



Hudson River Valley Chapter Newsletter

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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 **Red font.**

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Our Events Cancelled/Postponed by Coronavirus.

I know we are all getting tired of hearing about the Novel Coronavirus and what we can and cannot do at the moment. However, I think that members and friends of Hudson River Valley Chapter should know that your Chapter Executive Board is following the guidelines put in place by New York PAUSE, and the National Society to protect the Chapter membership population. Some of you may have been thinking about attending a meeting or one of the seminars that were advertised in our emails and Newsletters. However, due to the current virus situation, you need to know at the time of this newsletter being written we have cancelled or postponed for the immediate future the following Chapter meetings and functions.

March 11, 2020 – Joint Meeting with Safety and Health Council of the Hudson Valley, Kingston, NY.

March 29, 2020 – Tri-State Engineering EXPO, White Plains, NY.

April 15, 2020 – Joint meeting with NYSPE, Pomona, NY.

There may be more events that we will have to postpone or cancel depending on what the next few weeks will bring to us with life around the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Please be aware that your Chapter is still trying to function and find ways to continue to improve our service to you the membership. We are looking at platforms to use for presenting our Technical Meetings via a webinar type service. Our Executive Board meetings will be held using teleconference services such as ZOOM. You will be kept up to date as we make progress in this area. Instructions will be sent to you via email on how to use the service technology we decide on using, at no cost to you the members.

Thought of the Day.

“Face your deficiencies and acknowledge them; but do not let them master you. Let them teach you patience, sweetness, insight.” -- Helen Keller.

ASSP Society 2020 Elections are Closing Soon.

All members are reminded that the ASSP Society Elections are closing out on March 31, 2020. Please vote for the candidate of your choice in the election if you have not already done so. In case you do not remember which Region Hudson River Valley Chapter is part of, we are in Region VIII of the Society. You were sent an e-mail ballot for the elections in our area. If you cannot find that ballot in your inbox, and still want to vote if you have time left to do so, you can have a duplicate ballot sent to you by using this link I inserted [here](#) but you must act quickly as the deadline for voting is already upon us.

OSHA COVID-19 Injury/Illness Reporting & Recordkeeping Update.

On Tuesday March 10, 2020, OSHA provided guidance requiring the recording and reporting of workplace exposures to COVID-19. In response to employer concerns about how they would determine where a person contracted the virus – in the workplace or elsewhere – OSHA issued updated guidance on March 13, 2020.

Recording Workplace Exposures to COVID-19.

COVID-19 can be a recordable illness if a worker is infected as a result of performing their work-related duties. However, employers are only responsible for recording cases of COVID-19 if all of the following conditions are met:

- 1 The case is a confirmed case of COVID-19 (see [CDC information](#) on persons under investigation and presumptive positive and laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19).
- 2 The case is work related, as defined by [29 CFR 1904.5](#).
- 3 The case involves one or more of the general recording criteria set forth in [29 CFR 1904.7](#) (e.g., medical treatment beyond first-aid, days away from work).

Visit OSHA's [Injury and Illness Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements page](#) for more information on this topic.

Also - Many members have asked about donating N95 respirator masks and other medical PPE. We applaud the national effort to support our healthcare providers, but we strongly encourage you to first contact the facilities in your area and confirm how they want you to proceed.

Available COVID-19 Resources for Use.

If you are in the healthcare industry, please use this link for the [Temporary Enforcement Guidance](#) for respirator fit-testing in healthcare.

There are other resources available to you to protect yourself and your co-workers on a U.S. Department of Labor [new website](#). Also available from U.S.D.O.L. are two new [refundable payroll tax credits](#) for small and midsized employers designed to immediately and fully reimburse for the cost of providing Coronavirus-related family and medical leave and sick leave to their employees.

OSHA has a new [Workplace Safety Guidance](#) website for help in preparing your workplace for a COVID-19 outbreak. There are also OSHA Alerts in both [ENGLISH](#) and in [SPANISH](#) available.

Remember, it has not peaked yet so stay vigilant, stay safe. Following established guidelines is best to protect yourself. Like Momma said – “Wash your hands”, and “Don't touch your face”!

Lanyards Failing In Falls Over Abrasive Edges.

ANSI's Z359.14 standard tests leading edge self-retracting device's (LE-SRD's) by running the lifeline over a piece of steel bar with a radius of no more than 0.005". If the lifeline is cut or severely damaged, the fall arrest device is not ANSI compliant. The SRL-LE's (self-retracting lifeline leading edge) are no better at surviving the problem. They are still only tested over a steel rod 0.005" in diameter. This does not give an accurate representation of the abuse the lanyards take when abraded along the various types of roof edges.

