



## Readers,

January's good intentions have come and gone. As we move on to the next month of the New Year, perhaps we should take a step back—reflect and revisit those resolutions we made when the clock struck midnight. A new year, a new beginning, another chance at redemption—to turn our weight and health around, to spend more time with friends and family, to live life to the fullest capacity.

Whether you are still on track or you've scrapped the whole idea, we, at Safety Controls would like you to consider something else this year: *your safety*.

An explosion 260 feet below the ground on Jan. 2 was a wake up call for many businesses and industries nationwide when it claimed the lives of 12 workers at the Sago Mine in Charleston, WV. How and why? Authorities are still working that part out, as are the families devastated with the loss of loved ones.

We all know that accidents happen. Some things can't be foreseen—but what about the things that can be? What small things can we all do to help each other be safe and healthy?

In our first newsletter, we've addressed a few ways to get the year started off on the right foot: modifying the workplace for an aging workforce, keeping warm through cold conditions; warding off the flu; and upcoming events. With a few simple adjustments and some good ol' common sense, ASSE, ACGIH and OSHA outline just how easy being safe can be! But, first things, first:...

## UPDATES | SCT NEWS

### Safety Controls Technology, Inc. would like you to join us in welcoming our newest employee, Vanessa Pellegrino!



**Name:** Vanessa Pellegrino  
**Title:** Occupational Safety & Health Specialist  
**Age:** 34  
**Lives:** in Montville, a small rural town about 15 miles east of Chardon  
**Enjoys:** Spending time with her husband, Sylvio, and their four children; Horseback riding; reading mystery novels; and drinking red wine.

Vanessa joined our team at Safety Controls last November and is quickly becoming an integral part in promoting workplace safety.

“Ultimately, I want to be director of training,” she said. “I’m very passionate about training—how to recognize hazards and what to do when you run across them in the workplace.”

As Occupational Safety & Health Specialist, Vanessa assists clients with implementing safety programs in the workplace in order to get them compliant with OSHA standards. She also works to reduce their workers’ compensation premiums.

However, she has one goal in mind: helping her clients avoid injury. In strengthening workplace safety, she plans to help employers to “ultimately have a vital, happy, safe workforce.”

OCCU HEALTH | BWC NEWS

## Agenda '06 Aims to Please

Last month William Mabe, administrator/CEO of BWC, announced the agency’s plan of action for improving the bottom line—efficiency, effectiveness, and increased revenue—across the board for 2006.

A focus on fairness along with enhancements in how the agency conducts business may generate as much as \$424 million dollars in improvements in 2006. An estimated \$530 million in savings will be generated once all strategies are successfully implemented.

Agenda '06 will internally focus on financial performance by improving and modernizing business functions. Changes in handling investments and putting the agency on a nationally competitive scale are just two ways the BWC hopes to achieve a boost in revenue.

BWC will also work to improve underwriting capabilities by focusing on employer compliance, auditing and collections of

### UPCOMING BWC EVENTS:

**The 76<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Ohio Safety  
Congress & Expo**  
Columbus Convention Center  
March 28-30

Seminars will cover topics such as:

- Creating a safe transition for younger workers into the workplace, with teachings on avoiding hazards and serious injury
- Creating a healthier bottom-line by protecting employees
- Unique challenges faced by small businesses
- Challenges of multi-tasking and balancing work and life

For more information visit  
[www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com)

outstanding debt to ensure businesses are responsible only for their liabilities. The reduction of health-care costs is also a point of focus. Using an aggressive approach to reducing expenses, the agency will implement changes in the hospital fee schedule, customer payment methodology, and working towards a hassle-free relationship with providers.

Ohio's BWC plans to make a major improvement in customer value with the enhancement of service and quality. Strengthening communications within the agency will help to remedy inefficiencies in customer contact. A better equipped workforce will be able to deal with customer needs and the continuing changes in industry.

Monitoring customer feedback and satisfaction will be a major component for strengthening the workforce-customer relationship. BWC will also be pursuing a better partnership with labor unions.

For the full, in-depth report on the Bureau's tactics and strategies for 2006, visit [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com).

## OCCU SAFETY | ASSE NEWS

### Small Changes Can Mean Big Results

Let's face it—we're getting older. Some of us older than others, though we hate to admit to it. And with aging comes change.

We can easily make those changes when it comes to our bodies and our homes, but what about the one place at which we spend more than half our day—the workplace?

Modifying the workplace for the aging workforce is a topic that comes to the forefront. As the 'baby boomer' generation ages so does the workforce. As that same generation of nearly 77 million begins to retire during the next few years, the workforce will grow smaller.

Workplace injury rates for older workers are the lowest of any age group, but their fatality rate is the highest. Accommodating the new obstacles faced by the



aging workforce is one way to reduce fatality rates and preserve experienced and skilled workers.

There are many easy and economical ways to do so. Equipment, facilities, and work processes can be improved to account for physical and sensory limitations of the aging workforce. In the long run even making small and subtle changes will save time, increase output, and contribute positively to the business.

