

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

<p>CCOH Executive & Members 2007</p> <p><i>Each geographic area / local provincial organization is represented by a director at the CCOH.</i></p> <p>Directors/Assistant Directors:</p> <p>Lesley McCormick/ Jeff Mallany (British Columbia)</p> <p>Terry Demianenko / Kurt Dieckmann (Yukon)</p> <p>Dale Hills (Northwest Territories / Nunavut)</p> <p>Sheldon Weatherby / Shivi Thusoo (Alberta)</p> <p>Herb Wooley (Saskatchewan)</p> <p>Jane Maslowski / Edward Gatey (Manitoba)</p> <p>Lorraine Shaw - President / Richard Quenneville (Ontario)</p> <p>Alain Houle / Marie-Eve LePage (Quebec)</p> <p>Clive MacGregor - Treasurer (Atlantic)</p> <p><u>Website Committee:</u> Chuck Pilger Sheldon Weatherby</p> <p><u>Newsletter Committee</u> Yang Ting Shek (editor) Michal Zitnik</p>	<p>Letter from the Editor.... Yang Ting Shek, ROH Editor – CCOH Newsletter</p> <p>It is my honour and privilege to be the Editor of the CCOH Newsletter. This is my first foray into professional activism and I begin it with much excitement and a little bit of apprehension. I will say humbly that this is also my first “go” at being an Editor of a newsletter and I would welcome feedback from the readers to improve the quality of this newsletter.</p> <p>I will begin by relaying an interesting experience that occurred in recent weeks. As some of you may be aware, I have been preparing to write the CIH exam this spring. A few weeks ago, applicants were made aware that Prometrics (the testing centre utilized by the ABIH in Canada and the US to administer the exam) will be requiring a digital fingerprint as part of the identification process. Examinees must comply with this process or they will not be permitted to take the exam.</p> <p>I was very disturbed by this new requirement, both in terms of my right to privacy and possibly opening myself up to electronic fraud further down the road. I provided feedback to the ABIH, questioning the compulsory aspect of this relative to my rights as an individual under Canada’s <i>Personal Information Protection and Electronics Act (PIPEDA)</i> and the security procedures in place to protect my identity. While both ABIH and Prometrics are US-based, Prometrics has a Canadian presence and is required to comply with PIPEDA. Deep inside, I thought I might have to bite the proverbial bullet and provide my fingerprint when the time comes. But there is a happy-ending to this story: I received a communication last week from the ABIH that the biometrics scan (the fingerprint scan) will be <i>optional</i> to examinees in Canada. It was not made clear to me if others had complained but I was delighted and proud that I spoke up. As Borat would say: “GREAT SUCCESS!”</p> <p>So you may be wondering why I chose to write about this in the Newsletter. There are 2 reasons: 1) the Newsletter is an easy way to share this information with all the Hygienists that I do not know personally; and 2) this is a great “food-for-thought” on the importance of having a national organization to represent our interest and to be a forum for the sharing of information.</p> <p>Thus, this is my segue to a recent discussion in the CCOH organization on our mission and our goals for this coming year. Our mission has been defined but how does the organization actually accomplish these goals? A survey was submitted to each local provincial organization to facilitate discussion on this subject. Some preliminary survey results have been received and these results are discussed in the article on the next page.</p> <p>In this issue...</p> <p>Letter from the Editor.....Page 1 CCOH Survey.....Page 2 Health Canada Revised Guidelines for Radon Gas.....Page 4 Summary of OHS Legislative Change.....Page 6 Upcoming Events across CanadaPage 7</p>
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CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

CCOH Activities and Deliverables for 2007 – Reponses from Provincial Organizations

By Yang Ting Shek, MHS., ROH

2006 was a busy year for the organization. Highlights include:

- Achieving non-for - profit status.
- Obtaining support and in some cases, financial support from the provincial organizations.
- Development of a Student Recruitment document with information on academic programs.
- In partnership with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), hosted a national Webinar entitled “Ergonomics for Occupational Hygienists.” This Webinar was presented by Dr. Richard Wells of the University of Waterloo on Feb. 28, 2007 and was broadcasted to various ‘hub’ locations across Canada.

As the organization reviewed its accomplishments at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in February 2007, it became clear that CCOH will best accomplish its mission (see Insert on page 3) by working with the provincial organizations. There were also challenges identified including limited support from member provincial associations and limited financial/manpower resources within CCOH to provide services. A dialogue between CCOH and the provincial organizations was needed to identify activities / deliverables that are supported by the provincial organizations. Following the CCOH AGM, a survey was submitted to the executives of the provincial organizations to determine these activities / deliverables.

