



◆ NASA Electronic Health Records (EHR) Project Status:

Dr. Richard Williams officially appointed the EHR Task Force on October 1, and notified the NASA Enterprise Associate Administrators. An inaugural meeting for the Task Force has been set for November 20-21st. The establishment of this task force is being hailed as a positive commitment to push forward with health information management technology Agency-wide. In parallel to the task force appointment, a request for information (RFI) was officially posted to solicit information from commercial EHR vendors. It is anticipated that the task force will review the responses and make recommendations during the upcoming meeting.

◆ Revised OSHA Recordkeeping Forms Available

Online: OSHA has released a modified version of Form 300. There is now a clearly stated formula for calculating incidence rates along with a new recording criterion for *occupational hearing loss*. Employers must begin using the new OSHA Form 300 on Jan. 1, 2004. The revised OSHA Form 300 is available online at www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/new-osha300form1-1-04.pdf

◆ **Occupational Lung Disease:** Is the number one work-related illness in the United States. The diseases that fall under this category are caused by exposure, usually extended, to irritating or toxic substances that may cause acute or chronic respiratory ailments. Smoking can increase the severity of these diseases many-fold. More than 17,000 lung cancer deaths each year are attributable to inhalation of cancer-causing agents in the workplace. <http://www.lungusa.org/occupational/>

◆ Protecting Workers Against Mold Exposure, OSHA's New Guidance:

OSHA has published a new safety and health information bulletin to provide employers and workers with essential information on how to prevent, control and remove mold in buildings. Geared specifically for building managers, custodians and others responsible for building maintenance, the bulletin offers recommendations on preventing mold growth, proper use of personal protective equipment, and safe cleanup methods. <http://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib101003.html>.

◆ **PCR Based Mold Detection:** The recent development of a DNA-based technique for detecting and enumerating mold spores by the US EPA provides a tool for the industrial hygienist that drastically reduces the time required to accurately identify and enumerate mold spores at the species level. Quantitative real-time PCR is a valuable tool that is available to industrial hygienists for indoor mold assessments. It can quickly provide species-level information that cannot be obtained easily with other methods, if at

all. However, other techniques remain necessary if information on spore viability is desired, and information can be obtained only for those species being assayed. For more information refer to the AIHA Synergist publication's August edition.

◆ **Nursing Spectrum:** The online Nursing Spectrum educational program for nurses is supported by the OCHMO. This is a great way to earn your continuing educational units for licensure. During this quarter a total of 10 continuing education classes were taken online. Any nurse needing a password should contact Mae Hafizi at 321-867-3646.

◆ **SARS Update:** On October 23rd the CDC and University of NC School of Public Health sponsored a satellite broadcast *SARS: When a Global Outbreak Hits Home*. For additional information on the broadcast visit www.publichealthgrandrounds.unc.edu/. Copies of the broadcast can be requested from Stephanie Odom at 321-867-9185.

◆ **Health Promotion:** According to a new survey by Hewitt Associates, most large U.S. employers are offering health promotion and disease management programs to address skyrocketing health care costs. The survey of 960 large employers found that 95 % of surveyed organizations offer some form of health promotion program, an increase of 7 % since 1995. Nearly a third of employers (29 %) are offering health risk appraisals. The appraisals are increasingly being used as a referral mechanism for condition management or other health promotion initiatives.

◆ **Occupational Health Personnel Directory:** is now publicly available on the website and will no longer require a password to access. A link to the directory has been added to the navigation bar at the top of the website.

◆ OH NASA Center Evaluation Calendar:

-No regularly scheduled OH evaluations remaining in 2003.

◆ Upcoming Occupational Health ViTS:

-Fitness ViTS – Nov. 12th, 3:30-4:30 PM EST
-EH ViTS – Nov. 14th, 2:00-3:00 PM EST
-Health Physics ViTS – Dec. 3rd 12:00-1:00 PM EST
-Health Promotion ViTS – Dec. 15th, 3:30-4:30 PM EST

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