



Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 6

August 2016

Message from the President – Bernie Fontaine

Welcome back everyone. The summer is nearly over and it's time to get back to work. Our Executive Committee recently completed the annual local section planning agenda for the upcoming year. We believe the future of NJAIHA is going to be even better behind our strong leadership team. Our newly elected Director of Membership Services is Candice Kowalewski and our President-elect is someone many of you know - Craig Doolittle, a NJAIHA Past President. Thanks to Barbara Woodhull who returns for her third term as Treasurer. Welcome aboard.

The local section is going to be very active again this year and I look forward for the membership to help us achieve our goals. The Executive Committee has formed a planning group since NJAIHA will be hosting the Northeast Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exhibition (NEIHce) on Friday, December 2, 2016. We could use your assistance to help with logistics and other coordinated activities. Anyone who wants to volunteer, please contact Barbara Woodhull.

We are planning a stellar lineup of engaging speakers for our Professional Development Courses (PDCs) for December 1, 2016. More information will be forthcoming as we get closer to the event. We are always interested in hearing from anyone either from our membership or outside the organization who wishes to speak at our monthly dinner meetings, PDCs, or our annual regional conference. Please contact Craig Doolittle if you wish to volunteer.

Another goal is to collaborate with stakeholders to develop awareness, construct legislation, and provide the tools for the NJ Youth@Work training program. When you consider that nearly 18.1 million workers less than 24 years of age, and these workers represented 13% of the workforce (2013); young workers have high occupational injury rates in workplaces where they typically work (e.g. restaurants with slippery floors and use of knives and cooking equipment). Inexperience and the lack of any formal safety and health training also increase injury/illness risk to young workers.

The Executive Committee already has been hard at work over the summer trying to connect with various vested organizations about (1) developing policy to require all school districts to present a 45-minute curriculum for students who will be seeking employment, possible for the first time and the responsibilities of their employers to provide a safe and healthful workplace and (2) uploading the free materials needed for faculty to conduct the group training by the end of the school year..

The designed curriculum is a fun, free and engaging that helps administrators, teachers and school/community-based job placement staff educate young people about the basics of job safety and health. The curriculum also presents essential information and career-readiness skills that focuses on eight (8) strategic core competencies. These transferable skills will help students stay safe and healthy now and throughout their lives. The curriculum is flexible and it can easily be tailored to meet the needs of all NJ students while addressing specific child labor rules and regulations. In order for us to be successful we seek the assistance of our membership and several Outreach Coordinators. The tools for administrators and faculty to train students was posted on the NJAIHA website under IH Resources. If you are interested in supporting this initiative, please contact Mark Ostapczuk.

Our standard order of business continues to be our main theme for 2016. We want you at the dinner meetings! We are working hard to find quality speakers to engage our membership. If you haven't heard, NJAIHA is offering a **"Loyalty Rewards Program"**. Members who attend any five (5) dinner meetings will get the sixth dinner free!! In addition, if you sign-up five (5) new or former members, we will gladly offer you a free dinner as well. Feel free to contact me on any other incentive programs drive engagement in the organization and increasing the membership.

We are still looking for volunteers to be our Outreach Coordinators. This important opportunity assists NJAIHA to increase awareness of our profession as a career choice and the benefits of being a member of our local chapter. Ideally, we would be to start a NJAIHA student chapter to create synergy between NJAIHA, local universities and colleges. We envision that some of our scholarship winners and undergraduate and graduate students could work as Outreach Coordinators to tell middle school and high school students about the benefits of our profession. NJAIHA has constructed a fun and brief to meet this goal. If you are interested in this project, please contact Candice Kowalewski.


As always, more information is being continuously uploaded to the NJAIHA website and the LinkedIn and Facebook webpages. There are many peer-reviewed articles and other resources, which may be of interest to our members and the work that they do. We look forward to receiving comments and recommendations regarding content and format to deliver timely information about our profession. It is our hope that other people outside our profession will find this information informative as well. We hope to cross pollinate different related disciplines. The relationship can provide useful insight and dialog on how industrial hygiene and occupational health can become a sustainable entity that provides cost savings, return on investment, and improves productivity, profitability, and prosperity for business. We also envision more collaboration with economists, sociologists, and investors about risk.