The survey comprised of the following questions (for some questions, a choice of answers were provided (not shown):

1. How often would you like to see CCOH organize Webinars?
2. What topics would you like the Webinars to cover?
3. Is it important for the Webinars to be recognized by CRBOH and ABIH?
4. Would you like to CCOH to organize live courses in your area?
5. If yes to #4, would your local organization be willing to provide support to live courses?
6. Would you prefer several Webinars per year or one live course per year?
7. Would you like CCOH to organize a national conference (in conjunction with provincial organizations)?
8. If yes to # 7, would your local organization be willing to provide support?
9. What information would you like to see on the CCOH website?
10. What other activities would you like CCOH to promote / organize?
11. Would you support a formal partnership with AIHA-National to create a Canadian Sector?

Results of the CCOH Survey on Activities / Deliverables

At the time of publication, two provincial organizations had responded: the Atlantic and Alberta local AIHA chapters. Additional survey results will be summarized in future newsletters when they become available. Some general impressions are:

- Support for Webinars ranged from 1-2 per year up to 4 per year (a choice of 4x, 2x, 1x per yr, Other was provided). Results suggest CCOH should coordinate topics with provincial organizations to avoid competition. There was additional caution around organizing too many events (poor attendance).
- Suggested topics for Webinars are:
 - Mould
 - Emergency Preparedness
 - New Standards (e.g. CSA, ANSI, etc.)
 - Nanotechnology
 - Ventilation
 - Media Outrage/Dealing with the Media
 - Cost/Benefit Analysis of IH
 - Implementation of Health & Safety Programs in Post Secondary Institutions
- Recognition of Webinars by CRBOH and ABIH was important.

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

- Provincial support for Webinars/courses may include manpower and/or financial support. In one case, provincial support would be dependent on attendance levels.
- Suggested information for the CCOH Website:
 - Course Calendars
 - Pay on-line for courses
 - Speaker Presentations
 - Newsletters
 - Links to PubMed
 - Links to new research
- Suggested activities for CCOH to promote/organize:
 - Host events at provincial organization meetings
 - NAOSH week events
 - Develop promotional materials / material templates and provide to provincial organizations
 - Ensure provincial organizations have a link to CCOH's website
 - Promote CCOH to members of provincial organizations
 - Submit newsletter articles to provincial organizations on a regular basis
 - Annual forum / general conference
- Support for a formal partnership with AIHA-National was strong or moderate. More information is needed to understand how this partnership would work and to avoid redundancy of services and events.

On behalf of CCOH, our thanks go out to the Alberta and Atlantic Provincial local AIHA chapters for submitting their surveys. The current results will be discussed at our next monthly meeting on April 12, 2007. CCOH also looks forward to additional suggestions from the other provincial organizations.

CCOH Mission

- *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.*

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

Health Canada Revised Guidelines for Radon Gas

By Ray Ilson, M. Eng., CIH, CRSP

Radon, a colourless, odourless radioactive gas is back in the news. A natural decay product of Uranium in soil, radon decays into “daughters” or “progeny”, emitting alpha particles which may cause damage to lung tissue and have the potential to cause lung cancer. Radon can be found in the open air in low levels approximating 10 Bq/m³, (10 Becquerel’s per cubic metre), but can become concentrated inside buildings or other confined spaces. Levels within Uranium mines can be extremely high, requiring the use of automated machinery rather than men to extract rich veins such as those found in northern Saskatchewan mines. Radon levels in homes are found at intermediate levels. The potential for harm from radon exposure has been confirmed in animal studies, as well as epidemiological studies of miners. The results of epidemiological studies of residences are less clear.

To protect Canadians against such potential health risks, Health Canada is considering recommending a new national guideline for radon in homes. This guideline will require that action be taken to reduce radon concentrations in homes and public buildings if levels exceed 200 Bq/m³, down from the previous Canadian recommendation of 800 Bq/m³. Many other countries already recommend limits of 400 Bq/m³ for existing homes, which is within the range of 200–600 Bq/m³ recommended by the International Committee on Radiological Protection. Within Canada, the Federal Provincial Territorial Radiation Protection Committee, a well-recognized group of Canadian radiation protection professionals actively considering international and Canadian radiation legislation, supports the Health Canada initiative.

Science Considerations:

What is the science behind this proposed change? There is a well-documented relationship between lung cancer and radon levels, especially for smokers. This was first identified in Germany in the 1930’s but many more modern studies have been performed in Europe, Canada, USA, China and other countries

supporting this relationship. Like all forms of ionizing radiation, the potential for harm varies with the level of radiation energy and the duration of exposure. However, the relationship between radon and lung cancer will be familiar to Hygienists with an interest in radiation. There is a relationship between lung cancer and high concentrations of radon, but this is much less clear at lower concentrations and unproven at concentrations less than 1000 Bq/m³. This is analogous to the linear no-threshold model (LND) widely used for ionizing radiation risk. This model extrapolates the effects from high doses and forces a linear relationship through the origin, thereby implying that no dose is safe. However, many doubt that this relationship exists at low concentrations and believe instead that there is a threshold level below which there is no proven harm.