ANSI Z359 DOES NOT have a "sharp edge" requirement for testing. Thankfully, the ANSI Z359 Standard Committee is working to correct the testing oversight right now. Hopefully better testing requirements will allow us to have more confidence in the fall protection equipment we purchase and use. In the meantime the advice remains the same, ask the equipment providers how they test their equipment, and if anyone says they do a sharp edge test, don't believe it, as there is no such test. Any lanyard going over a roof edge needs to be adequately protected from the damage that can, and has occurred, but is not tested for by manufacturers. Make sure the worker is using a self-retracting lifeline leading edge (SRL-LE). There are several on the market. Follow all the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations as well as providing training for all workers that will be expected to use this equipment on how it works, and how to properly wear it while working at elevations and. This equipment should be inspected before each use and periodically by a competent person in personal fall arrest system (PFAS) components. Any lanyard not in good condition as deemed by the competent person, must be taken out of service and replace with a new piece of equipment.

Seventh National Safety Stand-Down To Prevent Falls In Construction.

The seventh annual National Safety Stand Down to prevent falls in construction is scheduled to take place on May 4 – 8, 2020. At least that is the plan depending on Novel Coronavirus outbreak, and the publicized local temporary halt to non-essential construction. Historically, falls are the leading cause of fatalities in construction, accounting for one third of all fatalities in the industry. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that there were 291 fatal falls to a lower level in construction, out of 828 total fatalities for the reporting year of 2013, the latest available index as of this newsletter compilation. OSHA booklet publication number [OSHA 3146-05R 2015](#) outlines all the provisions of Title 29 CFR Subpart M – Fall Protection, CFR 1926.500, 29 CFR 1926.501, 29 CFR 1926.502, and 29 CFR 1926.503.

It applies to all workers working at 6 feet or more above a lower level. It also covers protection from falling objects, falls from tripping over or falling through holes, and protection when walking and working around dangerous equipment without regard to height. For example, it covers working over machinery with open drive belts, pulleys, or gears or open vats of degreasing agents or acid.

It also mandates that employers must provide a fall protection training program to workers who might be exposed to fall hazards. Employers must verify the training by maintaining a written certification record of that training. The record must contain the identity of the worker trained, the dates of the training, and either the signature of the person who conducted the training or the signature of the employer.

You can participate in the Stand Down by going to the official site at:

<https://www.osha.gov/StopFallsStandDown/resources.html>.

You can select the tools for your toolbox talks, handouts, and training materials that cover everything from Fall Safety videos, Ladder Safety to Scaffolding and Roadway Work Zone Safety – Preventing Bridge Work Swing Falls. Many are available in both English and Spanish language to be used in your campaigns as to prevent falls in Construction, as well as how to obtain Certificates of Participation for participation in this national event.

Call For Suggested Topics You Would Like To Read Here.

Your Chapter Newsletter Editor is asking you the membership to suggest topic titles or articles that you want to see covered in our future newsletter issues. If there is a topic that you want to see here, please suggest it to me, or send me the article and it will be published. You can send it to me - Charles R. Von Dietsch Jr. I am the Newsletter Editor, using the email address that is on the bottom left hand side of the first page of this newsletter, and it will be published giving you the by-line credit. If it is something that the membership can use, then it will be published. There are however some restricted items that will not be published here. No political rants, or insults to any member of the chapter, or National Organization for any reason will not be published. We are a professional organization's chapter and we should, no - we must conduct ourselves as such.

Our Next Chapter Meeting.

To all chapter members and friends, as we struggle with establishing a safe, easy to use process to conduct our Executive Board meetings, and our General Membership Technical Meetings we will keep you informed of any progress made in that direction. We are bound by the provisions of New York PAUSE, as well as the national Organization's guidelines of Safe Meetings to protect you the membership. Combine that with the fact that many of the venues we have historically used in the past are now closed down for the purpose and use of having face-to-face meetings.

We are planning a meeting of the Chapter Executive Board using a teleconference service like ZOOM as advertised on television that is free to use for a thirty (30) minute conference call. Your Executive Board would like to try to set up this call for a time period in April, after the Easter holiday. We have used this service before and it worked but we had some difficulty in setting up the call and having the participant's dial-into the call.

The biggest issue is finding a way to get the Technical Membership meetings scheduled on a teleconference call that will accommodate the amount of members expected to join the call and for longer than the thirty minute time slots that this service offers. If we must change to a pay to use service, it will not be a member expense, as the Chapter Board has agreed to absorb the expense for members.

Hopefully the COVID-19 virus will be gone before too long and we will go back to holding normal face-to-face meetings.

In the event that this does not happen soon, you will be kept up to date on how we will work out these meetings. We are also exploring the possibility of presenting Webinar type meetings if we can get that technology to work for us. Your executive board thanks you for your patience and support during this current situation. This situation is changing rapidly every day, we will keep you informed by e-mail messages as necessary if any future meetings, or learning events will be set up and scheduled either on line or in person.

For the time being, stay safe – stay home if you are not an essential worker in an essential position. In the often quoted words of Science Officer Lt. Commander Spock of the United Federation of Planets aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise, NCC 1701: “Live Long, And Prosper.”

Remember – Hudson River Valley 2020 PDC is October 23, 2020 at the Rockland County Training Center. Volunteers are being solicited now to serve on the committee.