

## 2003 Newsletter

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- **OSH Statistics**

- Construction sites calling for death... Death rate rapidly increases by 22% this year

**the number of fatalities at construction sites as of September last year was 542, an increase by 22% and 29% respectively compared with the last year**

**The number of fatalities occurring at construction sites increased sharply this year. According to the materials recently announced by the Ministry of Labor, the number of fatalities at construction sites as of September last year was 542, an increase by 22% and 29% respectively compared with the last year (445 persons) and 2001 (419 persons). The number of casualties including the fatalities (16,416 persons) has also increased by 17% and 46% respectively compared with last year (14,035 persons) and 2001 (11,293 persons).**

**The Federation of Construction Industry Trade Union predicted the number of death will reach 800 if such trend continues.**

**In relation to the increase of death rate at construction sites, Baek Suk-gun, vice-chairman of the construction trade union said that there had been particularly high rainfall this year during which construction work could not be performed. In order to catch up with the delayed works, the construction contractors hurried works resulting in the increased accident rate and death rate or forced works even in the rain leading to accidents.**

**It has been pointed out that there are many unskilled workers including foreign workers mobilized at various construction sites which also leads to increased accident rate. An industrial safety manager, Lee (29) stated that there are many foreign workers used at construction sites because the labor is cheap even though they lack expertise and communication skills. This has contributed to the increased accident rate.**

**In connection with this, an official from the Ministry of Labor said higher accident rate is noted at the small and medium construction sites with the contract amount less than 5 billion won. The official said that the Ministry plans to strengthen its mobile inspections and supervision, and disadvantages will be given in biddings to the contractors having high rate of accidents.**

(November 24, 2003, Hangeore Newspaper)

- **Main OSH Policy**

- Ministry of Labor, Development of enforcement guidelines for health problem prevention program

**Ministry of Labor conducts surveys on workplaces requiring subject programs to provide positive guidance and supervision**

The Ministry of Labor has developed enforcement guidelines for the worker's health problem prevention program for wide application at the frontline workplaces. According to the announcement made by the Ministry of Labor, since the "Regulation on industrial health criteria" was wholly revised in July, the Ministry has completed the program enforcement guidelines to help owners who are obligated to establish and implement preventive programs regarding the protection respiratory organs and the protection of hearing in closed workplaces.

The "Respiratory Organ Protection Program" developed this time by the Ministry of Labor is intended for the workplaces exposed to dust exceeding the exposure limits or workplaces experiencing workers' health problems resulting from dusty works, and the "hearing protection program" is aimed at the workplaces generating noises exceeding 90 dB or where noises have caused health problems to workers. On the other hand, the "Health program in closed workplaces" is the program which the owner must establish and implement in case workers are performing duties in closed places.

The Ministry of Labor plans to check all workplaces requiring the establishment and operation of the program and check whether such requirements are being complied with. The Ministry will punish violators according to related laws.

KOSHA will build a database containing workplaces requiring the preventive programs and use it in providing guidance on the prevention of accidents and supplying technical materials. KOSHA intends to concentrate on the control of harmful factors and provide technical support for the workplaces exceeding exposure limits or the workplaces having a danger of oxygen deficiency to execute relate programs.

In order to promote the safety consciousness of the labor and the management, KOSHA during normal guidance and inspection, plans to conduct training on the seriousness of occupational diseases, prevention technique and the details of revised laws.

At the same time, KOSHA will strengthen the details of training on preventive programs for the

health managers and persons in charge of health. KOSHA will develop and supply training materials which are easy for the frontline workers to understand.

**(November 17, 2003, Safety News)**

- Government to issue "Consumer Alert" starting next year

**Government to disclose products that threaten the safety of consumers**

**In order to inform danger, the government starting next year intends to issue consumer alert with respect to the products that threaten the safety of consumers to advise of danger.**

**The consumer alert is a system under which the government officially inform the people in case any defects adversely affecting the safety of consumers are discovered from food, toys, daily necessities or medical services.**

**The Ministry of Finance and Economy on November 13 disclosed that starting in January of the following year, if a report is received for 10 times or more per month regarding dangerous products including cases where consumers pass away or are injured after they use or receive the same type of products or services, the consumer safety center operating under the control of the Consumer Protection Board will immediately issue consumer alert.**

