



American Society of Safety Engineers

West Michigan Chapter of ASSE Newsletter

March 2008

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April Meeting:

The April Meeting will be a joint session at the Michigan Safety Conference. Details are below.



Greetings,

We had a great meeting at the end of February on Industrial Hygiene. I think everyone learned quite a bit. Thanks to our speaker Dave Huizen, and Kevin Roehling and Berends, Hendrick's, Stuit for their sponsorship. We do not have a meeting scheduled for March, however everyone is invited to attend a joint session at the Michigan Safety Conference on April 15, 2008. The session will begin at 4:30 p.m. See the attachment with regard to the room number and RSVP information. The cost for this session is \$15.00 and will include food. The Michigan Safety Conference runs April 15-16 and will feature sessions on topics such as biological monitoring, worker fitness, infection control, ergonomics and fleet protection to name a few. <http://www.michsafetyconference.org/> Register for the conference here.

Please look for sign-up information at the Michigan Safety Conference for the "Party with a Purpose" sponsored by Marsh. The proceeds will be donated to the Michigan Safety Conference college scholarship fund.

Also at the conference, the General Industry Safety Standards Commission will be meeting in conjunction with the Michigan Safety Conference on Wednesday, April 16th. The meeting will be held at the Radisson Hotel, 111 North Grand Avenue, Lansing at 9:00 a.m. This is an opportunity for you to voice any particular concern you may have.

<http://www.michsafetyconference.org/documents/2008newsletter.pdf> This is a link to the "Michigan Safety Conference Times."

On March 20, 2008 the Revised Construction Standard Part 32 Aerial Work Platforms will become effective.

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-11407_15368--_00.html This link will take you to the revised standard.

Heather

From the ARCHIVE:

OSHA Week, Jan. 2, 1995 (Published in the WMASSE Feb. 95 Edition)

California Issues Workplace Ban on Smoking - Smoking is banned in most enclosed workplaces and nearly all restaurants. There are some exceptions such as gambling clubs, cabs, trucks, most hotel rooms and lobby areas, large warehouses in which 20 or fewer employees work.

March 1978

S.B. 1285 was introduced proposing a comprehensive reform of Workers' Compensation Escalated Future Benefits, Personal and Recreational Injuries, Death Benefit Increase, Statute of Limitations - ELIMINATED and Change in the Benefit Formula

March 1982

David Galbraith (Ferris Student Member) was awarded a one year \$300 scholarship.

April 1983

The meeting was held at The Boat and Canoe Club and the price of the meeting was 7.50 and included dinner!

April, 1993 - Linda Hudson graciously volunteered to help organize the upcoming golf outing... Present day (Mar. 2008) Where is Linda anyway??



Safety Director

The Oscar W Larson Co. company located in Clarkston is looking for a full time Safety Director with 5 years of construction experience. They install gas station pumps, piping, and tanks as well as some construction of stations. Job requirements include that candidates be well organized, able to travel, know DOT, and confine space standards. Contact Rick Risi, the Willis Inc. Safety VP, at 248-735-7263

For further details, go to: <http://www.wmasse.org/jobs.html>

Property and Casualty Risk Control Services RFQ

On behalf of the Michigan Petroleum Association/Michigan Association of Convenience Stores (MPA/MACS), we are seeking firms willing and able to provide property and casualty risk control services to Michigan-based petroleum marketers and convenience store operators.

Interested ASSE members should call or e-mail Joy Gander, Gander Con-

New Members

Andrianna Buford	Student Member	Heather Kubiak
Jeff Byxbe	Student Member	David Cox
Nena Cole	Member – Wolverine WW, Inc.	Jeannine Henry
Sarah Decker	Student Member	David Cox
Jennifer Groce	Member – Steelcase	Eric VanFleet
Patrick Gast	Student Member	

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Local MIOSHA Training

March 18 & 19	MIOSHA 10-Hour for Construction	Holland	Brian Cole, Ph.D.	616.331.7180
March 19	Supervisor's Role in Safety and Health	Traverse City	Michelle DeView	231.779.3061 or email rmdeview@att.net
March 25	Michigan Construction Safety Day	Lansing	Cathy Kester	517.371.1550 or ckester@aqcmichigan.org
March 26	Ergonomic Principles	Grand Rapids	Wendy DeShone	616.698.1167 wdehone@teagr.org
April 15 & 16	Michigan Safety Conference	Lansing	Staff	www.michsafetyconference.org
April 17	MIOSHA Record-keeping and Cost of Injuries	Holland	Brian Cole, Ph.D.	616.331.7180 or 800.690.0314
April 23 & 24	Blueprints for your Safety and Health Management System	Battle Creek	Connie Dawe	269.965.4134
April 30	Powered Industrial Truck Train-The-Trainer	Grand Rapids	Wendy DeShone	616.698.1167 or wdehone@teagr.org

Safety Inspector Just Can't Stop Poking Around

Mr. Bennett Is Retired But Still on the Case; Getting the Lead Out

By JOSEPH PEREIRA

March 5, 2008; Page A1 Wall Street Journal

BROOKLYN, N.Y. -- Shaking the rain off his jacket, Martin Bennett entered the cavernous warehouse of a refurbished-mattress supplier one recent afternoon. Past stacks of old bedding, he found, sitting behind a desk, a man who identified himself as the owner of the E&G Bedding Corp.

Mr. Bennett wanted to inspect the company's paperwork on the sanitation tests required on used bedding that's resold. Instead, he was shown the door. "Get...out of here!" shouted the man. "This is private property."

