



# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Monthly Newsletter January 2004

## ◆ Office of the Chief Health and Medical Officer (OCHMO)

**Renamed:** As part of a recent, major NASA Headquarters reorganization OCHMO has been changed to the Office of Health and Medical Systems (OHMS) with a proposed designation as Code Z. The new office will continue under the leadership of Dr. Richard S. Williams with a similar organizational structure. However, authority for several much needed positions was approved. In the near future OHMS will be filling the FTE for Director, Research Subject Protection and advertising a full-time position for a combination QA/Administrative type. In addition OHMS will also advertise for 2 Part-time Permanent positions; program support specialist and policy analyst.

## ◆ 2004 NASA Safety Managers and Medical and Environmental Health COTRs Meeting:

The 2004 Meeting is scheduled from March 2nd to 5<sup>th</sup>, with the welcome reception scheduled for March 1<sup>st</sup> at 6 PM. The meeting is being held at the Hilton Cocoa Beach Hotel, Cocoa Beach, Florida. *The cut off for guaranteeing the government rate is Monday, February 2.* To register for the meeting and view additional details regarding this NASA meeting, please visit the conference and meeting section of the NASA OH website ([www.ohp.nasa.gov/conference\\_info/index.html](http://www.ohp.nasa.gov/conference_info/index.html)).

**◆ EHRs Project Update:** The EHRs Task Force (TF) held its first ViTS this month to discuss the status of the project and subcommittee tasks for the team. The TF was given a draft document describing the specific services of the health clinics as well as minimum data elements required for an EHRs to be successful within NASA. The document is currently being reviewed by TF members with comments and edits expected by the end of the month. In addition, two subcommittees were formed out of the TF to begin 1) creating general work flow processes, and 2) drafting the requirements for worker's compensation case management Agency-wide. Overall, the project is progressing well. As part of this effort, Dynamac has retained an IT consultant specializing in medical informatics and system integration.

## ◆ JPL's Chemical Hygiene Program Highlighted in AIHA Synergist Monthly Publication:

JPL's Chemical Hygiene Plan is highlighted in the January 2004 edition of the *AIHA Synergist* magazine. The article outlines the program elements and how JPL involved lab stakeholders and designed their new chemical hygiene program initiative with the user or scientist in mind. The article also stresses the importance of using pilot studies for major initiatives and the importance of marketing and communicating to center residents before and during the implementation process. If you are a member of AIHA you can go online and read the longer version entitled "Chemical Hygiene Plans: A Case Study of Effective Leadership, Planning and Implementation".

## ◆ Updates on Health Promotion Activities:

The Health Promotion Campaign topic for Q2 FY 2004, January through March '04, is hearing conservation. All educational material has been mailed to the centers. The topic merits a close interaction between the IH and Clinic staff to better coordinate their education and outreach efforts. The next two quarterly health promotion campaigns are weight management (Q3) and colon cancer (Q4).

**◆ Guidelines of Care for Work-Related Injuries:** The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) has

released the second edition of "Occupational Medicine Practice Guidelines: Evaluation and Management of Common Health Problems and Functional Recovery in Workers": a comprehensive guide for effective treatment of workplace injuries and diseases. California state law (AB 227 and SB 228) now stipulates that the ACOEM practice guidelines shall be "presumptively correct on the issue of extent and scope of medical treatment". Visit the AAOHN policy page ([http://www.aaohn.org/public\\_policy/prohealth/index.cfm](http://www.aaohn.org/public_policy/prohealth/index.cfm)) for more details.

## ◆ NASA Annual Occupational Health Conference in 2004:

Make plans now to attend the *NASA Occupational Health Conference* in Williamsburg, VA, on June 21-25. The conference will be held at the Hospitality House, located within walking distance of Colonial Williamsburg. For more details about the conference please visit the NASA OH website conference and meeting page ([www.ohp.nasa.gov/conference\\_info/index.html](http://www.ohp.nasa.gov/conference_info/index.html)) of our NASA OH.



Williamsburg Hospitality House



Williamsburg Hospitality House

**◆ OSHA Regulatory Update:** OSHA has released its semi-annual regulatory agenda to cover the first six months of 2004. Three substances of interest continue to be in the pre-rule stage; *Crystalline Silica*, *Hexavalent Chromium*, and *Beryllium*. OSHA is still considering whether or not to promulgate a specific standard for exposure to crystalline silica. OSHA is moving forward with plans to expedite the hexavalent chromium rule that a US Court of Appeals ordered last year. The agency also expects to begin the small business regulatory review process for a beryllium rulemaking by late September. OSHA has announced the withdrawal of proposed rulemaking on *Occupational Exposure to Tuberculosis* and *Glycol Ethers*.

**◆ HPS Annual Meeting:** Health Physicists (HP) at the NASA centers are encouraged to attend the annual HP meeting in July in Washington, DC. A NASA HP breakout session during this meeting is currently being explored.

## ◆ NASA OH Center Evaluation Calendar:

- February 9-11 – Michoud Assembly Facility
- February 11-13 – Stennis Space Center

## ◆ Upcoming Occupational Health ViTS:

- EH – February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2:00-3:00 PM EST
- Health Promotion – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1:30-3:00 PM EST
- Health Physics – March 15<sup>th</sup>, 3:30-4:30 PM EST
- EHRs Task Force – March 16<sup>th</sup>, 3:30-5:00 PM EST

NASA OH Newsletter is published by the NASA OH Support Office

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