**The consumer alert is also issued when the same or similar danger continues for 1 month or longer, or when consumers suffer, or are likely to suffer fatal accidents or injuries but there are no other appropriate means available to protect the safety of consumers.**

**The consumer alert is issued through newspapers, broadcast and the Internet along with information on the type of products involved, date and place of damage, details of accidents, degree of harm, frequency of accident occurring and precautionary matters for consumers.**

**Consumers who suffer damage from dangerous products may report the case to the hospitals and fire stations designated by the government or through the consumer safety net home page ([safe.cpb.or.kr](http://safe.cpb.or.kr)) and telephone (080-900-3500).**

**An official from the Ministry of Finance and Economy stated that since a corporation may suffer lethal blow in case the consumer alert is issued incorrectly, the alert will be issued only there is a clear evidence based on objective judgment.**

**(November 24, 2003, Chosun Ilbo)**

- **Update in KOREA**

- 8th Asia-Pacific Responsible Care Conference

**Examples of constructing advanced accident prevention system presented, seeking exchanges of information networks**

**The era of loosely countering environmental and safety issue by the petrochemical industry has ended and a new era of scientific Responsible Care (RC) has arrived.**

**The 8th Asia-Pacific Responsible Care Conference (APRCC) was held on November at the COEX Inter-Continental Hotel with the participation of some 500 representatives from 12 countries including chemical experts from the America and Europe.**

**RC is an environment and safety activities voluntarily carried out by chemical industry since 20 years before to improve the negative image of the environment and safety related to chemical industry. Korea jointed the "RC Leadership Group", an international body and an organization of the RC campaign" in 2000 and operates 71 member companies and 8 chemical organizations.**

**This event scheduled to run through November 7 draws particular attention because interest in the environment and safety issue has risen following a series of accidents occurred at chemical plants. At this event hosted by the Korea Responsible Care Council (KRCC) (Chairman Noh Ki-ho) and opened for the first time in Korea under the theme "Toward Total Cooperation between RC and the social community", participants held various discussions and cooperative programs on environment, safety and health facing the chemical industries.**

**"This Seoul Conference is extremely meaningful in that the event is participated in not only by the chemical industries but also by other interested parties including the government, academic world and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss and seek solutions to the environment and safety issues facing chemical industries", said Chairman Noh Ki-ho (CEO of LG Chemical).**

**There were many distinguished participants such as Suh Joo-won, Secretary General of the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement; Chung Gwang-mo, Chairman of the Consumers Union of Korea; Chung Jae-hee, Secretary General of the Citizen's Coalition for Safety; Han Gi-yang, former representative of the Ulsan Federation for Environmental Movement; Gato Gatstoshi, Chairman of Japan's Federation of Chemical Energy Industry Trade Union; and Kim Jae-bom, Secretary General of the UN EP Korea committee. They dealt with matters of greatest interest in the chemical industry including the presentation of theme related to the contingency plan at the chemical plants, and the distribution and safety of chemical products.**

Representatives from the regional RC organizations operating in the U.S., Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan and other countries drew keen attention by presenting cases of constructing their own environment and safety systems. In addition, officials from the well-known international firms such as LG-Dow Chemical, BASF and Dupont also introduced advanced risk management systems and presented cases of emergency actions through keynote addresses.

LG chemical which has sponsored this conference attracted attention by presenting cases of success in reducing the emission of pollutants.

What is noteworthy here is that the Korea RC Council (KRCC), through agreement of the 12 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region, has succeeded in establishing "Asia-Pacific RC Organization (APRO)". APRO officially inaugurated this year is expected to guarantee continuous holding of APRCC and promote exchanges with the RC organization in other regions by constructing effective RC networks in the Asia-Pacific region.

"This Seoul Conference is meaningful in that the chemical industry in the Asia-Pacific region has built a joint cooperative system providing an important momentum of continuous development", said an official from KRCC. "I am confident that the RC activities will be expanded not only to large enterprises but also to small-medium enterprises in the nation."

APRCC is a large scale international event where corporations, organization and related persons practicing RC movement gather together to exchange information and opinions relating to environment, safety and health, and it has significantly contributed to the promoting of the image of the world chemical industry.