However, two recent European studies have suggested that lung cancer may be related to exposure to radon at the levels found in family residences. These studies have prompted Health Canada to address the concern that radon levels in Canadian homes may present a risk to health and to estimate that lowering the limits to 200 Bq/m³ may save 300 Canadian lives annually. Presentations by Health Canada researchers to the Canadian Radiation Protection Association in Toronto, May 2006, showed that the relative risk of exposure to radon at 600 – 1200 Bq/m³ doubled the risk of lung cancer.

Financial Considerations:

If the harm is real and based in science, then the society should expect its regulators to establish protection criteria to ensure that most affected individuals will suffer no harm. However, for radon as for most radiation hazards, the cost of protecting individuals against any exposure becomes impractical. Background levels of radiation are common and vary widely on the planet, yet the human race has established itself quite successfully in this environment.

The principle of ALARA (keeping exposures As Low As Reasonably Achievable) is widely utilized. This principle includes the consideration of social and economic factors. The real debate surrounds the cost of protecting society against lower and lower levels

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

of such threats versus the alternative of using such financial resources to reduce more proven threats to health. In this case for example, the risk of lung cancer from smoking is orders of magnitude greater than that for radon.

Financial considerations include the fact that while it is recognized in Canada that homes in Winnipeg have higher than average radon concentrations, it is impossible to predict which homes will actually experience higher levels. This depends on location, ventilation, seepage from soil and water, whether the basement floor is earthen or concrete, the walls are concrete-block or poured, leaks around pipes, drains etc. As noted earlier, many countries support remedial action at 400 Bq/m³ in existing homes. This criterion is reduced to 200 Bq/m³ in new homes in most of these countries. The cost of meeting this criterion in modern, more efficient and "air-tight" homes may be substantial, making modern homes less affordable.

Future Considerations:

Decreasing the recommended remedial levels to 25% of that previously established may require the reassessment of many schools for example. A whole new business may be born to perform testing of radon levels in individual homes, schools and other public buildings, perhaps with annual re-testing. Radon testing may become incorporated into home inspections prior to new home sale or the resale of existing homes. To ensure the quality of such assessments, Health Canada is considering the appropriate methods of measuring radon and the qualification and training of such assessors, perhaps including certification.

The debate over the usefulness of such assessments and the associated costs continues. Relatively inexpensive methods of reducing radon levels include renovating basement floors, particularly earth floors/crawlspaces, sealing cracks in wall and floors and around pipes and drains, and improving the ventilation particularly under basement sub-floors.

And we haven't yet considered radon in the workplace. Compliance there will raise public awareness and expectations and reinforce home compliance. Alternatively, home compliance may

force workplace improvements. In the final analysis, decisions may depend on who pays and how much.

Further information can be found at http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/envIRON/radon_e.html

References:

- "New guidelines for radon in indoor air", Michael Grey, Occupational Hygiene Association of Ontario OH Forum, Volume 28 No 3, December 2005
- "Update on the new radon guideline", Bliss Tracy, Health Canada, Canadian Radiation Protection Association Conference, Toronto, May 2006
- "Radon from low level wastes in Port Hope", Anar Baweja, Health Canada, Canadian Radiation Protection Association Conference, Toronto, May 2006
- "Lung cancer risks among former Uranium miners", Philippe Duport, Canadian Radiation Protection Association Bulletin, Volume 27 No 3, June 2006
- "What should we do about radon in homes?", Richard Osborne, Canadian Radiation Protection Association Bulletin, Volume 27 No 4, September 2006

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

Summary of OHS Legislative Changes January to March, 2007

By Michal Zitnik, MHSc, ROH

Federal

Department of Transportation

The Regulations Amending the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations, under the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992*, were published February 10 in *Canada Gazette Part I*.

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/>

CNSC

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) released February 21 a draft *Regulatory Guide: G-341 Control of the Export and Import of Risk-Significant Sealed Sources*. Comments are due December 1, 2007.

http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/pubs_catalogue/uploads/1397528.pdf

Alberta

The requirements of the OHS Code 2006 came into effect on February 1, 2007. The submission deadline for 2007/08 OHS Code Review has been extended from December 31, 2006 to March 31, 2007.

<http://www.hre.gov.ab.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/2114.html>

British Columbia

Amendments to the *Workers Compensation Act* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* made in 2007 are now listed on the WorkSafe BC website.

