

NC Industrial Commission

www.comp.state.nc.us

Safety Bulletin

4339 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-4339

919-807-2603

parnell@ind.commerce.state.nc.us

"Put the brakes on aggressive driving"

January - 2007

Greetings Friends in the Name of Safety:

Get ready for some exciting changes and new programs! We are experimenting with a new email server that guarantees a 98% delivery rate. This new service will allow for graphics and many other positive "tools". Hopefully we will begin testing email delivery within a few days.

Also, Work Zone Traffic Safety is taking on changes, so stay tuned for more on this subject. As always, we thank you for your support and we pledge to continue to serve your needs.

As always, we continue to update our email list. These mailings are the life-blood for attendance of our Nine Regional Safety Councils and without good contacts; the word will not get out. If you know of someone who might wish to receive these mailings, please send their contact information along to me at parnell@ind.commerce.state.nc.us or to their area Safety Representative as soon as possible. For those of you with SPAM software, you will need to add brantomail@blast.com to your "ACCEPT ALWAYS" list. Your Internet Provider service can help you with this. If that is not an option, provide us with a personal email address if you have or can create one.

Understand how your respirator protects you—Fit testing and maintenance

Last month we discussed why selecting the proper respirator is so important. This month we'll cover fit testing and maintenance of respirators.

OSHA requires that before an employee may be required to use any respirator with a negative or positive pressure tight-fitting facepiece, he/she must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size of respirator that will be used.

Medical evaluation

Keep in mind that before performing the fit testing you must have had a physician or licensed health care professional evaluate your health (by using a medical questionnaire or initial medical examination) before your employer allows you to be fit tested and wear a respirator. Your employer must make sure that any employee using a tight-fitting facepiece respirator is fit tested:

- Prior to initial use of the respirator,
- Whenever a different respirator facepiece is used, and
- At least annually after.

An additional fit test is required whenever there are changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect respirator fit (i.e., facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or an obvious change in body weight).

Types of fit tests

There are two types of fit tests: qualitative fit tests and quantitative fit tests. Both tests must be administered using an OSHA-accepted QLFT or QNFT protocol. The OSHA-accepted QLFT and QNFT protocols and procedures are contained in Appendix A of 29 CFR 1910.134.

Qualitative fit tests (QLFT)

QLFT may only be used to fit test negative pressure air-purifying respirators that must achieve a fit factor of 100 or less.

Quantitative fit tests (QNFT)

If the fit factor, as determined through an OSHA-accepted QNFT protocol, is equal to or greater than 100 for tight-fitting half facepieces, or equal to or greater than 500 for tight-fitting full facepieces, the QNFT has been passed with that respirator.

Unacceptable fit

If after passing a QLFT or QNFT, the employee notifies the employer, program administrator, supervisor, or licensed health care professional that the fit of the respirator is unacceptable; the employee must be given a reasonable opportunity to select a different respirator facepiece and to be retested.

Maintenance and care

Respirators, like most other equipment, need to be maintained in good working condition to be effective. The OSHA respirator standard requires that your employer, "provide for the cleaning and disinfecting, storage, inspection, and repair of respirators used by employees." However, just because the standard puts the burden on your employer, you and your coworkers need to take responsibility for your own well being and do what you can to help.

Cleaning and disinfecting

OSHA has a specific procedure for cleaning respirators (for more information see Appendix B-2 of §1910.134). Your employer can also use the procedures recommended by the respirator manufacturer, but only if the procedures are equally effective.

Clean and disinfect your respirators at the following intervals:

If the respirator is:

- Issued for the exclusive use of an employee, then it must be cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary to be maintained in a sanitary condition.
- Issued to more than one employee, then it must be cleaned and disinfected before being worn by different individuals.
- Maintained for emergency use, then it must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Used in fit testing and training, then it must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Storage

Your employer must take steps to make sure that respirators are stored as follows:

- Protected from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and damaging chemicals; and
- Packed or stored to prevent deformation of the facepiece and exhalation valve.

Emergency respirators

In addition to the storage requirements, emergency respirators have to be:

- Kept accessible to the work area;
- Stored in compartments or in covers that are clearly marked as containing emergency respirators; and
- Stored according to manufacturer instructions.

