

2005 Newsletter

HOME > > In Focus > Newsletter > 2005 Newsletter



- **OSH Statistics**

- Number of aged workers suffering from industrial accidents increases
 - Fatalities resulting from industrial accidents for workers aged 50 or over reach 46.4%

- **Fatalities resulting from industrial accidents for workers aged 50 or over reach 46.4%**

Due to rapid increase in the number of aged people, the average ages of industrial workers have increased which in turn leads to increased number of accidents involving aged workers. It is therefore urgent to set up appropriate preventive measures.

According to analysis conducted on occupational accidents involving aged workers of 50 years old and older during the past 5 years, the number of accidents which accounted for 25.1% of all accidents in 2000 jumped to 30.7% in 2004. Quoting this fact, Rep. Kim Yung-joo of the Uri Party said on the occasion of the Occupational Accident Worker's Day that it is urgent to set up appropriate preventive measures. She said that the number of industrial fatalities involving workers aged 50 and over, which stood at 42.5% of all accidents occurred in 2000, has increased every year reaching 46.4% in 2004. She analyzed that the number of casualties occurred at workplaces with employees less than 50 involving aged workers accounted for 20.4% of all accidents that occurred in 2004, indicating that there are more casualties involving aged workers at small and medium workplaces.

The Representative continued saying that even though the government provides health management technical support, develops and supplies technical materials and conducts collective training or seminars, it is extremely insufficient compared with the size of industrial accidents because there are not enough accident prevention measures to effectively prepare for the aged society

(April 29, 2005)

- **Main OSH Policy**

- Ministry of Labor to concentrate control on 10 large works creating frequent fatal accidents
 - "Comprehensive measures on reducing fatal accidents" to be pushed –

Eight workers die every day at average due to occupational accidents. The government plans to centrally manage the 10 largest works creating frequent fatal accidents in the construction and manufacturing industry in order to reduce fatal accidents and improve such current situation.

The Ministry of Labor disclosed June 2 that the number of fatalities resulting from occupational accidents and diseases stood at 2,825 last year, or an average of 8 per day, indicating an increase trend since 1999. It further said that it will prepare and push a comprehensive fatal accident decrease plan to reduce the number of occupational death by centrally managing workplaces with frequent accidents and by practicing safety befitting the characteristics of each workplace.

It plans to establish detailed safety measures covering the 10 largest works incurring frequent fatal accidents in the construction and manufacturing industry to more effectively prevent accidents. It will also readjust related standards and strengthen guidance and inspections, training and publicity activities so that owners and workers can effectively observe safety standards.

The Ministry also plans to launch a 'safety Campaign for 5 largest works' satisfying the characteristics of each workplace to induce active preventive activities from workplaces. In connection with this, the Industrial Safety and health Committee intends to provide support The current Industrial Safety and Health Law prescribes 'Imprisonment for a period not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding 50 million won' in case a worker dies due to owner's failure to take proper safe and health rules. The Ministry of Labor plans to reinforce this punishment to 'Imprisonment for a period not exceeding 10 years or a fine not exceeding 500 million won'.

"Through the aforementioned plans, we will decrease the number of occupational fatalities to less than 1,300 or a decrease by at least 15% by the following year," said a related official from the Ministry of Labor.

(June 3, 2005)

10 Largest Works inducing fatalities (2004)

Source: Ministry of Labor, May 2005

10 Largest Works inducing fatalities (2004)

No	Construction industry-type of work	Manufacturing industry - type of work
1	Works adjacent to opening	works inside equipment
2	Aerial works without installing work footing.	Operation of forklifts
3	Electrical works or works near electric systems	Handling toxic and hazardous materials
4	Works on slate roof	Operation of bridge cranes
5	Material salvage work with cranes	Operation of other motorized equipment
6	Works on movable scaffolding	Electrical works
7	Works related to excavators	Handling of loaded materials

10 Largest Works inducing fatalities (2004)

No	Construction industry-type of work	Manufacturing industry - type of work
8	Works involving the use of ladders	Use of lifts and elevators
9	Operation of construction equipment (excluding excavators)	Cleaning and clearing
10	Installing and removing forms	Operation of injection molding machines

• Update in KOREA

- Korea Safety Signs adopted as International Standards

- Eight types of sign including "Wear safety uniform" used throughout the world –

Eight types of safety sign proposed by Korea have been adopted as the international standards (ISO/DIS). The Agency for Technology and Standards operating under the control of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy disclosed on April 13 that 8 types of safety signs including "Wear Safety Uniform" proposed by Korea have been adopted as international standards.



The safety signs adopted this time include Shut off Power after Use, Wear Medical Safety Band, Wear Safety Uniform, Authorized Personnel Only, Warning on Flammables, Watch Obstacles Above Head, Do Not Push, and Wash Hands.