The new OSHA health standard on crystalline silica is being discussed among business in general industry, construction, and maritime trades. Our webmaster, Jack Zybura has uploaded a Body of Knowledge (BoK) on crystalline silica information to the website including federal OSHA, NIOSH, and NJ Department of Health and Human Services published resources. We hope our members and other stakeholders will find this information useful to construct a robust corporate policy, written program and standard operating procedures as OSHA compliance deadlines loom in the not so distant future.

Our plan is to continue selling the piqué polo shirts with the NJAIHA logo to raise additional revenue to support the student scholarships next year. After some deliberation, we plan on holding our pricing so that more of our members can afford these items. Several of our members proudly wore these shirts in support of NJAIHA at our Past President's night and AIHce in Baltimore, MD. Please consider making a purchase as a gift, present, or any other commemorative celebration.

Finally, NJAIHA is hopeful to attract more occupational health and safety consultants, equipment manufacturers and distributors, analytical laboratories, and corporations to help sponsor our monthly dinner meetings, advertise in our newsletters, and become premium exhibitors at the 2016 NEIHce. If you are interested in advertising, contact Mark Ostapczuk. In closing, I look forward to seeing all of you at our September 15th dinner meeting at Snuffy's!

Best regards,



Bernard L. Fontaine, Jr., CIH, CSP, FAIHA
President NJAIHA

Visit NJAIHA On-line

NJAIHA is continuously posting relevant information on industrial hygiene principles and practice on these webpages. Feel free to find out current events which may affect your business or industry and continue the conversation on a regional, national, and international level.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Industrial-Hygiene-Association-New-Jersey-Local-Section/139640922751121>

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=3675325>

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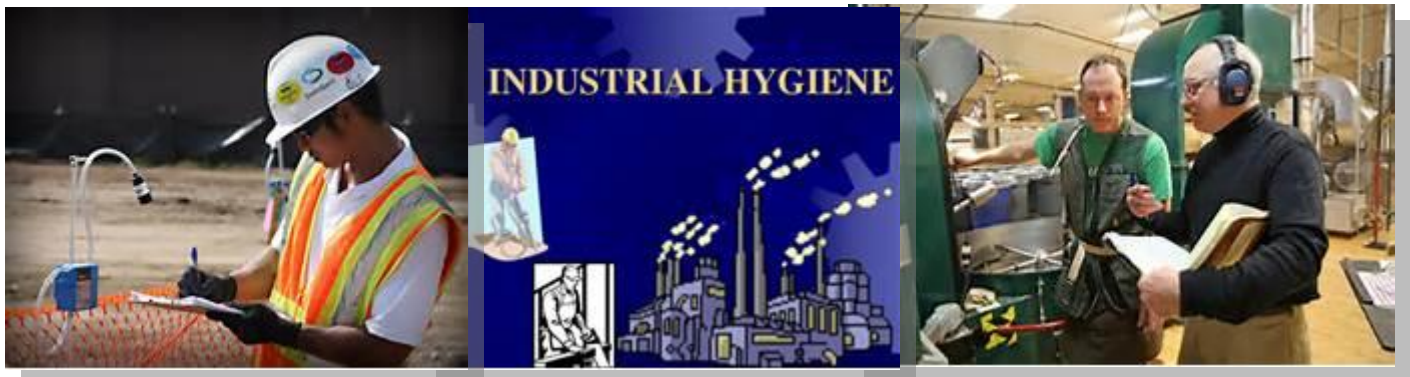
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Date	Upcoming Calendar of Events	Location
09/15/16	Monthly Dinner Meeting	Snuffy's Pantagis Scotch Plains, NJ
10/20/16	Monthly Dinner Meeting	Snuffy's Pantagis Scotch Plains, NJ
11/17/16	Monthly Dinner Meeting	Snuffy's Pantagis Scotch Plains, NJ
12/1/16	Professional Development Courses (PDCs)	PSE&G Facility South Plainfield, NJ
12/2/16	Northeast Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exhibition (NEIHce)	Westin Forestall Village, Princeton, NJ



Members remember our ongoing loyalty rewards program. After five (5) paid dinner meetings, dinner is on us!! Please pick-up your loyalty reward card and have it checked at the door. This is a great way to help us increase the membership at the dinner meetings.

