non-maintenance clients:

Safety Flash Cards: Monthly cards with quick safety reminders. A different topic is covered every month. This is available in individual cards for employees, posters or email.

MSDSLinks Management System: Trouble finding and maintaining your MSDS? CHES has developed an easy way to find MSDS from our MSDSLinks website. While you still have to keep a list of products used and on hand at your facility, you can find your MSDS through the MSDSLinks page.

Watch future newsletters for other new services we will be offering in 2010.



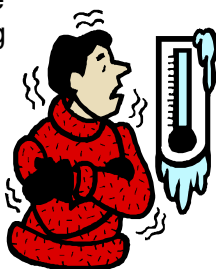
Baby, It's Cold Out There

It's Minnesota. It's winter. It's cold. It's expected. But it still creates problems.

If you have employees working outside, expect them to be dressed for the weather – in bulky layers, with hats and gloves on. That, combined with cold temperatures, can make operating equipment harder. In addition, peripheral vision can be obscured. Can tasks that require dexterity wait for warmer weather? Make sure people are given enough time to warm up. Remind them to get warm and dry right away if they get wet – they're at increased risk of hypothermia and frostbite if they're wet and cold.

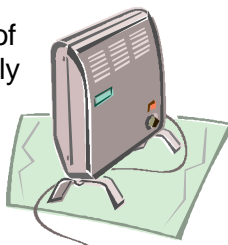


With your outdoor workers, go over the warning signs of cold stress. Shivering is the big one, but it stops if your body temperature drops below about 95°F. Review the measures to take if they're getting chilled or frostbitten. Warm up frozen hands gently, and wait to warm them up until you're sure they won't be refrozen right away.



Watch for slipping hazards: puddles left from snow tracked inside, icy parking lots. Stick to Minnesota fashion - Ugg boots, not smooth soles. Facility maintenance people: check the sidewalks on the building's south side. Even on these cold days, the sun can be intense enough to start melting the snow. But the snow melt will refreeze promptly, creating a new ice rink.

When we do walkthroughs at this time of year, we see space heaters under nearly every desk. We don't object too much to their use – but remind users to keep anything that burns (piles of paper, boxes) well away from them. Unplug them at night, to ensure they're off. And only allow ones with tipover protection, so they cannot run if they aren't upright.



Only three more months until the average temperature gets above freezing. Enjoy the dearth of mosquitoes while we can.

Out With the Old and In With the New

By Deb McGahey

For most employers, 2009 was a busy year monitoring all of the employment law changes that were enacted throughout the year. The following is a very brief recap of some of the human resource related changes. For more information, please check out the CHESB blog (www.chess-safety.com/blog) or contact Deb McGahey of HR Options at 952-240-9257.

Ledbetter Fair Pay Act¹

The Act makes it easier for employees who have experienced pay discrimination to seek redress. Key provisions of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act include:

- The Ledbetter Act will allow individuals to bring equal pay claims potentially many years after an alleged act of discrimination occurred.
- Expands plaintiff field. The Ledbetter Act will allow, not just an employee who was discriminated against, but, other individuals who were "affected" by an act of pay discrimination to file claims.
- Amends other civil rights statutes. The Ledbetter Act will extend the statute of limitations for filing claims for all protected classes of employment law, including gender, age, color, disability, race, religion and national origin.

MN Unemployment Insurance Updates

A number of changes have been made for consideration of benefits to former employees.

- Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation State Extension
- Base Period Definition Change
- Reemployment Assistance Training
- Changes to Qualifications for Receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits
http://www.uimn.org/general/ui_law_09.htm

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA applies to companies with 15 or more employees. The definition of what constitutes a disability changed substantially in 2009.

<http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm>

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Two of the major changes to the FMLA were the addition of Military Leave under FMLA and clarifying the definition of a serious health condition.

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28a.pdf>.

I-9

New forms and a handbook for employers were made available in August of 2009.

<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9.pdf>

¹Society of Human Resource Management

Deb has over 20 years of experience in Human Resources and is the founder and principal consultant for HR Options. She has helped clients with the development of handbooks, policy and procedure manuals, development of compensation structures, benefit renewals and acting as an interim head of HR.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have safety-related questions or just need more information about something or the services we offer. Please contact us by phone (651-481-9787) or email (deb@chess-safety.com) if you no longer want to receive newsletters or if you want them in a different format (email, mail).

Carol: 651-481-9787 cell: 651-269-6150
Janet: 651-458-4930

carkey@chess-safety.com
www.chess@chess-safety.com