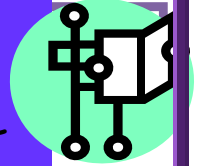




CCOH NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2010

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF OCCUPATIONAL  
HYGIENE NEWSLETTER (CCOH)



## Editor's Message

### CCOH 2010 Executive

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Hello,

After much navel gazing and tooth pulling I've managed to cobble together another summer newsletter on behalf of the CCOH. We'll begin with a message from our shiny new President Jason McInnis from Nova Scotia. Eager to bring his Atlantic perspective to the table, he will expound on his plan to achieve our 2010-2011 CCOH goals as discussed during our Annual General Meeting in April.

I ran into some of our colleagues from British Columbia at the AIHce conference in Denver and managed to wrangle two articles from our most westerly province. WorkSafe BC kindly agreed to share an article on laser use and a discourse on the bewildering array of accreditations we find ourselves faced with in our profession.

The AIHce conference in Denver was a whirlwind of activity for me, from attending the many interesting sessions (115???? in total), taking in the various sites of Denver to enjoying the many and assorted networking opportunities. I arrived into the beautiful "Mile High" city on the Friday and spent the weekend participating in two PDCs before the conference started on Monday. The photo above demonstrates the distinctive atmosphere of Denver's downtown. The big blue bear peering into the Colorado Convention Center watched us hungrily each day as we buzzed around within. The artwork is by Lawrence Argent entitled *I See What You Mean*, a 40-foot tall, blue bear, which I am sure just about every conference attendee with a camera took a photo of before leaving the city.

***Michelle Kutz***

## President's Message

Hello fellow hygienist!

This is my first newsletter contribution as President and it is certainly an honor. I look forward to the opportunities presented by past/current activities and future plans for CCOH. My focus is towards building on our past successes, building strategic partnerships, increasing our visibility and provided continued value to our members.

At the Annual General Meeting in April, a major activity of the executive was to review and discuss the association's mission with the goal of sustaining and building a national reputation for establishing a formal, coordinated perspective on Occupational Hygiene across Canada. Our mission:

- To promote the practice of occupational hygiene in Canada and to promote an exchange of information amongst Canadian Associations
- Consolidate and offer informed perspectives to federal and provincial agencies
- Encourage the development of associations in all parts of Canada and to strengthen association membership through networking and the exchange of ideas, actions and initiatives
- Support and represent the perspectives of Canadian occupational hygienists in the international forum at the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA)
- Promote the profession publicly and ensure a high standard of scientific and ethical practice in occupational hygiene
- Promote and encourage research, teaching and training in occupational hygiene

Within these six broad goals, the CCOH will strive in the coming months to forge a strategic plan to realize our objectives and bring growing value and relevance to our provincial hygiene associations.

Stay tuned. There are many exciting things happening in the CCOH guided by our recent cross-Canada membership survey. We have a dedicate group of volunteers who have grown this organization with active participation, sharing ideas and undeniable passion for occupational hygiene. If you'd like to learn more about CCOH future plans or provide feedback on current/future initiatives, please don't hesitate to contact me.

And lastly but certainly not least, on behalf of the entire executive, I wanted to thank our immediate past president, Lorraine Shaw, for her commitment, support and continued leadership in both her past role as founding president and current role on the executive.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

C.J. McInnis, ROH, CRSP (President, CCOH)

## High-Powered Lasers No Way to get your Point Across

(reprinted with the permission of *WorkSafe Magazine*, WorkSafeBC)



The ASHRAE 62.1 iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad application allows you to perform comprehensive minimum ventilation calculations for a wide variety of commercial buildings based upon Standard 62.1. This app is based upon the "62MZCalc.xls" Excel spreadsheet that accompanies each copy of the Standard. You can do pretty much everything in this app that you can do in the Excel spreadsheet, in addition to creating multi-system projects and emailing results so you can perform further analysis. To learn more:

<http://www.ashrae.org/publications/page/2654>

Lasers powerful enough to burn plastic, light a match, and travel kilometres through the air are finding their way into the hands of workers who've yet to appreciate how treacherous tiny beams of light can be.

WorkSafeBC senior occupational hygiene officer Geoff Clark says hand-held laser pointers have evolved from relatively benign boardroom tools into potentially hazardous devices found readily online and in some local hardware stores. "This new generation of laser pointers is powerful enough to burn the retina in milliseconds, because the human blink reflex just isn't fast enough to protect the eye from beams as high as 350 milliwatts," Clark says. "The potential for stupidity is boundless with these things, which is why we have to put out the warning about how dangerous they are."