Another way to earn loyalty rewards points, sign up five (5) of more new or former members of NJ AIHA. All new members are tracked to ensure that you receive credit for promoting the organization.

Those of you who are CIHs, don't forget to pick up your verification of attendance forms. These are located the entrance to the dinner meeting room, professional development courses, and conference.

OUR LOCAL SECTION OFFICERS

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
President	Bernie Fontaine, Jr.	732-221-5687	windsgroup@aol.com
President-Elect	Craig Doolittle	973-670-9793	CDoolittle@trcsolutions.com
Treasurer	Barbara Woodhull	732-225-6040	barb.woodhull@us.bureauveritas.com
Secretary	Henry Shotwell	908-310-8481	dr.hank@mindspring.com
Past-President	Mark Ostapczuk	201-783-6621	mark.ostapczuk@roche.com
Director: Member Services	Candice Kowalewski	732-695-4880	cakowalewski@msn.com
Director: Administration	Jack Zybura	973-560-0090	jzybura@lsga.com
Director: Publications	Mark Ostapczuk	201-783-6621	mark.ostapczuk@roche.com
Executive Secretary	Ronnie Tutty	973-300-0144	njaiha@ptd.net
Web Master	Jack Zybura	973-560-0090	jzybura@lsga.com
Historian	Tim Rice	908-782-2102	ricehss@comcast.net

Job Postings

There are many job postings on our web site. If you are looking or just curious check them out.

<http://www.njaiha.org/resources/job-postings/>

There are several job postings on these other organization web sites as well:

<http://njasse.org/jobs/>

<http://www.philaaaiha.com/Employment.htm>

2016 Industrial Hygiene and Safety Review Course

Are you looking for an inexpensive way to study for the CIH and CSP exams? Do you need certification maintenance points to meet your re-certification requirements? The New Jersey Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (NJ-AIHA) is offering a comprehensive Industrial Hygiene Course. The course is designed to provide basic training in some critical areas of industrial hygiene and safety and will likely be beneficial for those entering the field as well as those who are just looking to sharpen their skills in certain technical areas.

In addition, many of the people who have attended the program have found it to be very helpful in preparing for the CIH and CSP examinations. Certified Industrial Hygienists have the opportunity to obtain CM points per lecture (0.167 points per contact hour). Participants are welcome to attend any or all of the lecture sessions, depending on their individual training needs. People who need certification maintenance points must sign an attendance sheet for each session.

Industrial Hygiene & Safety Lecture Topics

History of Industrial Hygiene, OSH Act Review and IH Management, Epidemiology, Fire Protection, Emergency Response, Ergonomics, Risk Management – Record Keeping, Indoor Air Quality, Bio-Safety, Equipment and Facility Safety, Ionizing Radiation, Non-Ionizing Radiation, Math, Statistics & Calculator Review, Air Pollution, Toxicology, Regulatory & Legal Affairs, Physics and Basic Engineering, Air Sampling – IH Chemistry, Direct Reading Instrumentation, Industrial Noise, Mechanical Exhaust Ventilation, Ethics and Professional Conduct, Respiratory Protection and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The IH classes will be held Tuesday nights* (6:00-9:00) beginning June 7, 2016 at the Rutgers Environmental Health & Safety Dept., 27 Road 1, Livingston Campus, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854. Tel. (732) 445-2550 (See the following link to Google Maps Directions)

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Rutgers+Environmental+Health+and+Safety/@40.516915,-74.430336,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m2!3m1!1s0x89c3c7bf656ffff:0x2b79eadac518c3c8>

Cost: \$150.00 (includes registration, admission to all IH and Safety classes and on-line access to all course materials) **Safety Classes are sponsored by: ASSE**

*The NJ Chapter of the American Society of
Safety Engineers*



Safety Topics have been added to our schedule (included in the price). We will have guest speakers on certain safety topics to help prepare people for the CSP exam. **Safety classes will be held on Thursday nights (6:00 PM).** The website will be updated when the specific dates and topics for the Safety classes have been established. Enrollment forms, directions, and schedule are posted on the NJAIHA web page <http://www.njaiha.org/events/njaiha-summer-review-course/>.

