



# 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 **Bold 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 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.

May 2020 – as of now will most likely be rescheduled for a future date.

There may be more events that we will have to postpone or cancel since the National Society is recommending that all future meetings be cancelled until further notice depending on what the next few weeks will bring to us with life around the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The Chapter is still finding ways to continue to function and serve 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. We will keep you updated as we make progress in this area via emails on how to use the service technology we choose at no cost to you.

## 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.

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## ASSP National Society 2020 Elections are now Closed.

All members are reminded that the ASSP Society Elections were closed out on March 31, 2020. Please standby for the election results that will be made available to you as soon as we can obtain them and send them out to all chapter members. In case you do not remember which ASSP Region the 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 Regional area. If you did respond and vote in the election process for the National Society, Thank you for participating and being an active member.

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## Hudson River Valley Chapter Elections Are Coming.

Now is the time that chapter members should be thinking of actively participating in the Chapter processes by thinking of being a Board Member of the chapter yourself you can self-nominate for a spot on the Board, if you are interested or you can nominate a fellow chapter member that you think would be a good candidate to fill a slot on the Board in the coming election process. You can submit your nominated candidates to me as the Chapter Secretary, and I will carry them to the existing Board for placing those names on the ballot. Please do this as soon as you can, as the election process is usually held in May, with the election results announced in the May Newsletter. As this process is laid out by the Board, you will be sent emails detailing the process with the declared candidates, and the election process closing date. We look forward to your participation in the election process. The election results will be announced in the June 2020 newsletter.

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## National Society COVID - 19 Resources Webpage Now Made Easier To Use.

In-case you have not already noticed, the National Society has redesigned the COVID – 19 Resources page to make it easier to find what you need concerning COVID – 19. Recent posts and updates about the Society’s response and the [latest resources](#) are available as the situation continues to develop. There are also recorded [webinars](#) related to COVID – 19, which now has a space for you to submit questions about how to support your workers in this pandemic situation. There are a series of [articles](#) available also to help you support your workplace. You can obtain tips and tools from a network of 39,000 OSH professionals in the [COVID – 19 discussion threads](#) on the National ASSP Community. Note this link may require you to log in with your ASSP credentials.

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## Home Office Ergonomic Tips You Can Use.

If you are one of the millions of people now working from home during the [COVID – 19 pandemic](#), a [new fact sheet](#) from the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries can help you set up a home office workstation that is efficient and safe. The fact sheet released on March 24, 2020 focuses on five key ergonomic issues:

- 1 – Relaxed shoulders
- 2 – Supported lower back
- 3 – Level head
- 4 – Straight wrists
- 5 – Supported feet

First, ensure your chair is in good condition, comfortable and working properly. While sitting, make sure your keyboard, monitor and mouse are positioned so that your arms, wrists and neck are relaxed.

## Home Office Ergonomic Tips to Use (continued).

If you are working via a laptop computer, try to use a separate keyboard, mouse and monitor with a docking station as much as possible.

Center your body in line with the middle of the monitor, and make sure the top of the monitor is at eye level. Adjust your chair and footrest as needed so your neck and shoulders are in a comfortable position.

Additionally, make sure you have plenty of leg room, remove nearby tripping hazards, and use a headset or speakerphone whenever possible.

Regardless of how comfortable your home workstation is, Labor & Industries experts encourage you to change positions at least once every hour. As the fact sheet states, “Change positions frequently, because your next position is your best position.”

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## OSHA Postponed Seventh National Safety Stand-Down.

The current COVID – 19 pandemic and continually evolving situation has brought OSHA to the decision to postpone the **[Seventh Annual National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction](#)** event. This event originally planned to take place on May 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 is expected to now take place sometime this coming summer. Of course, this will be determined by the COVID – 19 situation at that time. This decision was reached and announced in a March 27, 2020 press release.

Falls are still the number one cause of workplace fatalities among construction workers, with 320 of the 1,008 recorded construction fatalities in calendar year 2018 according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. OSHA strongly encourages employers to remain vigilant and to use all available resources to enhance worker safety. There is no organized national effort as in past years at this time with various “stay at home” guidelines in place across the country. You are free to voluntarily use the materials of you’re an essential worker and are currently on a jobsite. Remember, there is a responsibility to protect yourself and your workers.

Resources to use for this purpose can be found at the OSHA National Safety Stand-Down website using the link highlighted in the bold underlined RED font above.

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## How’s Your Stress Level - Are You Feeling Stressed - Can You Cope?

Now more than ever, it is important to stay home, if you are not an essential worker, to slow the spread of COVID-19. If you must go out, you must practice **[social distancing](#)**. But you know that don’t you? You hear it all the time these days. However, while we stay at home, we shouldn’t let fear and anxiety about the COVID-19 pandemic become overwhelming and become a burden in the form of self-induced stress.

Here are a few ways the **[CDC recommends managing stress](#)** during these challenging times:

Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories and social media.

Connect with others. Talk with friends and loved ones over the phone or via video chat about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Take care of yourself. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.

Remember: If you need to see your doctor, please call them first. Their ability to use **[telehealth services](#)** has greatly expanded during the COVID-19 emergency for common office visits, mental health counseling, and preventive health screenings. Use the CDC link above to learn some of the common signs of stress.

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## Call For Suggested Topics You Would Like To Read Here.

As the editor of your chapter newsletter I am asking you the membership to suggest relevant, timely topics or articles that you want to see covered in future newsletter issues. If there is a topic that you would like to see covered here, or perhaps you have already written one, please send it to me and it will be published if it meets the guidelines of not being political, slamming of another member of the chapter. You can use my email address that is on the first page of this newsletter in the bottom left hand side. If it is published you will be given the by-line credit for the article.

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## Our Next Chapter Meeting.

To all chapter members and friends, as we struggle with establishing a safe, easy to use a process to conduct our Chapter 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 Society 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 for the purpose and use of having face-to-face meetings.

A Chapter Executive Board meeting using a teleconference service like ZOOM might be the best way to plan for the immediate future of our meetings. We are working with the National Society to use webinars they may have on hand to meet our commitment of holding technical meetings. As we make progress on this endeavor you will be informed using email message sent to your email addresses on file. Please make sure that we have your desired or latest email address on file in the chapter if it is different than the one you used to join the Society. If we must use a pay for use service, it will not be a member's expense to join the meeting, as the Chapter Board has agreed to absorb the expense for these member calls.

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. 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 of any future meetings, or learning events that 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. If you must go outside of your home in public for necessary food stuffs, medications, exercise or pet walking and could violate the social distancing requirements of New York PAUSE you MUST wear a mask or some type of barrier for the protection of others. New York Pause has now been extended to May 15, 2020 by Governor Cuomo.

If you think you are having a problem managing stress, please take advantage of the telehealth services provided to you by Medicare and the CDC through your insurance provider. In the words of Science Officer Lt. Commander Spock, United Federation of Planets assigned to the Starship U.S.S. Enterprise, NCC 1701: "Live Long, And Prosper."