Talk to your supervisor if you have any questions regarding respirator fit testing, maintenance, cleaning, and storage. ***Remember... the NC Industrial Commission can fit test you at no cost!***

Don't let aggressive drivers leave you feeling run down

If you travel for your job, you need to know how to avoid dangerous driving situations caused by other drivers. Aggressive driving, also known as "road rage," is a continuing problem that contributes to accidents and fatalities. While you can't control the behavior of other drivers, you can watch out for it and avoid provoking an angry response from another driver on the road.

Aggressive drivers are more likely to speed, tailgate, fail to yield, weave in and out of traffic, make unsafe lane changes, honk, and flash their vehicle's lights. Aggressive drivers show less concern for fellow motorists, and may take out their frustrations on others by:

- Engaging in verbal confrontations with other drivers;
- Using the vehicle to cause harm (bumping, ramming, forcing off the road); or
- Getting out of the vehicle and approaching another driver with violent intent.

The victim doesn't have to commit a traffic violation, but may simply be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Use these tactics if you encounter an aggressive driver:

- Be polite and courteous. Do not tailgate, make sure you leave enough room to merge, and use your turn signal. Allow other cars to merge in front of you.
- Be especially cautious during traffic congestion, delays, or other frustrating traffic situations.
- Don't impede traffic by driving slowly in the "fast lane." When it is safe to do so, move to the right lane and allow others to pass.
- Avoid actions that others could perceive as an insult, such as using the horn, making rude gestures, or glaring angrily.

Some drivers take passive-aggressive actions such as refusing to let others pass or merge, and intentionally driving slower to "teach a lesson" to another driver who failed to yield or followed too closely (whether real or imagined). Make sure you understand and recognize these behaviors in others and in yourself. Passive-aggressive driving can elicit anger in others, and the provocation could lead to a physical confrontation at the next stop sign or traffic light.

You can't control other drivers' behavior, but you can control your own reaction. By driving with courtesy, you can avoid "provoking" an angry response from other drivers, giving you one less thing to worry about on the road and at work. ***Call Mel or Alvin to schedule a Defensive Driving class!***

Site safety 101

Your employer is responsible for training you in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and of the regulations applicable to your workplace. Your boss is also responsible to frequently and regularly visit the jobsite and inspect it for safe working conditions.

However, you are also an important part of jobsite safety and security. The simplest of tasks, such as placing trash where it belongs, coiling up extension cords when not in use, and stacking lumber out of the way, may seem unimportant and unnecessary... until someone gets hurt.

Safety measures you shouldn't ignore

General safety rules that can help you avoid injury include the following:

- Wear the right clothing for the job. Winter cold and summer heat can present problems on the job. Shirts should be worn at all times.
- Wear appropriate safety shoes for the job.
- Use the right personal protective gear, including safety glasses, hard hats, and safety shoes.
- Never wear rings, necklaces, and other jewelry if it can pose a hazard.
- Be aware that open flames or sparks can ignite combustible materials. Portable heating and welding equipment, along with discarded cigarette butts, pose the greatest dangers.
- Participating in horseplay is dangerous and counterproductive. Avoid it!

Start today to make a difference at your worksite. Good construction site safety and security not only protects your company's assets, it also protects your own personal safety, your tools, and your job. ***Give us a call to assist you with your training needs!***

Insight...

- About 540 peanuts make up a 12-ounce jar of peanut butter.
- The hamburger got its name when German immigrants from Hamburg, Germany brought this popular patty to the United States in the 1850s. The meat was placed inside a bun and the hamburger was born!
- Stressed out? Eating vegetables on a regular basis for two weeks helped volunteers in a nutrition study reduce levels of stress-related molecules and boost their blood levels of vitamin C.
- Each year, 800,000 Americans seek medical attention for dog bites; half of these are children. Of those injured, 386,000 require treatment in an emergency department and about a dozen die.
- **Sports Trivia Question:** *What was the first sport televised in the U.S.?* Possible Answers: A: Baseball, B: Tennis, C: Golf, D: Rugby

Answer: see last page

Before you begin...

Before you start a new job working with chemicals - or when a new chemical is added to the list of those you already work with - there are several pieces of information you'll need to stay safe.

How would you know it spilled?

Some chemicals have a strong odor. Others may have no odor at all. For each hazardous chemical that you work with, there may be a different way to know if it has spilled or been released in a way that is dangerous.