Recent NJAIHA Activities in Pictures

Tim Rice, NJAIHA Historian



New Jersey Section AIHA - June 2016 Year-End Dinner Meeting

On Thursday, June 9, 2016, our annual year-end Dinner Meeting was held this year at Snuffy's Pantagis Renaissance in Scotch Plains, NJ. Section members and guests enjoyed convening for the last meeting of the 2015-2016 season at which outgoing officers were recognized, the year in review was presented, student scholarships were bestowed, we heard from three invited speakers, and members got one last chance to network before Section dinner meetings begin again in the Fall.

Mark Ostapczuk, NJAIHA President, served as the emcee for this year's dinner meeting which was loaded with activities. To start things off, it was a pleasure to again welcome **Tom Case**, CIH, CSP, and FAIHA. Tom, who is our Local Sections Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative of the AIHA Local Sections Council (LSC), reviewed his role on the Council which is to help facilitate open lines of communication between the nine (9) Mid-Atlantic Local Sections and the LSC, AIHA, and AIHA Board of Director members, and then updated NJAIHA members on current LSC activities .

Next on the agenda, President Ostapczuk gave an excellent summation of Section highlights and accomplishments for the 2015-2016 year, which included, among other things, a diverse variety of speakers and topics at our eight (8) monthly dinner meetings, successful Fall PDCs, an active student scholarship campaign for the year, the publishing of eight (8) newsletters and a successful 2015 Summer Industrial Hygiene Refresher Course (thanks as always, **Hank Shotwell!**).

Barbara Woodhull, who just concluded her second consecutive term as NJAIHA Treasurer, presented the Annual Treasurer's Report for 2015-2016 which again indicated that our Section continues to maintain itself on fiscally sound ground.

A traditional event during our Spring dinner meetings is the presentation of scholarships to deserving and qualifying students who have demonstrated scholastic excellence in the study and promotion of environmental health and safety/industrial hygiene at the undergraduate or graduate levels. With **Grey Coppi**, NJAIHA Director of Membership Services, presiding, three students were awarded scholarships this year as follows: a \$1,000 Raymond Manqanelli Scholarship to **Jessica Vallee-Vasquez**, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; a \$1,000 Brian M. Sylvester Memorial Scholarship to **Linard McCormick**, Columbia Southern University; and a \$1,000 President's Scholarship to **Katherine Fay**, Rutgers University. Congrats to Jessica, Linard, and Katherine from everyone at NJAIHA!

Outgoing Membership Services Director Grey Coppi was presented with a plaque by **Steve Siegel**, NJAIHA Past-President, in appreciation and recognition of Grey's three (3) year term of dedicated service to Section's members in the areas of promoting membership initiatives and student scholarship programs coordination.

Outgoing President **Mark Ostapczuk** received a plaque for meritorious service from Past President Siegel to recognize Mark's provision of clear direction to the Section and his excellent management of

its affairs over the past year. The Section certainly appreciates the personal time Mark provided to keep our organization strong and active.

Lastly, NJAIHA Treasurer **Barbara Woodhull**, who, as mentioned earlier, just completed her second consecutive term as Treasurer, was presented with a gift certificate from the Section by Past President Siegel to recognize her adept handling, tracking and management of the Section's financial affairs for the past three years. And the good news, Barb is coming back to serve a third consecutive term as NJAIHA Treasurer!

The evening's proceedings were rounded out with two presentations by current NJAIHA members. Our technical after-dinner speaker, **Steve Temes**, President, Airways Environmental Services, Red Bank, NJ, gave a thought-provoking discussion on the issue of multiple chemical sensitivity during his presentation, "*Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)*". Thanks, Steve!