This event closed on the 7th of the month with the proclamation of "Seoul Declaration" regarding safety by Chairman Noh Ki-ho based on the results of the APRCC workshops and forums.

In the meantime, KRCC plans to tour the Daesan Petrochemical Complex, one of the nation's major chemical complexes after the event with some 200 overseas guests related to petrochemical industries, and check the domestic environment and safety status.

(November 7, 2003, Herald Business)

- International seminar on safety and health management and productivity improvement

**Social interest in safety and health has risen recently and there are more enterprises attempting to improve accident prevention and competitiveness by introducing safety to the management. An**

international seminar was successfully held under the theme of [Industrial safety and health management and the improvement of productivity for the 21st Century].

The seminar was held on December 8 in the Seminar Room located on the 4th floor of the Yuhan Yanghaeng building at Daebang-dong, Dongjak-gu, Seoul. With the owners, economic organizations and officials related to safety and health participating in the event, KOSHA held the seminar on the subject of corporate safety and health management which is being internationally strengthened and the improvement of productivity.

At this seminar held on the occasion of the 16th anniversary of KOSHA founding, KOSHA intended to improve the living standards of workers by introducing the industrial safety and health management system and to strengthen corporate competitiveness. There were a total of 6 theme presentations including the [Industrial safety and health environment management and the improvement of productivity] presented by Exxon Mobil of the U.S.A.

The U.S. Exxon Mobil attracted the attention of participants when it presented cases of operating OIMS (Operations Integrity Management System), a systematic access system aimed at carrying out globally safe and environment-friendly production activities by integrating the safety, health, environment and product safety policies.

There were many safety experts from world-famous safety institutions such as the U.S. Exxon Mobil, TUV Rheinland of Germany and the U.S. National Safety Council and the safety management and certification specialist from KOSHA.



(December 15, 2003, Safety and health news)

- School safety insurance to be introduced.
  - Total treatment expense compensation for accidents and diseases occurring in and out of schools.

**Total treatment expense compensation for accidents and diseases occurring in and out of schools. The insurance to be operated in the same way as the accident compensation insurance starting in September of next year.**

**Starting in the latter half of next year, any students involving in accidents occurring in and out of schools are eligible for compensation covering total amount of medical expenses even if accidents occur due to the fault of students. Currently, each city and province has limits of compensation. In case of fatal accidents, the highest amount of compensation and solatium are paid as ruled by a court.**

**Under the system, students can receive compensation even for > accidents occurring while students are going to and from schools or immediately prior to or after lessons, > for food poisoning caused by school meals or > epidemic eye diseases for which schools are responsible.**

**On 5th of the month, the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development disclosed that it has arranged "special bill regarding the prevention of and compensation for school accidents" containing the above-mentioned details which is expected to enter into force starting in September of next year after discussing with related ministries. According to the bill, each Education Administration operating in cities and provinces will establish "School Safety Insurance Authority" and begin the "School safety insurance" business as in the case of "accident compensation insurance" applicable to workers.**

**The Safety Mutual Aid Associations currently operated by each city and province in relation to the compensation for school accidents will be merged into the school safety insurance authority. Up to now, there have been many problems with the operation of the Mutual Aid Association because > the criteria and limit of compensation varies according to areas and > the fault on the part of students have been offset with the accident compensation.**

**Once the school safety insurance enters into enforcement, students are eligible to preferentially receive insurance benefits irrespective of faults for quick medical treatment. If there is no intention on the part of teachers, teachers will be exempted from being responsible. Teachers thus can devote themselves to better education by minimizing civil or criminal liability in relation to accidents.**

**(December 6, 2003, Chungang Ilbo)**

- Direction of children's safety training in the 21st Century - Cyber safety training for children –

**Recently, Cyber training is being spread as a means of children safety training and other training. As the cyber training can be easily accessed by the children living in the Internet era of the 21st Century, it may be the methodology of safety training that sees continuous development.**

**Currently, domestic organizations related to safety operate sites related to the children safety. These sites are offered in various forms and shapes ranging from a simple information site which provides information on the types of accident involving children, school safety matters and children safety to a site introducing a training technique to teachers in charge of school safety and to a site which allows children to participate in the program and promote the consciousness of safety training.**