These methods may include:

- Monitors and/or alarms installed in the area,
- Continuous monitoring devices that you wear during your shift,
- Visual appearance or odor of hazardous chemicals, or
- Other methods.

Make sure you know what the method is for the chemicals you work with.

What are the hazards?

Find out the physical and health hazards of the chemicals in your work area.

Your first line of defense is to know what each chemical can do to you physically and how it can affect your health. Once you are armed with that knowledge, you can take correct precautions.

How can you protect yourself?

Understand the measures you must take to protect yourself from the hazards.

Make sure to follow the specific procedures set up to protect you from exposure to hazardous chemicals. These may include any or all of the following:

- Appropriate work practices (using rotating shifts, guarding, material handling techniques, etc.);
- Emergency procedures; and
- Personal protective equipment.

Where can you find this information?

All of this information is found in the company's hazard communication program. The written program explains:

- The labeling system used at the company,
- How to use material safety data sheets and where they are located, and
- How you can obtain and use the hazard information.

Check yourself

Can you answer all of these questions for each chemical you work with?

1. How would you know it spilled?
2. What are the hazards?
3. How can you protect yourself?
4. Where is the material safety data sheet?

Check with your supervisor if you have any questions about the hazardous chemicals you work with.

DOT Secretary Mary Peters urges motorcycle rider safety

Motorcyclists are key to reversing skyrocketing fatality rates, Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Mary E. Peters said recently during a visit to Harley-Davidson in Milwaukee WI, her first public event since being sworn in as Secretary of Transportation. Peters, an avid motorcyclist, said riders should take safety classes, ensure they have the proper license, and wear their helmets.

Peters said she was concerned by the fact that motorcycle fatalities have increased 115% during the past 8 years, from 2116 in 1997 to 4553 in 2005. She added that although motorcycles account for only 2% of all vehicles on the road, they now represent more than 10% of all traffic-related fatalities. Saying more must be done about motorcycle safety, Peters noted that DOT is working with the transportation community, including state and local governments, to find new ways to make our roads as safe as possible.

Peters urged motorcyclists to obtain proper licenses, to drive sober, and to know how to ride safely when other vehicles are around. She added that other motorists also needed to do a better job at being aware of motorcyclists. And she praised companies like Harley-Davidson for their leadership

in motorcycle safety and education programming and their effort to make sure bikes are properly maintained.

Peters said riders also should wear a helmet, noting that if every rider did, over 700 lives would be saved every year. Only 58% of Americans who ride motorcycles wear helmets today, which is down 13% from 2000.

From the Desk of Dennis Parnell, Director Safety Education...

CPSC recently released safety tips for notebook computer use. Notebook computers are now a part of modern life. They can be found in workplaces, work vehicles, schools, and homes across the country. There are tens of millions of portable computers in use. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is aware of at least 47 incidents involving smoke or fire associated with notebook computers, from January 2001 through August 2006. To promote safe use of notebook computers, batteries, and chargers, CPSC offers the following tips:

- Do not use incompatible computer batteries and chargers. If unsure about whether a replacement battery or charger is compatible, contact the product manufacturer.
- Do not use your computer on your lap. Computer batteries can get hot during normal use.
- Do not use your computer on soft surfaces, such as a sofa, bed, or carpet, because it can restrict airflow and cause overheating.
- Do not permit a loose battery to come in contact with metal objects, such as coins, keys, or jewelry.
- Do not crush, puncture, or put a high degree of pressure on the battery as this can cause an internal short-circuit, resulting in overheating.
- Avoid dropping or bumping the computer. Dropping it, especially on a hard surface, can potentially cause damage to the computer and battery. If you suspect damage, contact the manufacturer.
- Do not place the computer in areas that may get very hot.
- Do not get your computer or battery wet. Even though they will dry and appear to operate normally, the circuitry could slowly corrode and pose a safety hazard.
- Follow battery usage, storage, and charging guidelines found in the user's guide.

Now you know... Dennis ☺

Bird Flu Facts...

The reports of avian influenza (AI) - the bird flu - across the world is concerning to many people, especially the poultry industry. It raises numerous questions about the origins of the disease, how it's spread, and possible human infections. The good news is that the more we understand the disease, the greater the likelihood we'll be able to prevent the disease.