Concluding the evening's events, we heard from **Bernard Fontaine, Jr.**, CIH, CSP, FAIHA, Managing Partner, the Windsor Consulting Group, Inc., South River, NJ and incoming NJAIHA President. In his presentation "*2016 AIHce Report: Content Portfolios, Youth Safety Matters, and Happenings on the Hill*", Bernie reviewed highlights from the 2016 AIHce just held in Baltimore, MD including an update on AIHA's Content Portfolio Management strategy, a discussion of the joint NIOSH/AIHA "Safety Matters-A Safety & Health Training for Young Workers" training program initiative designed to raise awareness among young people about workplace safety and health, and a review of safety and health legislation currently being tracked by AIHA.

And, last but not least, we would like to extend our appreciation to the Edison, NJ office of **Bureau Veritas** for subsidizing the networking/cocktail session. The next few pages are some of highlights.

New Jersey Section AIHA - June 2015 Year-End Dinner Meeting (cont.)



The evening was well attended. NJAIHA members and guest enjoy networking session prior starting the 2015-2016 Year-End Dinner Meeting. The dinner meeting was held at Snuffy's Pantagis restaurant in Scotch Plains, NJ on June 9, 2016. Recipients of the three (3) student scholarships and faculty were in attendance.

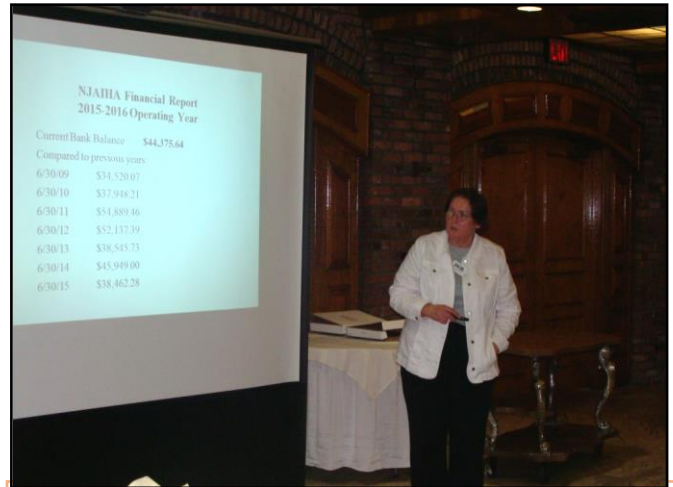


Tom Case, Local Sections Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative of the AIHA Local Sections Council (LSC), returned again for the third year to our year-end meeting to update NJAIHA members on Council efforts to facilitate open lines of communication between the nine Mid-Atlantic Local Sections and the LSC, AIHA, and AIHA Board of Directors, and update the membership on current LSC activities.

New Jersey Section AIHA - June 2016 Year-End Dinner Meeting (cont.)



Mark Ostapczuk, NJAIHA President, discusses the highlights and accomplishments of the 2015-2016 year during his "Year in Review" presentation. This year was focused on loyalty of the membership to promote NJAIHA and support the student scholarships.



Barbara Woodhull, NJAIHA Treasurer, provides the membership with Annual Treasurer's Report for 2015-16. The financial results were impressive based on all of the hard work by the Executive Committee to promote dinner meetings and the PDCs.



Grey Coppi, NJAIHA outgoing Director of Membership Services (left), accepts a plaque from **Steve Siegel**, NJAIHA Past-President, in appreciation and recognition of Grey's three year term of dedicated service to Section's members in promoting membership initiatives and coordinating the student scholarship program.

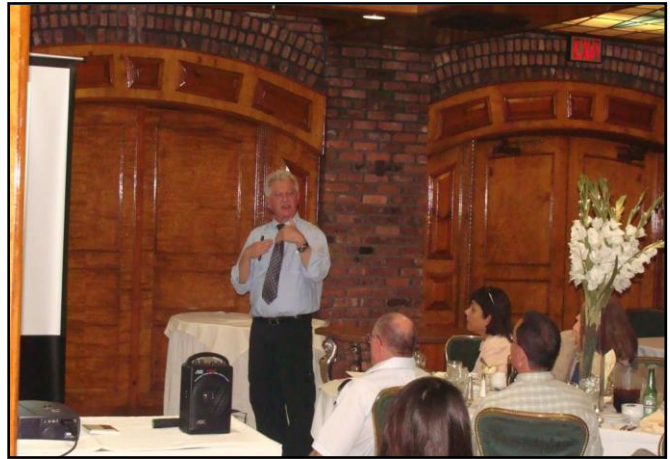


Mark Ostapczuk, NJAIHA outgoing President, listens to Past-President Siegel before receiving a plaque in recognition of his past year for meritorious service to the NJ Section. Thank you, Mark for your leadership!