**The site of the little children safety ([cooma.redcross.ac.kr](http://cooma.redcross.ac.kr)) operated by the doctors of nursing at the Red Cross College of Nursing consists of examples of various accidents and offers preventive methods according to the level of students.**

**The home page ([www.safekids.or.kr](http://www.safekids.or.kr)) is operated by the Safe Kids Korea, the Korea Branch of Safe Kids, a non-profit international organization operating with the main purpose of preventing the death or injuries of children caused by accidents. The site provides a variety of materials related to children safety and major activities of the Safe Kids Korea.**

**Most of all, however, we need to pay attention to the Internet Safety Broadcast scheduled to be opened soon with special programs arranged for the safety of school and children. This is an Internet Broadcast operated by the Safety News and the Maeil Safety News that have launched "Create safe nation" campaign. These programs teach children to voluntarily keep safety while growing as the safety keeper of the country, and provides real-time news through moving image.**





‘Little children safety’ home page



‘safe Kids Korea’ home page

(October 25, 2003, Safety News)

- Accident rate involving boys 1.7 times that of girls

**The probability that boys are involved in accidents is higher by 70% compared with girls.**

According to the statement made by the Ministry of Finance and Economy on 30th, the number of accidents involving boys was 3,012 which is higher by 1.7 times compared with those involving girls (1,729 accidents). This was the result of surveys conducted by the Consumer Protection Board for 3 years from 2000 to 2002 based on the information on accidents received from hospitals.



Of the total 9,159 cases of accidents, accidents involving children under the age of 14 or below accounted for 4,752 cases or 51.9%. Of these accidents, those involving infants of 1~5 years old accounted for 3,069 cases or 70.9%. Some of the causes of accidents involving children include the slipping while entering bathrooms, falling through the mosquito net from the veranda, swallowing coins or overdose of medicines.

The Consumer Protection Board stressed that actions must be taken to prevent accidents involving children by replacing, repairing or recalling products lacking safety standards, strengthening the requirements to indicate caution or warning marks on children articles, and establishing safety standards for home appliances.

(December 1, 2003, Kookmin Ilbo)

- **Update in KOSHA**

- KOSHA wins Knowledge Management Award  
wins Knowledge Management Award

**The Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA) on December 10 received the 2003 Knowledge Management Award in recognition of the efforts made by KOSHA to construct and utilize an industrial accident prevention system through the new paradigm of knowledge management.**

**In connection with this award, KOSHA's construction of a knowledge management system (called: ILLUMI) received favorable evaluation. The system provides effective technical services by sharing the safety and health technical knowledge and information within KOSHA to actively cope with the change in the management environment in the era of the knowledge and information and to reduce industrial accidents.**

**About 57% of all KOSHA employees (639 employees) participated in this knowledge management, accumulating a total of 3,612 cases of knowledge assets. Up to now, 848 employees in 88 teams participated in the knowledge sharing and it is known that approximately 7,880 million won was saved by sharing knowledge.**

President Kim Yong-dal stated that the knowledge management is vital in an era where knowledge and information have emerged as the source of competitiveness in international management, and that there are changes in the industrial sectors and safety and health systems in tandem with such trends.

President Kim added that all employees share the information on advanced technologies acquired by KOSHA as a specialist institution, and that there are many small groups and study teams operating within KOSHA that systemize the know-how acquired by individuals or groups through the Internet for all employees to share.

On the occasion of receiving this Knowledge Management Award, KOSHA made a determination to systematically manage core technologies, prevent industrial accidents by using the knowledge resources and continuously provide high level technologies and information in order to take a new jump as a super-class safety and health specialist.



(December 11, 2003, Naeil Shinmun)

- KOSHA signs a memorandum of understanding on preventing serious industrial accidents with CSB of the U.S.A.  
**KOSHA and the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) of the U.S.A. signed a memorandum of understanding on October 20, 2003 to promote mutual relations and for the prevention of serious accidents.**

"I am honored to have entered into the memorandum of understanding with KOSHA. The purpose of this memorandum of understanding is to exchange and share technologies and information between the accident investigation experts of both institutions. As discussed with the KOSHA President today, the safety of chemical plants is an important task that guarantees the highest

value", said Ms. Carolyn W. Merritt, CSB Chairwoman who signed the agreement with KOSHA President.

