



Hudson River Valley Chapter Newsletter

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In This Issue

- SafetyFOCUS 2021 Going Virtual
- Did You Hear of Safety For NonProfits (S4NP)
- COVID-19 Guidance for Restaurants Resuming Dine-In Service
- Preventing Hearing Loss in Construction and Demolition
- 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.**

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SafetyFocus 2021 Shifted to Virtual Event.

The second largest event in the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP), **SafetyFOCUS 2021**, is being shifted from an eight day in-person event in La Vegas, NV to a ten day on-line event. If you are planning to attend, mark your calendars for these dates: February 8 – 12 and 15 – 19 to participate in the virtual learning experience. February 13 – 14, are days off for the weekend.

Virtual platforms have proven to be smart and successful education alternatives while the future of in-person gatherings remains uncertain.

We must continue to support occupational safety and health professionals who are helping their companies keep workers safe throughout the pandemic said ASSP President Deborah Roy.

SafetyFocus is a deep dive into safety education to help participants excel at protecting works in all industries. Live Virtual Classroom technology enables SafetyFOCUS instructors to conduct courses in real time from wherever they are located. The courses offered will take place from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Central Time each day, providing all the benefits of face-to-face instruction without the travel time and hotel expenses. Attendees simply need to supply a computer with audio capabilities and a camera connected to the internet to participate. The instructors can see you and you can see them. It will be an engaging experience that allows you to ask questions and interact with other virtual learners in real time. It will be time well spent to advance your career.

SafetyFOCUS 2021 will offer workplace safety and health courses on a broad range of topics such as business skills and personal development, certification preparation, construction, ergonomics, fall protection, risk assessment and management, safety management systems, training, and education. Attendees also fulfill their continuing education unit (CEU) requirements while making lasting professional connections and absorbing relevant information you can immediately implement in your organization. You can get more information regarding SafetyFOCUS at: **SafetyFOCUS.assp.org**.

Did You Hear of Safety For NonProfits (S4NP)?

Did you ever hear of this organization called Safety For NonProfits Inc. (S4NP)? No?! Well they are a new organization started by ASSP member Jack Geissert, CIH, an emeritus professional member of the Greater Boston Chapter of ASSP. As he worked with various nonprofit organizations in the Boston area, he found himself noticing the organizations risks with volunteers experiencing near hits and various injuries. He began to work with the organizations leaders and started to perform comprehensive assessments of their operations to make them safer. While doing this type of work, Jack thought that there must be an organization, group, or function that encouraged and facilitated this type of volunteer work he was doing. It turns out there is no such system in place that promoted this type of volunteerism by OSH Professionals.

This led to the launching of **Safety For NonProfits Inc.** (S4NP), a startup organization that is establishing a system for delivering pro bono professional workplace safety and health services to the charitable nonprofit sector. The organization strives to connect nonprofit organizations with OSH professionals who can provide safety, health and environmental services to those organizations.

There are 1.3 million nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations that work for the common good according to Jack. While some large organizations may have formal programs, when it comes down to the work that employees and volunteers at nonprofits do every day, there are too many people being injured, and too many people dying on the job doing that volunteer work.

Jack Geissert says that many nonprofit leaders are well intentioned, but they simply lack experience in how to structure and implement a proactive safety program. Through S4NP, he hopes to reduce workplace injuries and fatalities among nonprofit employees and volunteers. With teams of volunteers from the OSH profession, the organization is working on building a system to deliver professional OSH services to charitable Organizations.

Safety professionals who are interested in advancing this group's work are invited to help develop S4NP's program plan. You can visit the organization's web page to learn more or get involved. Again, the link is: **Safety For Nonprofits, Inc**

COVID-19 Guidance for Restaurants Resuming Dine-In Services.

OSHA is committed to protecting the health and safety of America's workers and workplaces during these unprecedented times. The agency will be issuing a series of alerts designed to keep workers safe as the slow process of returning to normal begins.

As restaurants and beverage establishments resume offering dine-in service, the following steps can help reduce the risk of worker's exposure to the coronavirus:

- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Comply with state and local requirements for occupancy restrictions.
- Require all staff to wear face coverings.
- Increase cleaning and disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs, chairs, faucets and sinks, countertops, and touchpads.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize dishware, utensils, and beverage equipment after each use.
- Maintain at least 6-feet between co-workers and customers, and avoid direct hand-to-hand contact, when possible,
- Use mobile ordering, text on arrival for seating, and contactless payment options when feasible.

Encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns to a supervisor.

For more information, visit **www.osha.gov/coronavirus** or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742). This is also available in Spanish.

Preventing Hearing Loss in Construction and Demolition.

Jackhammers drilling into the ground, saws cutting lumber, dump trucks, and bulldozers moving materials. These are just a few examples of the noises that construction workers encounter each day as they do their jobs. While noise may not seem as dangerous as other hazards present on construction and demolition sites, it can have a tremendous impact on worker safety and health. According to Scott Schneider of the [ANSI/ASSP A10.46](#) Subcommittee, "Noise is one of those hazards that's often ignored in construction because hearing loss is generally gradual and the danger is not immediately obvious, but that doesn't mean it isn't important." The average construction site has a noise level of between [80 and 90 decibels](#) (db). The CDC reports that approximately [51 percent](#) of construction workers have been exposed to hazardous noise and 31 percent of those workers report not wearing hearing protection. Furthermore, approximately 14 percent of all construction workers have hearing difficulty. With this in mind, how can you know if your job site is too loud? What steps can you take to protect worker's hearing? Here are a few things to remember.