New Jersey Section AIHA - June 2016 Year-End Dinner Meeting (cont.)



Barbara Woodhull, NJAIHA Treasurer, listens prior to Past-President Siegel presenting her with a gift certificate in appreciation and recognition of her successful completion of a second three year term as Section Treasurer. We are honored and blessed to have Barb back to start her third consecutive term as Treasurer in the 2016-17 year!



Our after-dinner technical speaker, Steve Temes, President, Airways Environmental Services in Red Bank, NJ, makes a point during his thought-provoking environmental air quality presentation, "*Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)*".



Bernie Fontaine, incoming NJAIHA President, receives a token of appreciation from outgoing NJAIHA President Mark Ostapczuk, after providing members and guest with a summary of current activities and initiatives at National AIHA during his presentation "*2016 AIHce Report: Content Portfolios, Youth Safety Matters, and Happenings on the Hill*". These highlights will be considered as the drivers for the upcoming year action plan.



Here are our three NJAIHA Student Scholarship Awardees gathered for a group photo with Grey Coppi, NJAIHA Director of Membership Services, and Dr. Gail Becker, Professor, Middlesex County College, who presented the *Raymond Manganelli Scholarship*. Shown left to right are Grey Coppi; Katherine Fay, Rutgers University, a *President's Scholarship*; Jessica Vallee-Vasquez, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the *Raymond Manganelli Scholarship*; Linard McCormick, Columbia Southern University, the *Brian M. Sylvester Memorial Scholarship*; and Dr. Becker. Congratulations to all from everyone at NJAIHA!



Happenings On The Hill

July 13, 2016

Congress Prepares to Take 7-Week Recess –

Yours Truly to Take a Longer One – More on That Later

Congress is preparing to leave town for its annual “summer recess”, leaving the end of this week for 7 weeks, returning after Labor Day. But as usual there is the “last minute” surge of activity and several issues to address. Let’s dig right in.

Federal Budget –

As if on command we can use the same words we usually use by saying we do not yet have a federal budget for FY17. Congress is charged to approve the budget before the existing FY16 budget expires on September 30.

There was hope that the compromise Congress agreed to last year to limit spending would hold up this year but that isn’t the case. None of the individual appropriations budgets have been approved; with one of the biggest sticking points whether or not these budgets will include any “policy riders”. These riders are usually very controversial, such as riders that might ban OSHA from spending any money on silica, etc.

The bottom line is that Congress will unlikely enact a budget before the deadline. The most likely scenario is that a Continuing Resolution will be adopted, perhaps to run as long as 6 months. This would mean all agencies are allowed to spend the same amount they are now spending until after a new administration comes to town in January. While some speak the dreaded words “government shutdown” if no budget is forthcoming, I do not see that happening.

Agency Budgets –

Speaking of the federal budget, the debate rages on about appropriations for occupational safety and health. Don’t get too concerned though as these are all preliminary figures.

The FY17 budget proposal now looks like this – (all in millions)

Agency	Senate Committee	President Proposal	House Committee	Existing Spending
OSHA	\$553	\$595	\$534.4	\$552.8
MSHA	\$376	\$397.3	\$350.5	\$375.9
NIOSH	\$334	\$285.6	\$329.1	\$339.1

Regulatory Reform –

The House passed HR 4768 this past week; a bill that would limit federal agencies' rulemaking power. The bill, the Separation of Powers Restoration Act overturns a 1984 Supreme Court decision. Here's what it really means – the Supreme Court decision says that courts must defer to agency interpretations of statutes when disputes arise.