The major contents of the agreement include mutual exchanges of expert investigators of both institutions, and the translation into Korean and the publication of CSB reports and CSB Internet materials. The agreement is valid for 3 years. The text of the agreement can be viewed from the legal affair section of the CSB Internet ([www.csb.gov](http://www.csb.gov)).

KOSHA was established on December 9, 1987 to provide technical support in accident investigation, supply accident prevention technologies, provide industrial safety and health training, promote the safety and health of workers through the inspection of harmful and dangerous equipment, and to contribute to the economic development by promoting owners' accident prevention activities.

CSB is an independent federal agency in charge of chemical accident investigation. It conducts detailed investigation to determine causes of accidents in all areas including the physical error such as the equipment error and the inappropriateness of the safety management system.

In general, the investigation involves witness statements, analysis of physical evidence, and chemical and medicolegal inspections. CSB does not issue summons or impose penalties but, in order to prevent the recurrence of the typical accidents, it provides recommendations to workplaces, management, trade unions and OSHA, Environment Protection Agency and other related institutions in respect to safety. For more detailed information on CSB, visit CSB web site or contact through the Daniel Horowitz telephone system (202-261-7613).

On October 20, 2003, the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA) and the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) of the U.S.A. signed a memorandum of understanding in respect to serious accident prevention at the CSB Headquarters located in Washing D.C.



**(November 1, 2003, Safety and Health Information)**

- Industrial safety meets an era of international certification - Korea's S Mark recognized in overseas : machines, tools, semiconductor equipment and others.

**- Korea's S Mark recognized in overseas : machines, tools, semiconductor equipment and others**

The number of accidents have consistently increased at the domestic industrial sites since last year posing a serious threat to the safety and health of workers. As of the end of September this year, the number of industrial victims stood at 69,960, a sharp increase by 18.0% or 1,0673 workers. Even the number of fatalities accounted for 2,154, a year-on-year increase by 14.2% or 268 workers with accident rate rising to 0.65% from that of the year before (0.57%).

◆ **Safety problem subject to international regulation = As such industrial safety issue induces large amount of expenses and the loss of labor power, international regulation on industrial safety is being strengthened.**

While EU plans to enforce REACH (Registration Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals) starting in 2006, China in the last August began to enforce CCC (China Compulsory Certification), a quality safety certification system which has strengthened the safety inspection and certification of industrial products.

President Kim Yong-dal stressed that an international level safety and health certification system should be established because the safety and health issue will act as trade barriers between countries.

◆ **Korea's S Mark system = The "S" mark safety certification system was introduced in November 1997 under the control of KOSHA. It is an overall quality certification system under which the**

quality of industrial machines and tools is comprehensively evaluated.

The range of certification has recently been expanded to high-tech semiconductor equipment from the industrial machines and tools. Any product failing to acquire this certification reveals serious defects which adversely affect domestic sale or export.

The examination under this system is very strict and up to now since 1997, only 66% or 1,785 cases have received certification out of a total of 2,707 cases of application. Representatives from domestic makers including Samsung Electronics regard S Mark as the primary requirements for the purchase of equipment or machines.

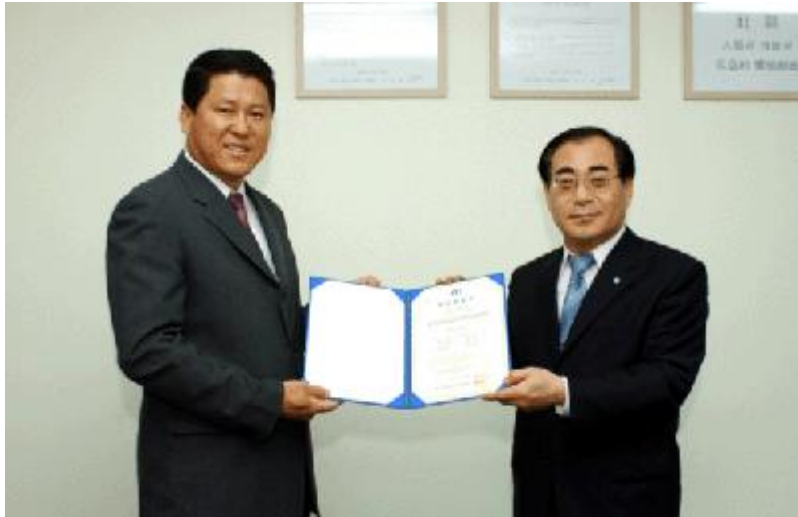
Under a situation where the advanced automated facilities are expected to increase in the future, protection from toxic materials including the electromagnetic wave generated by machines and facilities is expected to play decisive roles for the safety and health of workers.