What is it?

AI is a virus that infects wild birds (such as ducks, gulls, and shorebirds) and domestic poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese). There is a flu for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others.

AI strains are divided into two groups based upon the ability of the virus to produce disease in poultry: low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

LPAI avian influenza naturally occurs in wild birds and can spread to domestic birds. In most cases it causes no signs of infection or only minor sickness in birds. These strains of the virus pose little threat to human health.

HPAI avian influenza is often fatal in chickens and turkeys. HPAI spreads more rapidly than LPAI and has a higher death rate in birds. HPAI H5N1 is the type rapidly spreading in some parts of the world.

How is it spread?

AI is primarily spread by direct contact between healthy birds and infected birds, and through indirect contact with contaminated equipment and materials. The virus is excreted through the feces of infected birds and through secretions from the nose, mouth, and eyes.

Contact with infected fecal material is the most common of bird-to-bird transmission. Wild ducks often introduce LPAI into domestic flocks raised on range or in open flight pens through fecal contamination. Within a poultry house, transfer of an HPAI virus between birds also can occur via airborne secretions. The spread of avian influenza between poultry premises almost always follows the movement of contaminated people and equipment.

AI also can be found on the outer surfaces of eggshells and in the case of HPAI, can infect the inside of the egg, which includes the yolk and albumen or the egg white. Transfer to eggs is a potential means of AI transmission. Airborne transmission of virus from farm to farm is highly unlikely under usual circumstances.

HPAI can be spread from birds to people as a result of extensive direct contact with infected birds.

Can you get it from eating poultry or eggs?

AI is not transmissible by eating poultry or eggs that have been properly prepared. If HPAI were detected in the United States, the chance of infected poultry or eggs entering the food chain would be extremely low because of the rapid onset of symptoms in poultry as well as the safeguards in place, which include testing of flocks and Federal inspection programs.

Hens infected with HPAI usually stop laying eggs as one of the first signs of illness, and the few eggs that are laid by infected hens generally would not get through egg washing and grading because the shells are weak and misshapen. In addition, the flow of eggs from a facility is stopped at the first suspicion of an outbreak of HPAI without waiting for a confirmed diagnosis. Therefore, eggs in the marketplace are unlikely to be contaminated with HPAI.

Cooking poultry, eggs, and other poultry products to the proper temperature and preventing cross contamination between raw and cooked food is the key to safety. Consumers should follow the same handling practices that are recommended to prevent illness from common foodborne pathogens such as *Salmonella*:

- Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw poultry and eggs.
- Clean cutting boards and other utensils with soap and hot water to keep raw poultry or eggs from contaminating other foods. Cutting boards may be sanitized by using a solution of 1-tablespoon chlorine bleach and 1 gallon of water.
- Cook poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Cook eggs until the yolks and whites are firm. Casseroles and other dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Use either shell eggs that have been treated to destroy *Salmonella* by pasteurization or pasteurized egg products for recipes that call for eggs that are raw or undercooked when the dish is served. Some examples of these kinds of dishes are Caesar salad dressing and homemade ice cream. Commercial mayonnaise, dressing, and sauces contain pasteurized eggs that are safe to eat. Treated shell eggs are available from a growing number of retailers and are clearly labeled. Pasteurized egg products are widely available.

It is difficult to predict when and where the next outbreak of AI will occur, but the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is aggressively working to ensure public health is protected.

Cell Phone Law

By Roxanne Parnell

Cell phones are causing more and more traffic fatalities as they become more used. The state of North Carolina is cracking down on teen drivers under the age of 18. Cell phones are thought to be one of the biggest distractions while driving. "Of the 5,524 workplace fatalities - workplace fatalities recorded in the US for 2002, 43% were transportation related." These drivers were distracted and may not have been involved in a crash, but could have been the cause of one. By passing a law that prohibits the use of cell phones for drivers under 18, North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) hopes to prevent traffic fatalities.

I agree that teens under 18 do not have the driving experience as a 30-year old. By passing this law, we have allowed for more concentration toward driving instead of drivers being distracted and possibly wreck. Teen drivers are already distracted because they are new and inexperienced, so this law will allow them to pay more attention to other drivers and the road. On the other hand, I disagree that the law should be limited to drivers under 18. It does not matter if you are 16 or 56, anything can happen and a cell phone is a huge distraction.