Opponents of the current system say that courts should review all relevant questions of law instead of relying on agency interpretations. This debate has been going on for some time and will continue. Even if the Senate were to pass the bill, the President has vowed to veto the measure. This won't make it into law during this session.

More Regulatory Reform –

Congress continues to consider a couple of dozen legislative measures addressing regulatory reform; however it is likely few, if any, will make it into law. The most recent effort comes from the Democrats in the Senate who are calling for creation of a regulatory watchdog to speed OSHA and other agencies rulemaking. Proponents say such a watchdog would put a stop to what they consider is industry control over the regulatory process.

One example used is the recent silica standard that took nearly 40 years after it was first proposed; but that may be an extreme example. Proponents cited the fact that EPA takes an average of 3.8 years to craft a rule, while OSHA takes 12.5 years.

Don't bet on anything happening with this issue. Besides, if one looks to the usual outcome of some new "watchdog" created, we are more than likely to spend some more tax dollars without ever seeing a result.

Could Asbestos be Banned?

One of the results of the recent Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) amendments that were signed into law is the question about whether or not EPA now has the ability to ban asbestos. Proponents of a ban say that the new law provides EPA with the power to overcome any regulatory barriers and move forward to ban asbestos.

However, opponents of a ban say such a ban is not needed because the chemical is no longer widely used. Plus, EPA has not indicated it is interested in again addressing a possible ban. While the debate will continue, don't look for any ban on asbestos in the near future.

Guidance Document or a Rule?

And the debate on this issue also continues. There has long been concern that agencies are issuing more and more guidance documents because they can avoid the process of having to go through the public comment period and hearings. While guidance documents are not legally binding – they are often treated as such.

Proponents of guidance documents say it is sometimes the only way for agencies to address an issue, providing an interpretation for employers and others. Opponents say the documents are an attempt to put in new regulations without following the required process.

They are probably both right! That means it is likely that nothing will come of the debate and things will continue as they are for some time.

Licensing for Occupational Safety and Health Professionals –

A long time debate over whether industrial hygienists and safety professionals should be licensed has always ended with the fact that most of these professionals are not in favor of having to be licensed; arguing that having such a license would be turning over the profession to government policymakers. On the other hand, there are those who believe that licensing would provide an additional level of professionalism and credibility.

While in the past government has left this debate to the private sector, the White House has now entered the discussion by announcing an effort to assist states with efforts to make licenses more portable across state lines. While on the surface one may wonder what this has to do with AIHA and our members, the fact is that the efforts by the White House may make it even more difficult to enact licensing for OH&S professionals, if that is the wish of these professionals.

An interesting debate. Over the years, AIHA national has stated many times that our members are not supportive of licensing, yet AIHA national has supported individual local section efforts in specific states to enact licensing. To date though there are no states that have licensing for industrial hygienists and I don't see it happening any time soon.

Similar Issue to Licensing Introduced –

Speaking of licensing, a similar issue has come up in Congress with the introduction of HR 5543, the Environmental Health Workforce Act. This act would prioritize education and training for existing and new environmental health professionals. If enacted, the bill would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop model standards, guidelines and technical assistance for credentialing environmental health workers.

Another issue that looks as if it could have some impact on some AIHA members; but the intent of the legislation is to address the problems found during the recent water crisis in Flint, MI; problems that showed the need to have qualified, accountable and efficient professionals.

Doubtful if this will be enacted this year but am sure the issue will be back in the next session of Congress.

OSHA Activity

Plenty to talk about from the agency.

Penalty Increases –

OSHA received approval to raise maximum penalties for safety and health violations by almost 80 percent after the Office of Management and Budget provided guidelines to the agency. The penalty increases came about through a provision in last year's federal budget that allowed OSHA to increase the penalties up to 82% on a one-time basis and then update the amounts yearly according to inflation. The changes take effect August 1.

All is not as clear as it seems though. Since the announcement and the new penalty structure, there are those who believe OSHA should significantly strengthen agency practices to settle enforcement actions. They argue that settling violations for lower amounts does not provide enough of deterrence for providing a workplace that includes risks and hazards to workers.

