



Hudson River Valley Chapter Newsletter

September 2020

Volume 5, Number 3

In This Issue

- Construction Final Beryllium Rule
- Catch A Safe Ride To Work
- Care for Tech-Tired Eyes
- Blue Light Eye Damage
- Clean or Disinfect/Sanitize
- Respirators COVID Guidance
- Thought Of The Day
- Chapter Chatter

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.**

Newsletter Editor:
Charles R. Von Dietsch Jr.
"cvondietsch@yahoo.com"

Final Beryllium Standard in Construction.

OSHA has published the final revised rule for beryllium standard for Construction and Shipyard Industries. The final rules include revisions designed to clarify the standards, and simplify or improve compliance. These changes maintain protection for employees while ensuring that the standards are well understood and compliance is simple and straightforward.

The final rule amends the following paragraphs of the beryllium standard for construction industry and shipyards: "Definitions," "Methods of Compliance," "Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment," "Housekeeping," "Hazard Communication," "Medical Surveillance," and "Record Keeping." OSHA has removed the "Hygiene Areas and Practices" paragraph from the final standards because the necessary protections are provided by existing OSHA standards for sanitation. The effective date of the revisions in this final rule is September 30, 2020. OSHA began enforcing the new permissible exposure limits in the 2017 beryllium standards for construction and shipyards in May 2018. OSHA will begin enforcing the remaining provisions of the standards on September 30, 2020. The final standard will affect approximately 12,000 workers employed in nearly 2,800 establishments in the construction and shipyard industries. The final standards are estimated to yield \$2.5 million in total annualized cost savings to employers.

Catch A Safe Ride.

Do you carpool or use a ride hailing service to get to work? Or are you a ride-share driver? To help you avoid contracting COVID-19 or spreading it to your fellow commuters the CDC offers the following tips: Wear a mask to reduce risk; Let fresh air in through vents or windows. Avoid using the recirculated air option on the ventilation system; Cover your coughs and sneezes and encourage the others to do the same; Use proper hand hygiene using sanitizers with a minimum of 60% alcohol after coughing, sneezing or touching objects; Limit the number of people and travel with the same people with as much space as possible; Be safe if you wait for your ride and maintain your 6 feet distance from others.

Staying Healthy with TLC for Tech-Tired Eyes.

It's hard to avoid technology with televisions, tablets, computers and mobile phones playing such a big part of our daily lives during quarantine and working from home. American adults spend more than half of each day interacting with screens, with people over 60 and older devoting an extra half hour each day as compared to 10 years ago. But are these blue light emitting devices wrecking our health?

The truth is exposure to blue light can affect our sleep patterns. That is because its short wavelength can delay the release of melatonin, a natural hormone that prepares the body for sleep, and shifts our internal clock (aka circadian rhythm) to a later schedule pushing bedtime later than optimal. The healthy fix is to turn off electronics an hour before your normal bedtime. If your bedtime is 11:00 PM, turn then off at least by 10:00 PM. But when it comes to our eyes, it's another story.

According to Dr. Rishi Singh, a retinal specialist and staff surgeon at the Cole Eye Institute at Cleveland Clinic, "Many people think there is a direct correlation between blue light and eye damage". Yet the actual amount of Blue light emitted from electronic devices is quite small and has not been shown to be harmful to our eyes, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Singh insists "it is not a blue light phenomenon, but instead a *screen* phenomenon." It is how we use our screens and how much time we spend using them that could be problematic.

Good screen hygiene can go a long way toward easing problems from screen exposure, including eyestrain or fatigue, blurred vision, headache and dry, irritated, itchy or red eyes.

Blink – On average, we blink about 15 times per minute. But when we stare at our screens, our blink rate gets cut roughly in half. Blinking is beneficial to the eyes, bathing and moisturizing them and supplying nutrients. Less blinking equals dry, irritated eyes.

Look Away – Dr. Singh recommends the "20-20-20" rule: Look away from your screen every 20 minutes and focus on an object 20 feet away from you for at least 20 seconds. This exercises your eye muscles and changes your focal point so your eyes can relax and dissipates some muscle tension.

Lubricate – Lubricating eyes drops can be obtained over-the-counter without a prescription, and can ease dryness in your eyes. Some ophthalmologist's may suggest taking Flax Seed Oil capsules to help lubricate dry eyes.

Wear Your Glasses – If you wear corrective lenses for vision improvement, wear glasses not contact lenses while using a computer. Contacts can dry out and irritate your eyes, especially if you're not blinking enough to keep your eyes moist and lubricated.

Avoid Glare – Move your computer away from windows or light sources that are directly in front of or behind your monitor. A matte filter may also help avoid glare, which can cause you to squint which can result in headaches.

Distance Yourself – Sit about 25 inches (or an arm's length) away from the screen and position your screen's height so you're looking slightly downward at it.

Following these simple guidelines may reduce or eliminate many of the common computer use complaints experienced while working from home under the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine.

Can Blue Light Cause Age-Related Macular Degeneration?

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) occurs when a portion of the retina, called the macular, becomes damaged. The condition, which can evolve from a dry to a more serious wet form, prevents you from seeing fine details and affects your central vision while keeping your peripheral (side) vision intact.

