



Hudson River Valley Chapter Newsletter

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In This Issue

- Chapter Election Results
- Thought Of The Day
- Signage Improves Workplace Safety
- Construction Worker Suicide
- New Chapter Meeting Process
- Call for Suggested Topics
- Next Chapter Meetings

Useful & Helpful Links

<http://www.assp.org>

Link to the National ASSP webpage for information on great topics in EH&S. Go look things up.

<http://hudsonrivervalley.assp.org>

Link to the Hudson River Valley Chapter web page. Information on the Local items and events as well as good information. Try it, you'll like it!

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

Link to the Center for Disease Control. Great current information on health items to help protect us all through illness controlling and prevention. Lots of good items!

Hotlinks in articles are in **Bold Red font.**

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Chapter Election Process Now Closed.

Our Hudson River Valley Chapter Election Process is now closed out. The chapter officers will serve a two year term in their new chapter assignments. The successful candidates and offices they assumed are listed here below:

President ----- Matthew McDonald

President-Elect ----- Curt Jones

Chapter Delegate ----- Josephine McCaffrey

Chapter Treasurer ----- David Zaremsky

Chapter Secretary ----- Charles Von Dietsch

Member-At-Large / ----- Tammy Rossomando
WISE Representative

Past President/PDC Committee -- Ken Eck
Chairperson

PDC Committee Co-Chair ----- Jim Bohren

Past President/ ----- Crystal Turner-Moffatt
PDC Committee

Government Liaison ----- Linda DiGasper
(Requested by the Chapter Executive Board to fill this position.)

All persons named above in the Chapter Officer positions stated will serve from July 2019 to July 2021. Congratulations to our New Chapter Officers.

Thought of the Day.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." -- *Winston Churchill*

Can Signage Improve Workplace Safety?

We may not often think about it, but signs play an important part of keeping us safe every day. They tell us when to stop at an intersection, if there is construction work ahead, or when it's safe to cross the street. The same goes for your workplace. Signs play a huge role in telling workers what dangers or hazards are present and how to avoid them. To be most effective, these signs must be understandable so workers will know what to do to stay safe in different work environments.

According to Diana Stegall, executive vice president of Rivendell Safety Consulting, "Although safety signs and warnings are low on the hierarchy of controls, they are an important art of communicating with employees about the hazards in the workplace." Ms. Stegall also states "Signs that are well positioned and take into consideration the hazard audience can be very effective in communicating a hazard and serves as a reminder when no one else is around."

These three steps can help you ensure that signs in your facility actually help employees understand the risks present in different environments.

1 – Speak the language of safety.

Signage needs to easily and effectively communicate its message to everyone on the job site. Without a clear understanding of the hazards present in different working environments, workers do not have the knowledge necessary to operate safely. The purpose of a safety sign is to give people the information they need to act safely, and to provide that information when and where it's needed. If you keep that goal in mind, the regulations and standards for signage become how-to guides and help you make improvements to your workplace communication in the name of safety," according to compliance specialist Brian McFadden.

With regard to regulations, the **ANSI/NEMA Z535 series** of standards establishes requirements for the design, application and use of safety signage. This includes color coding, sign size, text size and viewing distance. For example, the standard states that YELLOW be incorporated in signage where minor or moderate hazards are present, ORANGE for more serious hazards and RED for the most severe hazards.

Using these as a foundation for safety signage, employees begin to understand and recognize the types of hazards associated with different types of machinery and environments. Along with the Z535 requirements employers, safety professionals and others need to consider the "audience" for each sign, which means thinking about the demographics of their workplace.

It's important to know that literacy rates vary from worker to worker and that not all workers may speak the same language. Therefore, signs should be easily understood in whatever language(s) are spoken in that workplace. When multiple languages are used in a workplace, signs featuring all those languages are a common solution. Many signs are available in bilingual formats and custom signs can be created with any selection of languages.

2 – Location, Location, Location.

A sign is only truly effective if it is appropriately placed on a worksite. This includes both the location of signage on machinery as well as ensuring that signage is placed outside of a hazardous work area well enough in advance for workers to be aware and take proper precautions.

Signage should be positioned close enough to a hazard so that it is relevant, but not so close that employees enter a potentially dangerous area before seeing the sign. Ask yourself, "Is the sign positioned close enough to the hazard that it is relevant, but not so close that the employee is entering a potentially dangerous area before they see the sign?"

3 – Avoid Mixed Messages.

While signage is an important element of workplace safety culture, there can be too much signage and safety professionals need to be mindful of that in their work environments. You don't want to have so many signs that the warnings blend together having one safety sign after another or signs that contradict each other since they warn of different hazards can create confusion among your workers. Employers are encouraged to focus on consistency across the job site. This means if similar signage is needed in multiple places, the messaging of those signs should be conveyed in similar ways. This helps workers quickly understand the context of any given sign. It's easy to go overboard with signage. Before posting any new sign, think about its purpose. What information, specifically, needs to be provided? If you post a new sign in a given location, will its message be relevant, timely and actionable when a worker reads it? It is important to view safety signage as one component of a safety system. No sign in itself can make your workplace safer in practice. A safe workplace requires commitment.