ISO adopted 16 types of international standards with respect to the 'safety signs for workplace and public areas'. Among the signs adopted include those suggested by Russia, Britain, Germany and Japan in addition to Korea.

In particular, the face model of the Oriental person proposed by Korea was adopted as the standard face model of the ISO safety signs, changing the safety signs bearing the face shape of Western people that had been used worldwide for some 30 years.

"We plan to reinforce international standardization activities in order for more Korean technologies and systems to be adopted as international standards, and expand public guidance and the adoption of Korean safety signs as international standards," said a related official from the Agency for Technology and Standards.

(April 14, 2005)

- Ministry of Labor active on improving working environment of places producing noises
 - Up to 50 million won to be financed for installing noise reducing facilities
 - **Up to 50 million won to be financed for installing noise reducing facilities -**

The number of patients suffering from noise-induced hearing loss is on an increase trend every year. The results of the working environment monitoring conducted to check causes showed noise to be the main factor among workplaces exposed to harmful factors. The government therefore decided to improve the working environment of the noise-producing workplaces to solve noise problems considered the cause of the inveterate occupational disease for many years.

The Ministry of Labor disclosed that, starting this month, the government will support 50% of the required expenses or up to 50 million won to workplaces installing noise-reducing facilities to reduce noise at workplaces. Those eligible for this support are the workplaces employing 50 to 300 employees. Up to 50 million won will be supported and 50% of the required expenses is to be paid by the owner. For workplaces with the number of employees less than 50, a maximum of 30 million won may be financed through the existing financial support system for the creation of 'Clean workplace'.

"Since small and medium workplaces lack intention to improve facilities due to financial burdens and technical difficulty, it is necessary to induce owners' investment in reducing noise through financial support," said an official from the Ministry of Labor. Small and medium workplaces desiring to obtain financial support should submit an application to an area office (regional headquarters) of Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency. In the latter half of 2003, 6,333 workplaces exceeding the exposure levels of harmful factors were surveyed to check the working environment. Of these workplaces, 6,056 workplaces or 95.6% exceeded noise exposure levels.

In the meantime, the number of patients suffering from noise-induced hearing loss, which accounted for 204 in 1999, steadily increased and it reached 314 in 2003. The number decreased to a certain level last year to 266. However, it is feared the number might increase again, and when special medical examinations were conducted in 2003, the number of persons carrying possible symptoms of the noise-induced hearing loss was 2,108 or 91.7% of 3,000, the entire number of persons carrying possible symptoms of occupational diseases. It is therefore expected that the number of patients would increase.

(April 12, 2005)

- Ministry of Labor to improve shipbuilding safety to a top world level
 - Construction of management systems including "Safeship Program" to be executed –

Shipbuilding is considered to be a highly dangerous industry because it has many danger factors of aerial works and of handling heavy materials, and workers have to move frequently, and compared with other industries, its accident rate is relatively high. To increase the level of shipbuilding safety management to that of advanced countries, a 'Safeship Program' will be executed. The Ministry of Labor disclosed on March 31 that starting this year, it will implement the 'safeship program' (Safe Shipyard Creation System), a rating system which grants grades according to the level of safety management after evaluating the safety management activities of the shipbuilders.

This system is the existing 'Shipbuilding Industry Rating System' which has been streamlined to a large level to induce more active preventive activities where builders are classified into Grade S (Excellent), Grade H (Fair) and Grade I (Unsatisfactory). As part of a program to improve safety management level to that of advanced countries, workplaces receiving Grade S will be allowed to implement voluntary safety management while those receiving Grade I will be centrally supervised and managed.



(AP Photo by Mike Griggs)

Those subject to evaluation are 30 workplaces employing 100 or more permanent workers, and they will be classified into 3 groups by sizes according to 3 indexes: accident rate, severity rate and the safety and health activities. The results of surveys and evaluation will be announced during the first half and follow-up actions taken during the latter half.

"We can become a true world's best advanced shipbuilding country when aggressive investment is made in safety and health by realizing 'Safeship Program' and a scientific safety management system is constructed," added an official from the Ministry of Labor in connection with this.

(April 12, 2005)

- Korea Labor Welfare Corporation introduces a 'Casualty Insurance treatment reporting system'
- Customer satisfaction realized by saliently improving treatment procedure –

- **Update in KOSHA**

- New President for KOSHA



Park Kil-sang, new president of KOSHA and former Vice-Minister of Labor, began full activities after holding an inaugural ceremony at KOSHA on May 17.

"In order for KOSHA to become a super-class occupational safety and health expert agency pursued by KOSHA that makes continued efforts under the motto of change and reform, we need to unite together," said President Park.