The North Carolina Industrial Commission offers many driving classes of which I have taken one. I took the defensive driving course last summer and learned a lot about how to always be alert and think "What if?" The Hickory Daily Record says that studies show that coordination skills are not fully developed in young people. The paper also states that cell phone use increases a driver's chance to wreck by four times. The North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force is the panel that recommended the ban on teen usage of cell phones. Ever since the adoption of the graduated license in the late 1990s, statewide crashes involving 16 year olds are down by 34%.

Many states have already passed this law and have had it for many years. In some states, the law prohibits bus drivers to talk on their cell phones. On the subject of occupational hazards, road construction workers have a large risk of being killed by interstate drivers. If one is driving down the interstate at 70 mph and talking on a cell phone, one cannot control a car. When one is on the interstate with construction workers, one must pay special attention to the road and people working because if one does not have all of one's attention on the road, one has a higher risk of crashing and possibly killing an innocent person.

I am glad the state is passing this law because as my experience in being a new driver, talking on my cell phone is a huge distraction, and I have almost wrecked a few times because of it. I take full responsibility for the wreck almost happening, but I now try to avoid talking on my cell

phone because I do not want to have a wreck. With this law coming into effect on December 1, 2006 many teens will not follow it, but it will only take one ticket to prove that the state is serious about this law.

The *NC Industrial Commission Safety Education Section* stands ready to assist you with your Safety training needs. We offer a variety of courses, designed to suit your needs. Please give one of our Industrial Safety Representatives a call...

- [Mike Bingham](mailto:binghamm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - binghamm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Western Carolina Area - 919-218-9045
- [Randy Cranfill](mailto:cranfilr@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - cranfilr@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - APCAP Coordinator - 919-218-2986
- [Markus Elliott](mailto:elliottm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - elliottm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Southeastern Area - 919-810-5788
- [Mel Harmon](mailto:harmonm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - harmonm@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Mid-State Area and Defensive Driving Instructor- 919-218-3374
- [Eric Johnson](mailto:johnsone@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - johnsone@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Southern Piedmont Area 919-218-3567
- [Michael Nance](mailto:nancem@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - nancem@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Blue Ridge & Western Piedmont Areas 919-218-9047
- [Ginny Schwartzer](mailto:SAFETYIC@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - SAFETYIC@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Program Assistant- 919-807-2603
- [Alvin Scott](mailto:scotta@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - scotta@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Eastern & Northeastern Areas and Defensive Driving Instructor - 919-218-2792
- [Tania Whitfield](mailto:whitfielt@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - whitfielt@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Central Piedmont area - 919-218-9049
- [Dennis Parnell](mailto:parnell@ind.commerce.state.nc.us) - parnell@ind.commerce.state.nc.us - Director Safety Education - 919-218-3000

We Are Working For You!

[NC INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION](#)

[CLIP AND SAVE]
Upcoming Events...

- ⊙ January 17, 2007 - NC Rural Water Association 6-hour Workshop - City of Wilmington Operations Center - 212 Operations Center Drive - Wilmington, NC - 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - FREE!
- ⊙ January 25, 2007 - Eastern Carolina Safety Council - Quarterly Meeting - Gardner's BBQ - Hwy 301 Bypass - Rocky Mount, NC - 6:00 p.m.
- ⊙ February 5 - 9, 2007 - 30 Hour Accident Prevention Certificate Awareness Program - Airport Pavilion - Manteo, NC 8:00 am - 4:00 p.m. daily, ending at noon on Friday. Sponsored by the Northeastern Safety Council.
- ⊙ February 7, 2007 - Eastern Carolina Safety Council Construction Workshop - Ag Center - Wilson, NC 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ⊙ February 15, 2007 - NC Rural Water Association 6-hour Workshop - City of Sanford - Service Center - 601 N. Fifth St. - Sanford, NC - 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - FREE!
- ⊙ May 15 - 18, 2007 - NC Statewide Safety Conference - Koury Convention Center Greensboro, NC

- *Answer: A. On May 17, 1939, baseball became the first sport ever televised in the US. The game was between Princeton and Columbia at Baker Field. Princeton won 2-1*