Construction Workers Suicide Rate shows Surprising Increase.

OSHA has revealed that they are beginning to see an increase in the number of reported suicide deaths of construction workers. At the moment, there are some trending thoughts as to why this is happening, but one thing that is beginning to make itself known is Job Stress, or not being able to talk about how you feel with someone who might be able to help you relieve that stress. This Editor, yours truly, can identify somewhat with that stress factor and its effect it as on the family as my dad was a construction worker in NYC back in the 1950 -60's. While not a suicide statistic, he became an alcoholic because "nobody knew what it is like to not have someone to talk to". You see his dad, my grandfather, died in a car accident when my dad was a young boy.

In any event the societal view has changed drastically for the good since those Macho baloney days of the 1950's. There are plenty of organizations to help talk you through your stress and negative thoughts. Surprisingly one of the better known organizations is OSHA. They have a new webpage that lists sources of help to prevent the horrific, tragic results of isolation and feeling of hopelessness and helplessness. You are not alone. If you or one of your co-workers seems to need help, learn the signs they exhibit if in distress, and do not hesitate to but in! I have put the OSHA webpage link here for you to use if you or they need to talk with someone in a safe and confidential manner;

<https://www.osha.gov/preventingsuicides/>



Remember, your family needs you! Besides, the world is a better place with you in it!

Chapter Executive Board Has Implemented New Procedures.

Our chapter's Executive Board has made and implemented some planning changes to the meeting structure of this chapter. Those new procedures involve more technical meetings and attempting to move the meeting location to different areas of the chapter footprint making it easier for you, the members, to get to and participate in the meetings. This is being done in order to attract more of our members to the meetings if they are closer to the meeting locations. These meetings will be announced and posted on the Chapter Web Page, and here in this newsletter, as soon as arrangements are made in order to give you advance notice of the meeting locations as soon as we can. Please keep checking for announcements on our [web page](#) as we will try to keep that as up-to-date as we can, as well as here in the monthly newsletter. The March meeting was held as announced in the Yonkers location of the Hyatt Place, in the Cross County Center. The intent is to move the meetings to allow the membership more opportunity to attend meetings and be more active in our chapter.

Call For Topics You Want To See Here.

In previous newsletters I asked if you the readers had a topic they felt would be useful and interesting to the general membership, to be summarized in a Newsletter item, or to be presented at one of our chapter meetings. If you do have a topic, please send it to me, Charles Von Dietsch, my email address is on the front page of this newsletter. Please feel free to contact me or any of the Board members with any questions or concerns about the Chapter or with Technical or General Meeting topics you would like to see presented. They will be brought to the rest of the Chapter Executive Board for discussion on the possible use of your idea as a meeting topic to be presented. You will be provided with feedback concerning the decision to use your suggested topic or not. Just about any safety related item is welcomed, either an on-the-job topic, or one for family safety at home or on vacation, a near miss incident, local regulation, or federal regulation update will be welcome. There are a few guidelines that we follow which were outlined way back in June of 2016 when we published the first new chapter membership newsletter. Nothing political, inflammatory, or insulting to any other person – member of this chapter, or the Society – or non-member will be put in this newsletter. Items that describe a serious violation of safety standards are encouraged and will be allowed in the newsletter, or as a live topic. Specifics that might be identifiable to a person will be removed unless the suggested item is supplied to us with the required written permissions to use some personalized details for accuracy of the incident or experience. This is an easy way for you to become more involved in the chapter, so give it a try. Remember, this is YOUR Chapter and we need and look forward to your support, assistance, and participation.

Our Next Scheduled Chapter Meetings.

There is no Chapter meeting scheduled for August 2019, as we are taking the month off to be with family and friends, and to unwind a little bit before starting up again in September of this year, to finish out the Chapter calendar year in June of 2020.

The Chapter meeting scheduled for September 13, 2019 will be held at the Orange County Fire Training Center, 9 Training Center Lane, in New Hampton, NY with a scheduled start time of 9:00 AM.

Registration and networking is at 8:30 AM. It will be a combined technical meeting with the Hudson Valley Federal Safety and Health Council; all ASSP Hudson River Valley Chapter members are welcome to join us if scheduling permits, as this is a general membership meeting. Topics of the two presentations at this time are scheduled to be "Fire Extinguishers", and "Front Desk Safety and Security".

The scheduled Chapter meeting for October 3, 2019 is to be an Executive Board meeting to conduct Chapter business and last minute items for the PDC on October 24 & 25, 2019 being held at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY. This board meeting will be held at 1376 Route 9, Wappingers Falls, NY at 6:00 PM.

The Scheduled November Chapter Meeting for November 8, 2019 will be held at Rockland County Fire Training Center, 35 Fireman's Memorial Drive, Pomona, NY with a start time of 9:00 AM. All chapter members are welcomed to attend if their work scheduling allows.