Know the Limits

The first step of protecting workers hearing is understanding the level at which workplace noise can be hazardous. [ANSI/ASSP A10.46, Hearing Loss Prevention for Construction and Demolition Workers](#), establishes an acceptable noise level of 85 decibels over an eight-hour day, with a 3-dB doubling rate. As defined by NIOSH, a [3-dB doubling rate](#) means that for every 3-dB increase in noise level, the allowable exposure time is reduced by half, and conversely, a 3-dB decrease in noise level doubles the allowable exposure time. Modern technology has made it possible for employers and safety professionals to determine the noise levels of their job sites. Schneider notes that people can download sound level meters to their smartphones that can be used to easily and accurately identify noisy tasks. Another useful tool is Appendix 2 of the A10.46 standard, which provides probable noise levels of common construction tools and equipment such as air hammers, electric grinders, nail guns and circular saws. Using this appendix as a guide, you can determine what noise levels could be at different areas of the job site and take appropriate measures to protect workers' hearing.

Establish a Safe Distance

Once you've determined the noise levels throughout your site, you can institute controls to minimize the hazardous noise. Schneider encourages any efforts to begin with engineering controls to create an overall quieter working environment. "If we can provide a quieter work environment, that's better for everybody," he says. "It means that you're protecting workers from hearing loss, and it's easier to communicate on the job site to protect workers from safety hazards." Engineering controls could include retrofits or mufflers for older equipment, or siting equipment away from workers. Some pieces of noisy equipment, such as an air compressor, can be sited 10-to-15 feet away from where work is being performed. You can also rotate workers between noisier tasks and quieter tasks to minimize their risk. Along with minimizing noise levels, engineering controls can also help you evaluate your noise reduction program. "If you're using engineering controls, you can easily use a sound level meter or an app on your phone to see how loud noise levels are and if you're effectively reducing them," says Schneider.

Use the Latest Tools

Once engineering controls are in place, you can use PPE to provide an extra barrier between workers and hazardous noise. Technological advances in hearing technology have made it possible for workers to protect their hearing while still being able to communicate with coworkers and help them be more aware of the activity on the job site. "Hearing protection has improved significantly in the last couple years and there are many new models of hearing protection that make it easier for workers to communicate while wearing them," Schneider explains. "Supervisors should be checking as they walk around the site ensure that workers are wearing hearing protection when needed."

Preventing Hearing Loss in Construction and Demolition (Continued).

For example, electronic earmuffs contain a microphone that monitors noise levels and will reduce the noise level inside the earmuff to 85 dB or below, thereby allowing for easier communication between workers and encouraging consistent use of the earmuffs. “Even if noise levels are below the level that is going to cause hearing loss, excessive noise can also cause stress and other physiological responses,” he says. “Consistent use of hearing protection when you’re exposed to high levels of noise is the best predictor of protecting your hearing.”

Teach Your Workers

Schneider emphasizes that in addition to reminding workers how to properly wear hearing protection, you should also explain why workers need to wear it consistently and the potential long-term health impacts of not wearing hearing protection. “The most important aspect of training is for workers to understand that hearing loss occurs gradually, and they may not recognize it right away,” Schneider explains. “It’s important for workers to get their hearing tested regularly to monitor for hearing loss. That helps motivate people to be more vigilant about protecting their hearing moving forward.” Workers also need to recognize that workplace noise isn’t just a health hazard. It can also be a safety hazard if noise hinders communication or prevents them from hearing a piece of machinery moving toward them. It is in everyone’s best interest to have administrative and engineering controls in place, and properly wear hearing protection to reduce their exposure to hazardous noise. “Hearing loss can have a dramatic effect on your quality of life,” Schneider says. “Yes, people can get hearing aids that amplify the sound, but that’s a poor solution since it doesn’t always help with the intelligibility of sound. It’s better to protect your hearing from loss in the first place.”

Chapter Chatter

Our last Chapter Executive Board Meeting was held on Thursday October 15, 2020 using the ZOOM on line teleconference service. The meeting minutes were distributed to the general membership electronically for your reference. **At that meeting the executive board was informed by Matthew McDonald that the National ASSP Organization has told Chapter Leaders that members who have lost their income source due to COVID-19 impact can continue as members for free – no dues will be required – until the economy recovers.** The Chapter’s next scheduled Board Meeting is to be held on Thursday December 19, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. on the ZOOM platform.

A joint technical meeting with Federal Safety and Health Council of the Hudson Valley was held on October 23, 2020 using the Microsoft Teams platform beginning at 9:00 AM. The topics were OSHA UPDATE and Safety Leadership. The Chapters next scheduled virtual Technical Meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 19, 2020 and is a joint meeting with the New Jersey and Connecticut Valley ASSP Chapters at 12:00 Noon. The topic is How To Assess and Reduce Risk. It will be presented by Mr. Frank Gesualdo.

Thought Of The Day:

“I always prefer to believe the best of everybody; it saves so much trouble” – Sir Rudyard Kipling.

Minutes of all chapter meetings and all newsletters are published on our chapter webpage for you to read if you want to see what is covered during these meetings, or items in those newsletters. These are available for as far back as 2016. We have posted many of the Presentations from past Technical Meetings as well. This is the link to the files page on our website for you to review 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 address is: cvondietsch@yahoo.com