



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Services



SANDRA SHEWRY
Director

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

May 24, 2006

Labor Organization/Community-Based Organization
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX
XXXXXXX

Subject: Two Cases of Bronchiolitis Obliterans (Life-Threatening Lung Disease) Among California Flavoring Manufacturing Workers

Dear XXXXXXX:

The Occupational Health Branch (OHB), California Department of Health Services, is trying to reach workers in the food flavoring manufacturing industry, their employers, and their health care providers to alert them about bronchiolitis obliterans, a life-threatening lung disease. Two cases have been diagnosed among workers at food flavoring companies in California. The disease is associated with exposure to diacetyl, a butter flavoring ingredient¹. It is also known as “microwave popcorn lung disease” based on cases among workers in that industry.

We are requesting your help in identifying food flavoring manufacturing workers who may be at risk for bronchiolitis obliterans, and in disseminating the enclosed worker fact sheets on diacetyl and pulmonary function testing. We plan to have a Spanish translation of *Diacetyl (Butter Flavor Chemical)—Use in Flavoring Manufacturing Companies* available by June 1st.

For your information, we are also enclosing the outreach materials OHB disseminated to food flavoring companies and to health care provider organizations in California. Employers received the resource list in addition to letters and the worker fact sheets. Health care providers received letters, diacetyl fact sheets, and the case summaries. All of the materials are available in PDF format and can be distributed electronically.

Please contact OHB at **(866) 282-5516** if you have questions or if you need additional fact sheets and other outreach information.

Sincerely,

Barbara Materna, Ph.D., CIH
Chief, Occupational Health Branch

¹ See the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fluorings/> for more information.