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/changestoohsregulation.asp?ReportID=34403>

New and updated guidelines for 2007 can be found at:

http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/changestoohsregulation.asp?ReportID=33523#February_07

Manitoba

The New Workplace Safety and Health Regulation 217/2006 came into effect on February 1, 2007.

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/actregnew.html>

Nova Scotia

Safer Needles in Healthcare Workplaces Act came into force January 1, 2007.

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/bills/60th_1st/3rd_read/b013.htm

Ontario

The new noise exposure limit for all workplaces in Ontario covered by the Regulations for Industrial Establishments and the Regulations for Offshore Oil and Gas Operators will come into effect on July 1, 2007

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/news/2007/07-01b.html>

Quebec

The *Regulation to amend the Regulation respecting occupational health and safety*, made under Quebec's *An Act respecting occupational health and safety*, was published in the December 20, 2006, edition of *Gazette officielle du Québec*. The amendments add new sections dealing with lift-truck retention devices, combustible dusts, and permissible exposure limits.

<http://www.canlii.org/qc/laws/regu/s-2.1r.19.01/20061117/whole.html>

Saskatchewan

Launch of consultations on proposed changes to the province's Occupational Health and Safety Regulations was announced on February 9. Comments are due March 30; April 20, 2007 for health care sector changes. *The ministry has produced separate information sheets summarizing the proposed changes to each of 23 sections of the regulations. These can be reviewed by accessing the labour ministry website.*

<http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety>

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

Upcoming Events across Canada

Ontario

ALARA Industrial Hygiene Services -
"Occupational Hygiene Air Sampling, a 3-day
Intensive Course."
May 9-11, 2007
Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.alara.ca/aswrkshp.html>

E-A-R Hearing Conservation Seminars – "Hearing
Protection Devices and Hearing Conservation
Programs."
May 10, 2007
Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.e-a-r.com/hearingconservation/toronto.cfm>

Sudbury Occupational Health Clinic - "International
Conference on Lung Disease: Up Close."
May 10, 2007
Sudbury, Ontario
<http://www.ohcow.on.ca/clinics/sudbury/>

ALARA Industrial Hygiene Services -
"Industrial Noise Exposure Evaluation Workshop."
June 21-22, 2007
Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.alara.ca/noise1.html>

ALARA Industrial Hygiene Services - "Indoor
Environmental Quality Evaluation Workshop."
Nov. 22-23, 2007
Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.alara.ca/ieq1.html>

Québec

L'Association québécoise pour l'hygiène, la santé et la
sécurité du travail (L'AQHSST) - Le 29^e congrès
annuel sous le thème <<L'approche globale en
SST...UN GAGE DE RÉUSSITE!>>
Les 16-17-18 mai 2007
Chicoutimi, Québec
<http://www.aqhsst.qc.ca/>

Atlantic

Association of Canadian Ergonomists - "Ergonomics
in Healthcare Facilities Design and Planning."
April 4, 2007
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
<http://www.ace-ergocanada.ca/>

National/International

Association of Canadian Ergonomists - "Ergonomic
Tools for Quantifying the Risk of Workplace MSDSs
of the Upper Extremities."
Various locations across Canada: April 2- May 11,
2007. Webcast available for May 11 session.
<http://www.ace-ergocanada.ca/>

North American Occupational Health and Safety
Week, May 7-10, 2007
<http://www.naosh.org/english/>

American Industrial Hygiene (AIHA) Conference and
Exposition - "Sparking Tradition with Invention"
June 2-7, 2007,
Pennsylvania Convention Centre
Philadelphia, USA
<http://www.aiha.org/Content/CE/aihce/aihce.htm>

AIHA's Protective Clothing and Equipment
Committee - "Student Poster Award"
Award to be presented during the AIHA conference
(see above for details).
<http://www.aiha.org/content/insideaiha/volunteer+groups/pcecomm.htm>

CCOH Newsletter

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene
Spring 2007

Upcoming Events across Canada

- Cont'd

National – cont'd

Canadian Council of Occupational Hygiene (CCOH) in joint partnership with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety (CCOHS) - "Webinar on CSA Standard Z1000-06 Occupational Health & Safety Management." Additional topic to be announced.

June 19 or 20, 2007(to be confirmed)

Various Webinar locations in Canada (to be announced).

<http://www.ccoh.ca/>

CCOH Event!

Canadian Centre for Occupational Safety and Health (CCOHS) - "Emerging Health & Safety Issues from Changing Workplaces - A Canadian Discussion."

Sept. 17-18, 2007

Vancouver, British Columbia

<http://www.ccohs.ca/events/forum07/>

Professional Certified Industrial Hygienist (PCIH)

Fall Conference - "Your Track to Worldwide Solutions"

Oct. 20-23, 2007

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

<http://www.aiha.org/TheAcademy/html/pcih.htm>