"In connection with this, we need to make joint efforts to maintain moral attitude and expertise through continued development,

"In connection with this, we need to make joint efforts to maintain moral attitude and expertise through continued development, and to create cooperative atmosphere. I am grateful that you have spared no efforts for the progress of KOSHA by disclosing and pushing New KOSHA 2010 despite difficult circumstances. We need more efforts to be a trusted agency that provides the best services to our customers, the people and the enterprises." He added that he would accept a wide range of opinions from each circle so that each project can be handled more effectively.

(May 17, 2005)

- International symposium held to discuss the harmfulness of nano particles

- KOSHA 's OSH Research Institute discusses nano substance and the workers' health –

- **KOSHA 's Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute discusses nano substance and the workers' health -**

Dr. Andrew of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the world authority in the toxicity sector and Dr. David Warheit of Dupont Research Institute made presentation on the theme at the symposium, and discussed nanotoxicity with other participants.

[Since the rapid development of nanotechnology is expected to affect all parts of our lives in future, we need a systematic research into nanosubstance from now, the initial stage of development,] said Kim Kwang-jong, Director of the Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute. [KOSHA

will also place added weight of research in this field, while strengthening exchanges and cooperation with advanced countries.

A problem related to the toxicity of nanoparticles has become an issue along with the development of the nanotechnologies, and an international symposium is scheduled to be held to discuss ways of protecting the health of workers. KOSHA's Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute disclosed that an international symposium will be held under the theme "Toxicity of nanotechnologies and nanoparticles and countermeasures" on May 11 at the Chemicals Safety and Health Center located in Daejeon city with some 100 domestic and overseas scholars and other related persons attending.

Recently, the whole world is concentrating on the development of nanotechnologies and the resultant toxicity of the nanoparticles, environmental problems, and the health of workers have become an international issue including EU, and this symposium was planned to search countermeasures.

Dr. Andrew D. Maynard of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the world authority in the toxicity sector and Dr. David Warheit of Dupont Research Institute will make presentations on the theme at the symposium, and discuss nanotoxicity with other participants.

"[Since the rapid development of nanotechnology is expected to affect all parts of our lives in future, we need a systematic research into nanosubstance from now, the initial stage of development," said Kim Kwang-jong, Director of the Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute. "KOSHA will also place added weight of research in this field, while tackling the issue in various angles by strengthening exchanges and cooperation with advanced countries."
(May 11, 2005)

- Workplace working environment monitoring and evaluation to be strengthened
 - KOSHA develops a new sample for use in checking harmful materials, the first such type ever developed in Korea
-

A sample capable of more accurately monitoring and evaluating the working environment of workplaces handling harmful materials has been developed for the first time in the nation, providing an opportunity to promote the reliability of measuring.

KOSHA's Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute disclosed that it had recently developed 'a quality control sample using a steam artificial environment system', and used it in managing the quality of the working environment monitoring during the first half of the year. The results showed superior accuracy compared with the existing method.

KOSHA explained that up to now, one test was able to evaluate only 3 types of materials, however, with the development of the new sample, KOSHA is now able to validate the analytic ability of the working environment monitoring institutions covering the materials that require quality control for tens of mixed materials actually used at the workplaces handling harmful materials.

At the same time, when 115 monitoring institutions that had participated in the monitoring of the working environment during the first half were evaluated, excellent accuracy was indicated. KOSHA therefore plans to use the sample in various research activities in future including the development of the sampling apparatuses for the working environment monitoring purposes.

"At a time when new chemicals are used at workplaces and diversified harmful materials are continuously developed and used, the ability to analyze variegated materials in a single operation and verify harmfulness will be of help to the production of workers from harmful environment," said an official from KOSHA.

(May 9, 2005)

- Surveys to begin to check the status of safety and health at workplaces
 - Results to be used as the basic materials for the establishment of the industrial safety and health policies. –
- A large-scale survey will be conducted on some 5,000 nationwide manufacturing, construction and other commercial establishments to check the status of the safety and health at workplaces, the most fundamental materials used for the establishment of the industrial safety and health policies. KOSHA's Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute(Director: Kim Kwang-jong) disclosed April 20 that it will conduct, until the end of July, a '2005 industrial safety and health trend surveys' covering overall safety and health status of the nationwide workplaces employing at least 5 permanent workers.**

During the period from April 18 to the middle of July, investigators from Gallup Korea will visit each workplace for this survey. Those to be surveyed include some 5,000 construction, manufacturing and other industrial sites employing at least 5 permanent workers.

During this survey conducted pursuant to Article 4, Occupational Safety and Health Law. matters related to safety and health will be surveyed and analyzed in depth. The results of survey will be used as the basic materials in supporting occupational safety and health policies and in establishing preventive measures.