◆ Safety issue is subject to international regulation = Korea has signed a mutual recognition agreement with 5 countries (Britain, Germany, France, U.S. and Switzerland) on the S Mark. Since Korean exporters now can export products without having to undergo separate safety certification procedure, they can save expenses and time.

It is known that approximately 60~70 corporations out of 100 large corporations in Japan gave high score on this system and even multinational corporations including NIKON, IBM, Tokyo Electron, Hitachi, BOC of Britain and ASML of Netherlands have applied for S Mark certifications.

In addition, KOSHA plans to expand the signing of agreements with the certification institutions operating in other countries to indirectly support Korean corporations in their overseas local production and sales activities.





(December 11, 2003, Naeil Shinmun)

- **New Materials**

- Ministry of Labor, aThese are toxic materials´
  - Publishes "Toxic material directory" containing information on 191 types of toxic material –



A book containing general information on 191 types of toxic materials as prescribed under the Industrial safety and health act has been published.

The Ministry of Labor disclosed that it had published a "Directory of toxic materials" containing information on toxic materials in the form of one page per item. The book describes the toxicity of the harmful materials prohibited or controlled by the Industrial Safety and Health Act.

The directory of toxic materials provides detailed information on handling 191 kinds of materials consisting of 66 kinds of toxic materials subject to prohibition such as benzidine; 14 kinds of toxic materials subject to approval including beryllium and 111 kinds of toxic materials subject to

control.

"This directory has been distributed to each local labor authorities and offices and other related institutions", said an official from the Ministry of Labor, stressing that " it is essential that the owners and workers have accurate knowledge on toxic materials in order to minimize damages resulting from chemical substance".

**(November 17, 2003, Safety News)**

- Ministry of Labor, Publication of the history of the Industrial Safety and Health Act

**- Originated from Labor Standards Act... Revised for 13 times since enacted in 1981 -**

The Ministry of Labor on the 5th of month published a history of the Industrial Safety and Health Act. The book contains details of revisions made to the Industrial Safety and Health Act for 13 times since it was enacted in 1981. According to this book, all articles related to industrial safety and health were originally contained in the Labor Standards Act.

The Industrial Safety and Health Act enacted in 1953 contains 10 articles related to safety and health such as the establishing criteria for the machines and tools at workplaces and working environment and the dispatch of safety and health managers. These provisions have been complied with for the past 28 years until the Industrial Safety and Health Act was established.

When the Labor Health Management Regulation and the Labor Safety Management Regulation were established in 1961 and 1962 respectively, a specified frame of safety and health work was created. In 1963, the Mine Security Law which prescribes the safety of miners and the industrial accident compensation insurance Act prescribing items related to the accident compensation were enacted as independent laws.

When Korea entered a high growth period during the 1980's, the machines and facilities at workplaces became larger and faster while the scale of construction works have also significantly grown. This caused rapid increase in serious accidents and increase in occupational diseases resulting from the use of large amount of toxic materials. When related persons recommended that the industrial safety and health section be separated from the Labor Standards Act and a new independent Act established, the Industrial Safety and Health Act was finally established in 1981.

At that time, this law contained items related to the establishment of danger prevention criteria, duties of owners and workers in relation to the prevention of accidents, establishment of an industrial safety and health policy examination committee within them Ministry of Labor, records of



checking working environment and the workers' medical examinations.

The first revision made in 1990 contained items related to the establishment of accident prevention funds, government service regulation on industrial safety and health affairs and the establishment of the industrial safety and health committee. There were 13 revisions made until last year.

The last revision made last year has established a legal basis for the owners to prevent musculoskeletal diseases caused by the simple, repeated work and the handling of heavy materials.

(December 8, 2003, Korea Daily Labor News)