He was correct that Mr. Bennett has no business reviewing the company's internal records -- at least not anymore. He retired more than six years ago from the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission, where he worked as a compliance officer for more than four decades.

But retirement hasn't stopped the 69-year-old sleuth from continuing to hunt for unsafe consumer goods -- and from going after companies that sell or distribute them. Mr. Bennett, a widower who is now remarried, spends hours on his home computer, researching whether recalled products are still being sold at online auction sites. He sends letters marked "URGENT" to retailers, demanding they contact the CPSC "within 24 hours" about toys and other products they carry that he considers dangerous. He attends public hearings in Washington and, about once a week, makes unannounced shopping trips seeking unsafe merchandise.

His former employer can use the help. A flood of imports, from China particularly, has put a strain on the CPSC, which came under fire last year for failing to uncover lead and other safety issues in millions of toys that ended up being recalled. The agency currently has only 90 inspectors for the whole country, and it says it wants to add more. Since retiring, Mr. Bennett has passed along scores of tips to the CPSC, which says it welcomes the input.

Scoring Victories

Mr. Bennett says that as a government inspector, he played a role in the recall of more than 500 unsafe products -- including space heaters that got too hot, vitamins that looked like candy in bottles that lacked child-resistant caps, lead-tainted furniture and defective kitchen appliances. His findings contributed to revised industry standards, including the use of squat plastic

gasoline containers in place of tall metal containers that easily tipped over, and safety guards on windows of tall apartment buildings.

In retirement, Mr. Bennett has also scored some victories, including a recent recall of overheating candles and the relabeling of a rust remover. "We really appreciate what he's doing," says John Drengenberg, consumer affairs manager for Underwriters Laboratories, the respected product-safety testing and certification organization. "In a sense he's a kind of hero."

"Marty's a type of guy who finds more enjoyment going into a store and finding violative labels on consumer products than he would playing a round of golf on a sunny course somewhere in Florida," says Steven Garitta, another former CPSC compliance officer, who prefers a restful retirement.

Just 5 feet 2 inches tall, the diminutive Mr. Bennett often sports a navy beret worn at a tilt and lets his eyeglasses hang halfway down his nose to scan the fine print on product labels.

Last winter, after reading in a community newspaper that several house fires apparently had been caused by the same brand of Hanukkah candles, Mr. Bennett bought and tested some. He found the candles, made with "Jelled Extra Virgin Olive Oil," burned so hot they melted their plastic cup holders. So he contacted the Brooklyn distributor, Aviv Judaica Imports, and notified the CPSC, which in April ordered a nationwide recall. As a result, about 9,000 of the Chinese-made candle sets were destroyed. "We thanked Mr. Bennett," says Phillip Lax, a spokesman for the importer. "He saved us from a few house fires."

Last spring, Mr. Bennett wrote to Whink Products Co., of Eldora, Iowa, asking the company to make clearer on its warning label the dangers of hydrofluoric acid, a chemical in one of its rust-removing products. "If it spills on you, you won't know it right away but you'll wake up the next day and see that the entire skin on your arm or your face or whatever it touched is gone," Mr. Bennett says.

The label stated that while the product may cause "severe burns which may not be immediately painful," it also "safely and easily removes stains." Mr. Bennett believed those statements were contradictory and violated federal code 1500.122, which requires that labels for hazardous products not contain words like "harmless" or "safe." As a result of his letter, Whink dropped the word "safely." Says the company's CEO, Stephen W. Throssel, "We welcomed the letter from Mr. Bennett. It could save us

some grief."

Not all of Mr. Bennett's efforts have been as effective. In August, he wrote to Amazing Savings, a 16-store chain based in Orangeburg, N.Y., demanding it immediately stop selling "Magic Magnets." He said the toy contained small magnets that were similar to those that had sparked recalls by toy makers Mattel Inc. and Rose Art Industries Inc. because they could be swallowed by children.

Amazing Savings temporarily removed the product from its shelves. But after being reassured by its Hong Kong manufacturer that the magnets were safe, it began selling the toy again. "The Consumer Product Safety Commission we know, but who's Martin Bennett?" asks Sam Friedland, a partner at the retailer.

During a recent inspection outing in Brooklyn, Mr. Bennett picked up five items that he suspected contained lead: a Winnie the Pooh alarm clock, a paint set, a packet of crayons, a plastic handlebar ornament for a kid's bike and a toy fire truck.

To test his suspicions, The Wall Street Journal bought the toys and had them tested at the University of Massachusetts in Boston with a lead detector from instrumentation maker Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc. It found that all five products had traces of lead. Mr. Bennett says he'll forward the toys to a CPSC lab to see exactly how much lead they contain before notifying the stores.

Mr. Bennett's Tip

After Mr. Bennett was escorted from the E&G warehouse, he contacted the New York Public Health Department and questioned the cleanliness of the company's mattresses. Mr. Bennett says he has seen E&G-tagged mattresses selling for \$55. "For that price I don't believe they're doing all the necessary testing," he says.

He later discovered that E&G had paid a \$5,000 fine to the state of Connecticut in 1999 for improperly sterilizing and incorrectly tagging mattresses. A spokesman for the New York Department of Consumer Protection says it is investigating Mr. Bennett's tip. A spokesman for E&G said it is in full compliance with government regulations.

Asked how he felt about being chased from the building, Mr. Bennett says, "It's part of the job." Then he corrected himself. "I mean my old job."