Blue light passes through the cornea and lens and ultimately reaches the retina, and some research suggests that this light may lead to, or worsen, AMD. But many experts say that the blue light you need to worry about comes from the sun, not your electronic devices (which is why they advise everyone to wear UV-blocking sunglasses).

In fact, experts at Harvard Medical School say that factors like aging, smoking, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure or being overweight are far more significant than exposure to blue light in the development of AMD.

What is the difference between Cleaning and Disinfecting/Sanitizing?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the best practice to prevent the spread of viral respiratory infections including COVID-19 is routinely cleaning and disinfecting/sanitizing surfaces. That's because recent studies have found that SARS-CoV-2 – the actual coronavirus that causes COVID-19, can remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. To effectively remove and eliminate the virus, however, workers need to understand that the terms “cleaning” and “disinfecting/sanitizing” aren't interchangeable, as pointed out by NIOSH Director John Howard during a seminar held on March 31, 2020 hosted by the National Safety Council and the CDC. “Cleaning is getting the dirt out”, Director Howard stated. “Sanitizing is what's used in public health a lot to get down to a certain level of bacteria where sometimes 95% of the bacteria is killed. Disinfection is killing everything. That's where you want to aim.”

The Official CDC explanation goes a step further:

Cleaning – cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces. It doesn't kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting/sanitizing – disinfecting/sanitizing refers to using chemicals (e.g., Environmental Protection Agency registered disinfectants) to kill germs on surfaces. This process doesn't necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Sterilization – sterilization describes a process of destroying or eliminating all forms of microbial life and is carried out in health care facilities by physical or chemical methods.

Among CDC's tips to clean and disinfect surfaces, are the following:

- a. Wear disposable gloves.
- b. Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use a disinfectant.
- c. When using EPA registered disinfectants, follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- d. More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on the level of use.

Surfaces and objects in public places (shopping carts and point-of-sale keypads) should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.

OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard's COVID-19 Temporary Guidelines.

OSHA has issued a temporary enforcement guidance document to help employers understand and comply with the Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134) during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the availability of respirators and fit-testing supplies. The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the availability of respirators and fit-testing supplies. You can review this document using this provided link and clicking [here](#).

Thought Of The Day.

“Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Chapter Chatter

On September 30, 2020 a virtual JOINT Technical Meeting with two other groups was held. The participating groups were:

1. New York City Chapter, ASSP (Host organization)
2. Hudson River Valley Chapter, ASSP
3. Safety and Health Council of the Hudson Valley

This virtual joint Technical Meeting was well attended by representatives of each organization. This meeting was hosted by Mr. Austin Lyon, Secretary of ASSP NYC. The featured presenter was Mr. Mark Drozdov, Senior Environmental Consultant at Cooper Union College, and Chair of ASSP NYC Technical Programs. The topic presented was 'COVID-19 update: Safety and Prevention.' The presentation contained updated information from multiple government organizations battling the COVID-19 Pandemic, and some strategies to utilize the information disseminated at the meeting. Meeting minutes will be posted when they are ready.

The next scheduled Chapter Meeting will be a Board Planning Meeting to be held on Thursday, October 15, 2020 and will be held on the WebEx Teleconference platform with a planned start time of 5:30 P.M. Log in information will be sent to board members in advance of the meeting.

There will be a Joint Technical Meeting scheduled for October 23, 2020 which will be both a *virtual* meeting as well as a *live* meeting. This meeting is planned to be held at the Rockland County Training Center at 35 Fireman's Memorial Road, Pomona, NY. There will be an in-person networking session starting at 8:30 AM and a meeting start time of 9:00 AM. The virtual session for the actual meeting will begin at 9:00 AM. The expected end time of this meeting is 12:00 Noon. To enter the facility you will have to wear a face covering at all times and participate in the standard COVID-19 screening questions process.

The October 23, 2020 Joint Technical Meeting will have the following groups participating:

1. The Hudson Valley Field Federal Safety and Health Council
2. ASSP Hudson River Valley Chapter

Two topics will be presented. The first topic will be OSHA Update and Safety Meetings Leadership to be presented by Mr. James Giarraputo, OSHA Compliance Assistance Specialist.

The second topic will be Safety Leadership to be presented by Ms. Joyce Schroeder, President of Flourishing Culture Consultants LLC. Meeting minutes will be posted as soon as they are composed.

On November 19, 2020 we have a virtual joint meeting scheduled with the Connecticut Chapter of ASSP. More information on this meeting and topic(s) will be sent to you as plans are finalized for this meeting.

The continued safety of all our chapter members and chapter friends remains as our goal during this continuing COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we will continue to pursue virtual meetings whenever possible.

Minutes of all chapter meetings as well as issues of our Chapter Newsletter are published on our chapter webpage for you to read over if you want to see what is covered during these meetings, or items in those newsletters. In fact, these are available for as far back as 2016. We have also posted many of the Presentations from our past Technical Meetings as well. This is the link to the files page on our website for you to see these chapter documents: <https://hudsonrivervalley.assp.org/files/>.

Stay safe, and stay healthy. Hopefully we can meet face to face soon. If needed for any questions you may have about our Chapter activities, my email contact address is: cvondietsch@yahoo.com