Not all laser pointers are dangerous, however. In fact, Class 2 (less than five-milliwatt) red lasers originally sold as presentation devices remain safe workplace tools. According to WorkSafeBC occupational hygiene officer Ian Salomon, stronger lasers — generally those with green, blue, or violet-coloured light beams — are hazardous, and can be used only at workplaces with a formal laser safety program and a trained laser safety officer. This includes construction or manufacturing sites where higher power red lasers are used as leveling devices. "The general rule of thumb is if you can see the beam, then it's way too powerful to use without workplace controls," Salomon says.

Apply that rule and you can clearly see that no laser should ever be pointed at aircraft flying overhead, yet that very thing happens dozens of times each year. In 2009, Transport Canada recorded 15 incidents involving lasers pointed at aircraft in B.C. — and 90 such incidents in Canada.

At WestJet Airlines, laser beams are finding their way into the cockpit and into the eyes of pilots who become distracted by them. Typically, people are simply unaware of how dangerous a laser pointer can be. Last November, a Clarington, Ont. man was facing 12 charges after aiming a laser pointer at police helicopters three times in two months. An air ambulance pilot suffered retinal damage in a similar incident in Ottawa last September, and the pilot remains off work and unable to fly.

No WestJet pilot has sustained permanent eye damage; however, at least one victim of a misdirected laser has been treated in hospital.

"It's not an everyday occurrence by any stretch, but it happens several times a year and our pilots are extremely concerned about it for obvious reasons," says WestJet public relations manager Robert Palmer. "Potentially, it's very dangerous since most of these incidents occur during takeoff and landing and those are the riskiest times on a flight."

WorkSafeBC has no jurisdiction over the aircraft industry, however, workers and the general public need to be aware of the dangers of these laser devices, Clark says.

## High-Powered Lasers No Way to get your Point Across (Cont'd)

In Canada, no laws prohibit the public purchase or use of hand-held laser pointers. But the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation does require workplaces using class 3B or class 4 lasers to have a formal laser safety program and a laser safety officer on staff.

At Simon Fraser University, laser safety officer Susan Yeung is broadening her scope beyond scientists working in the lab, to include professors lecturing at the podium. The university has recently unveiled an education program aimed at educating staff and students about laser pointers and their proper use.

"We are finding ourselves in a new place, having to adapt to this new trend of more powerful pointers," Yeung says. "It's all very new to them because just a few years ago it would never have occurred to them that a pointer could be dangerous."

### Watch where you point it

Laser pointers are a million times brighter than a light bulb and brighter and more damaging than looking at the sun. Consider the following guidelines when using laser pointers:

- Choose lasers labeled as Class 2
- Never look directly into the laser beam or point it at another person
- Select lasers that turn off automatically if dropped



## What's in a name?

By Heather Prime

(reprinted with the permission of *WorkSafe Magazine*, WorkSafeBC)

**CHO? CRSP? CHSC? When the omission of a single letter can make a life-or-death difference on the job, it's important you know your ABCs.**

Phil Houston is a practical man. He works for Wartsila Canada and he's responsible for safety at the company's Vancouver and Victoria operations. It's a job he knows he can't do without the help of qualified safety professionals.

"Our philosophy is that no injury is acceptable and all hazardous situations should teach us something," Houston says, "but it's just not practical to have in-house expertise in all areas, so we hire certified professionals."

Thanks to people with letters like CRSP and CHSC following their names, Houston says his company has "become more aware of how to minimize our risks and hazards." And the results, practically speaking, are impressive.

"Our company has reduced its lost-time injuries by 35 percent since 2008," Houston says. "We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go, and we'll continue working with safety professionals to get there."

### Certification confusion a problem

It makes good business sense to hire certified safety professionals. But with so many designations to choose from, it can be difficult to hire the right safety professional. And that could be dangerous.

"Although many designations share similar skills, the focus of designations can differ significantly," says Bruce Jackson, WorkSafeBC senior manager of prevention quality, who also possesses the CRSP designation. "Employers run the very real risk of having a particular issue addressed inadequately or inappropriately when they fail to hire the right expertise."

All certified safety professionals must meet education, experience, and exam standards to earn their designations, but those standards vary widely, depending on the governing body setting the standards. It's no wonder employers are increasingly confused about which safety professionals to hire.

## What's in a name? (Cont'd)

### Different designations, different focus

Designations can be categorized into three broad categories. The following is an introduction to some of the more common and well-established designations within each of these categories.

#### Generalist designations

Certified safety generalists can help you with a broad range of safety issues, such as safeguarding, lockout, and fall protection, to name a few.

**CRSP** — The Canadian Registered Safety Professional designation is one of Canada's first safety certifications. This designation ensures that the safety professional has a generalist's level of knowledge in 11 areas.

**CSP** — The Certified Safety Professional designation is administered by the U.S. Board of Certified Safety Professionals. A number of Canadian professionals obtain this designation, which is favoured by companies with operations in Canada and the U.S.

#### Industry-focused designations

Several designations focus on the unique safety issues and conditions of construction sites. The following is one of the more common designations employed today.