**Consider these suggestions from ASSE members for increasing workplace safety for an aging workforce:**

- Improve illumination, add color contrast
- Eliminate heavy lifts, elevated work from ladders and long reaches
- Design work floors and platforms with smooth and solid decking while still allowing some cushioning
- Reduce static standing time
- Remove clutter from control panels and computer screens and use large video displays
- Reduce noise levels
- Install skid resistant material for flooring and especially for stair treads – helps reduce falls
- Install shallow-angle stairways in place of ladders when space permits and where any daily elevated access is needed to complete a task to help reduce falls
- Utilize hands-free volume adjustable telephone equipment
- Increase task rotation which will reduce the strain of repetitive motion
- Lower sound system pitches, such as on alarm systems, as they tend to be easier to hear
- Lengthen time requirements between steps in a task
- Increase the time allowed for making decisions

UPCOMING ASSE EVENTS:

**The 6th International Conference on Occupational Stress & Health**

Hyatt Regency Miami Hotel

Miami, Florida

March 2-4, 2006

"Work, Stress, and Health 2006: Making a Difference in the Workplace" was designed to address the changing nature of work, and the implications of these changes for the health, safety, and well-being of workers. Topics will include: workplace restructuring, work and family, workforce diversity, and the aging workforce. For more information visit [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

**Excellence in Safety Leadership**

An ASSE Safety Management Symposium  
Baltimore, MD  
March 30-31

Learn about the essential skills and strategies that will improve your effectiveness as an influential leader through the many presentations on leadership techniques, such as organizational politics. For more information visit [www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org)

- Consider necessary reaction time when assigning older workers to tasks
  - Provide opportunities for practice and time to develop task familiarity
- For more information visit [www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org)

## AVIAN FLU INFECTION CONTROL TIPS

What is *flu pandemic*? And how does your workplace prepare for one? In a newsletter article titled 'Avian Flu: Infection Control Guidelines,' the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) Healthcare Practice Specialty group offered some answers.

The first thing is to be informed. A pandemic is a global outbreak of a disease; an influenza pandemic occurs when a new strain of influenza is introduced into the human population, for which there is little or no immunity developed. Though people are most familiar with seasonal flu, it is the bird/avian influenza, which has been of recent concern. A dangerous strain of the bird/avian flu, also known as H5N1, has spread from Asia to Europe, ASSE reports. The virus can infect humans as well as birds and can cause serious disease and death.

The H5N1 flu strain has been reported only to have passed from birds to humans, not human-to-human. However, if and when the strain mutates to an H5N1 human pandemic strain, it could spread rapidly around the world within several weeks to months. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the avian flu can be transmitted in many ways, especially in agricultural settings. Animal manure containing the virus can contaminate dust and soil, which can be inadvertently inhaled. Farm equipment, feed, cages, or shoes can carry the virus between farms.

### UPCOMING ACGIH EVENTS:

**Society of Toxicology  
Annual Meeting Exhibit**  
San Diego Convention Center  
San Diego, California  
March 5-9

Offering educational courses, exposure to cutting-edge research and technology, and access to the industry's top suppliers. For more information visit [www.toxicology.org](http://www.toxicology.org).

**Fundamentals  
in Industrial Ventilation**  
ACGIH Professional  
Learning Center  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
March 27-29

A three-day course covering basic and advanced topics such as contaminants in the air; design of exhaust hoods, ducts and fans; and troubleshooting existing systems.

**Practical Applications  
of Useful Equations**  
ACGIH Professional  
Learning Center  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
March 30-31

A two-day course including calculation approaches to airborne contaminants; TLV and TWA; and a calculations lab for participants. For more information visit [www.acigh.org](http://www.acigh.org)

Though there is currently no vaccine to ward off bird/avian flu, research is progressing. In the meantime, ASSE advises communities, workplaces and individuals to:

- ✓ participate in influenza vaccination programs annually, especially if at a high risk to acquire influenza infections
- ✓ participate in health promotion programs to prevent airborne, blood borne, waterborne, food borne and contact types of diseases and infections adopt business practices that encourage sick employees/students to stay home
- ✓ anticipate how to function with a significant portion of the workforce absent due to illness or caring for ill family members
- ✓ practice good health habits, including eating a balanced diet, exercising daily, and getting sufficient rest and take common-sense steps to stop the spread of germs, such as washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes with tissues

OCCU IH | ACGIH & OSHA NEWS



### **Combating Cold: Tips to keep warm through winter**

It's a new year and every day seems to be a surprise – in terms of weather, that is. Between the 50-degree rainy afternoon and the bone-chilling evenings, it's hard to know what to expect come the morning. But it's still winter, despite Mother Nature's fickle behavior.

OSHA is reminding employers and workers to take necessary precautions by providing Cold Stress Cards to employers, workers and the public. The laminated fold-out card works as a quick reference guide to prevent and treat cold-related health problems.

## OSHA'S WINTER TIPS:

- ✓ Train workers about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- ✓ Encourage workers to wear proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions.
- ✓ Be sure workers in extreme conditions take a frequent short break in warm dry shelters to allow their bodies to warm up.
- ✓ Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day.
- ✓ Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- ✓ Use the buddy system - work in pairs so that one worker can recognize danger signs.
- ✓ Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) and avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- ✓ Eat warm, high-calorie foods such as hot pasta dishes.

For more information visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)