This has been an interesting debate over the last couple of years. Why raise the penalty maximums if the agency negotiates for a lower penalty? On the other hand, a higher maximum must be in place to provide deterrence. Am sure the debate will rage on.

Silica Rule –

The silica rule is now in effect with a year of implementation underway. But all is not as easy as it sounds as there are still legal challenges and always the threat of Congress getting involved.

Compliance dates for construction are June 23, 2017 but general industry and maritime compliance will be June 23, 2018. Oil and gas sector has until June 23, 2021.

Industry remains concerned about the cost and that the rule will be unworkable. That seems to be the thrust of the legal challenges that have yet to be heard. Then you have the threat of Congress getting involved through a policy rider in the budget. Its doubtful Congress will succeed with a policy rider but just the threat adds more and more complexity to the issue. Bottom line – I don't see anything stopping this rule.

Injury Reporting Rule –

Now that OSHA has finalized its injury reporting rule that requires employers to submit electronically to the agency many injury and illness records, industry is gearing up to block some aspects of the rule. Industry is not happy with the drug testing portion of the rule and also believes that the safety incentive programs in the rule will not reduce injuries.

Bottom line – Not sure industry has enough to stop the rule from moving forward but the courts may be sympathetic to some of the arguments about privacy concerns, etc.

General Industry Fall Rule –

OSHA has announced it is working hard to finalize OSHA's rule to revise general industry requirements to employers to protect workers from slips, trips, and falls. The agency has resubmitted the draft final rule to the White House for an analysis. There are few details about what the final rule might include so will have to wait until the draft is returned to the agency. OSHA still hopes to finalize this rule prior to the end of the Obama administration.

It's Time for A Break –

As I mentioned in the first headline of this issue, Congress will take a break for the summer later this week. Yours truly has also decided to take a break for the summer, fall, winter, spring

After having worked in the government affairs field for 40 years, the last 24+ years with AIHA, I have decided to retire from the day to day politics of the job of government affairs and of Washington.

I'm not sure it takes much to explain why I want to retire? I want to spend a little more time traveling with my wife – on vacation and not business; I want to spend a little more time getting frustrated on the golf course; and I want to spend a little more time doing nothing! That's it, that's how simple it is.

Many of the “Happenings” readers know my wife and I are moving from Virginia to California. Many have asked “why California”? Well, how far can one get from Washington without moving to Alaska or Hawaii? California was the answer, plus the year-round weather and a lot of golf courses doesn’t hurt.

What will I miss? The members of AIHA come to mind, as well as the many other individuals I have worked with over the years in Washington and around the country. I will also miss going out and making presentations to local section meetings, state conferences, etc. I figure I gave over 500 presentations while employed at AIHA, probably one of the most fun things I ever did.

So, how does this impact AIHA. Well, it’s a little complicated. My last day in the AIHA office is July 15 and I will then be on vacation for 3 weeks. My last day employed at AIHA will be August 5. However, AIHA has asked me, and I agreed, to stay on and do a bit of consulting until the end of the year. This gives the association time to consider the next step with government affairs. The association will have a new executive director on board around October or November and this individual will no doubt want to have some input on the government affairs department. Having me stay on until the end of the year provides some backup for the association should anything happen in Washington (that would a first). So you will still be receiving a few things from me on behalf of AIHA and I will remain on the AIHA email system until December 31.

I will be putting out another “Happenings” or two; for sure one after the election. Oh, I have to give you my take on that!! And what an election this will be. If there was ever a time to get out of Washington before whoever comes to town in January this is the time.

I joke and complain a lot about what does or does not happen in Washington. But we still have the best representative government of any place in the world! We live in the best country in the world! The people who work for government, from the heads of agencies like NIOSH and OSHA to the individuals who do the work behind the scenes, are some of the finest leaders and protectors of worker health and safety anywhere.

But remember this. In the end it many times makes little difference what OSHA does or does not do. It many times makes little difference what Congress does or does not do. Because so long as you – professionals in occupational safety and health – continue to do what you do every day, workers will be protected and able to return home safe and healthy.

Keep up the effort to improve worker health and safety and I hope we have the chance to run into each other again. Thank you for your support and your friendship over the years.

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