**CSO** — A Construction Safety Officer is qualified to prepare a sound safety plan, put the plan into action, and ensure workers comply with site rules and regulations. However, employers should keep a careful eye on this designation, Jackson says, "since there are no common standards in place for construction safety officers."

The standard training period for certification is two weeks; the prerequisite, one year of experience in the construction industry.

#### Field-focused designations

When you need in-depth expertise in a specific field, such as occupational hygiene or ergonomics, seek out safety professionals with certifications focused on that specialty.

**CIH and ROH** — Recognized worldwide, the Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) and the Registered Occupational Hygienist (ROH) are the two most common designations for occupational hygienists.

**CCPE** — The Canadian Certified Professional Ergonomist designation is relatively new. Ergonomists with this designation are qualified to use standardized tools to identify, assess, and control work-related risk factors for musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs).

### Making your choice and making it work

#### Step 1 - Determine your need

Jim Hopkins, manager, safety, security, environment, at the B.C. Rapid Transit Company recommends asking yourself:

- Is my company experiencing avoidable injuries?
- Do these accidents disrupt operations and affect our bottom line?
- Is employee morale low? Is absenteeism or turnover too high?
- Is my company receiving unfavourable customer or public attention about safety?
- Would my company flounder in the face of emergencies like fires, floods, or earthquakes?



## What's in a name? (Cont'd)



Is my company paying a high WorkSafeBC assessment rate or penalties for non-compliance?

"The more you answer yes," Hopkins says, "the more important it is that you hire a safety professional." But before you start your search, be clear about where you need help. For example, your accident and injury history may reveal patterns of any issues to focus on.

### Step 2 - Choose the right designation

A lot can be learned about the quality of a designation's program when you visit the governing body's web site, Jackson says (see [Learn more online](#)). Help is also available from industry associations and colleagues. And when doing your research, Hopkins suggests asking:

- Are the designation's education requirements and focus the right match for your specific needs?
- Is the designation recognized nationally?
- Is continuing education required to maintain the designation?
- Does the designation require professional liability or errors and omissions insurance?

### Step 3 - Empower your safety professional

Now that you've hired the right safety professional, entrust and empower him or her for success. Effective safety professionals need the support of employers to follow through on everything from ordering new safety equipment, to arranging training for workers, to asking a worker or contractor who is acting unsafely to leave.

### Learn more online

CCPE — [www.cccpe.ca](http://www.cccpe.ca)

CHSC — [www.csse.org](http://www.csse.org)

CIH — [www.abih.org](http://www.abih.org)

CRSP — [www.bcrsp.ca](http://www.bcrsp.ca)

CSO — [www.cso.asttbc.org](http://www.cso.asttbc.org)

CSP — [www.bccsp.org](http://www.bccsp.org)

ROH — [www.crboh.ca](http://www.crboh.ca)

Employers should note that safety designation requirements are continually changing. For the most current information, it's best to check the appropriate web site for each designation.



OHTA was formed to promote better standards of occupational hygiene practice throughout the world. They develop training materials and make them freely available for use by students and training providers. They also promote an international qualifications framework so that all hygienists are trained to a consistent, high standard, recognized in all participating countries.

OHTA is supported by IOHA and approximately 26 national occupational hygiene associations.

To learn more:

<http://www.ohlearning.com/default.aspx>

# Upcoming Events

## [CSSE Professional Development Conference](#)

Halifax, NS  
Sep 12-15

## [Health Work & Wellness Conference 2010](#)

Vancouver, BC  
Sep 29-Oct 2

## [WorkSafeNB H&S Conference](#)

Moncton, NB  
Oct 17-19

## [Alberta H&S Conference](#)

**Nov 8 - 10, 2010**  
**Edmonton, AB**

# FREE PODCASTS

The Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety allows you to download the following audio to your computer or MP3 player to listen when it's convenient for you:

Safety in the Sun;  
Twitter Tips;  
Keeping Active at Work;  
**New Workers. Orientation is Key;Improving the Lives of Shiftworkers;**  
Workplace Injuries: A Personal Story;Violence and Harrassment in the Workplace;  
Tips to Prevent Repetitive Strain Injuries;  
Mentally Healthy Workplace;  
Cyberbullying;  
Systematic Approach to Creating Healthier and Safer Workplaces;  
Mentally Healthy Workplace;  
Cyberbullying;  
Systematic Approach to Creating Healthier and Safer Workplaces;  
Winter Driving Tips;  
Quality MSDSs - Why and How;  
Workplace Noise;  
Leading Your Team to a Healthier Workplace;  
Working from Home;  
Healthy Workplaces;  
Help Prevent the Spread;  
Bridging the Generations at Work;  
Working in the Heat;  
Keeping Young Workers Safe;  
Planning for Influenza;