Major items to be surveyed include general status of workplaces, accidents and record control, investments made in occupational safety and health, management of safety and health

organizations at workplaces, status of safety and health training at workplaces, management of dangerous materials at workplaces, safety and health management at workplaces, consciousness and activities of safety and health at workplaces, and safety culture at workplaces.

Meanwhile, the occupational safety and health trend survey is being conducted every year since 2002 to check matters related to safety and health, and the results of survey are disclosed at the end of each year.

(April 21, 2005)

- **New OSH Materials**
 - KOSHANET, Use of the safety and health posters and industrial site photos induce good responses from users
Since 1996, KOSHA has been providing various safety information in the form of text and image through KOSHANET. Recently, however, a technique of grafting Internet with multimedia technologies is being utilized, increasing the interest of those who are related to safety and health.

The information produced on the offline is actively used to expand the safety and health consciousness and for training purposes by supplying the web contents combined with the latest multimedia technologies. To build a basic frame of the accident prevention project using web services, KOSHA constructed 'Searching for Mistaken Pictures' and 'Searching for Danger Factors' contents manufacturing tools, providing the service starting in 2003. Following the addition of new web contents, the number of KOSHANET subscribers has jumped to some 80,000 during the past 2 years.

[Searching for Mistaken Pictures]

[Purport]

The 'Searching for Mistaken Pictures' uses the occupational safety and health posters manufactured and owned by KOSHA to produce multimedia web contents and provide interesting web services. It can effectively be used to induce participation by the web site visitors and to enable them to spontaneously feel the meaning to be delivered by the safety and health posters. It will also promote the safety and health awareness of the persons related to safety and health and the general public.

[Method]

The original poster is placed on the left, and the modified poster, on the right side. The user compares the 2 posters to look for mistaken points and click the points with the mouse. The user wins if he/she discovers 5 mistakes within the specified time. One set is composed of 5 posters.



[Searching for Danger Factors]

[Purport]

The 'Searching for Danger Factors' uses field photos collected by KOSHA employees during their technical guidance provided at site regarding safety, health and construction. This game provide services in a way that many workers at industrial site can participate in the game and directly check the danger factors, and that it can be used to train new workers.

[Method]

A site photo containing danger factors is placed in the center of screen. The user wins the game if he/she discovers specified number of danger factors within the specified time.

Selecting the danger factors will present detailed description of the danger factors and related laws and regulation, and appropriate countermeasures for voluntary learning.



- "Safety helmet is not a handbag."

- Top winner of the slogan and poster competition sponsored by KOSHA –

A poster reading "Safety helmet is not a handbag." was selected at a poster competition held to promote the safety awareness of the workers at workplaces. The poster will be distributed to nationwide workplaces sometime prior to or after the occupational safety and health rally scheduled to be held in July this year.



KOSHA invited public subscription to the accident prevention slogan and poster competition during the period from March 3 to April 15 to promote pan-national awareness of accident prevention and to fix safety culture early in our community. On May 20, KOSHA announced winners in each

category. According to KOSHA, there were 4,394 entries in slogans and 829, in posters, a record high competition rate, indicating keen interest of the people.

The prize awarding ceremony will be held sometime during June, and the prize-winning materials will be manufactured during the same month to promote the safety consciousness and for use as the materials for the accident prevention. The materials will be distributed to all workplaces and related institutions in the nation sometime prior to and after the July occupational safety and health rally to enhance the safety awareness of the people.

(May 23, 2005)

- 'Safe Korea', a cyber accident prevention and PR system to be operated.
- National Emergency Management Agency to provide various accident prevention information through Internet. –
The National Emergency Management Agency (Administrator: Kwon Wook) disclosed April 11 that it will start a model service of a 'Cyber accident prevention training and public information system (www.safekorea.go.kr)' where anyone can easily receive accident prevention information and training at any time anywhere to enhance individual ability to effectively counter disasters. There have been large disasters recently including earthquakes and storm waves, and mountain fires; however, the reality is that most people do not know detailed rules of acts to prevent accidents or to reduce damage.

In connection with this, the National Emergency Management Agency will construct, and provide services to the people relating to, 'safe Korea', an easily accessible cyber accident prevention and public information system, through the Internet used by most people. To induce voluntary participation by the people, 'safe Korea' will provide accident prevention information through diversified and interesting contents such as the accident prevention games and moving pictures.

Major accident prevention educational contents include national rules of act during earthquakes and/or storm waves, prevention and treatment of diseases related to yellow sand, information on accident prevention closely related to living, accident prevention posters, note of conquering disasters and accident prevention news. In addition, the system operates classrooms and safety consulting office while providing flood rescue games, typhoon escape games and social safety games to the children and young people so that they can learn disaster knowledge while enjoying games.

(April 13, 2005)