



WORKERS' SPOTLIGHT

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WHPP AND BTMED ROSTER UPDATES

One of the most challenging aspects of the projects that provide medical screening examinations for the Former Worker Medical Screening Program (FWP) is locating former United States Department of Energy (DOE) workers who are eligible for these services. In an ideal world, one with unlimited funding, the projects would have large advertisements during the Super Bowl, sponsor a NASCAR racecar, and plaster billboards all across the country to make certain every one of the hundreds of thousands of former DOE

workers are aware of our medical screening programs. Instead, we operate in the real world, one where we must use an affordable, creative and multi-dimensional approach to conduct outreach.

Of the many methods used to locate former workers, one of the most efficient is contact by direct mailing. Direct mailing generally comes in the form of a letter or a brochure, highlighting the potential impact past occupational exposures, at a DOE facility, may have on a former worker's current health status and of their eligibility to participate in the FWP. In our early years,

direct mailings were often difficult because the projects did not have access to the names and addresses of former workers. Through the cooperative efforts of DOE Headquarters and the various contractors and subcontractors at the DOE sites, we have been able to successfully obtain lists or "rosters" of former workers from DOE facilities, as well as updates on a regular basis.

The depth of information provided on rosters varies by site and by worker population (contractor vs. subcontractor workers).

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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Greg Lewis

Quality Control

Department of Energy (DOE) sites have been processing Energy Employee Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) records requests for over 10 years now. As a result

of the thorough search and staff experience, sites have been able to improve their records-gathering process and create procedures that ensure a consistent and quality response. A standard part of the records gathering process is a measure of quality control

(QC) review. Many success stories have been reported from DOE sites regarding cases where the initial search didn't turn up a vital piece of information, but was eventually found. This can be especially important for Special Exposure Cohort (SEC)¹ cases, where

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GETTING TO KNOW OUR STAFF



The retirements from the Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS) in 2008 created a staffing need for someone with historical knowledge of the

weapons complex and the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) covered facilities and locations.

Jeff Tack, a contractor employee with the DOE Office of Legacy Management, is funded part-time to fulfill that need. Jeff has more than 40 years of experience in the industry, including work at the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission fuels research facilities, DOE offices, and U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission sites. As a Senior Research Analyst supporting the HSS Office of Worker Screening and Compensation Support, Jeff responds to critical questions sent to our office from the

U.S. Department of Labor, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the public regarding our EEOICPA covered locations. He thoroughly researches HSS and other records about specific DOE sites and provides findings to HSS Management for review.

When not at work, Jeff enjoys fishing, climbing, and hiking in the Colorado mountains. ■

ROSTERS *cont.*

Because the DOE legacy dates back to the 1940s, locating records can be challenging. The rosters do provide a foundation that we can work from in our quest to locate workers; however, we often find that worker contact information is outdated or information is missing altogether. Sometimes the rosters contain workers who haven't set foot in a DOE facility in over 30 or 40 years and may have moved many times since their addresses were last on file. To account for changed addresses, our projects utilize private and public information services to find the most recent contact information for our participants, all while following stringent protocols to protect personal information that are dictated by DOE. The updated information provided through these information service entities offers our projects a much better chance that our information will reach the correct destination, while avoiding unnecessary costs incurred from mailing to incorrect addresses.

Often, the organizations administering the FWP exams will work together to determine current addresses for workers listed on rosters and to conduct joint mailings to these individuals, thereby reducing the burden for any one project. For example, the Worker Health

Protection Program (WHPP) recently joined up with the Building Trades National Medical Screening Program (BTMed) to share the cost of both updating rosters and splitting the cost of mailing an informational postcard to former Paducah, Portsmouth, Oak Ridge K-25, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Y-12 National Security Complex workers, since WHPP provides screening to former production workers from these sites and BTMed provides screening to the former construction workers. The yield of respondents was much greater and the cost was much lower than if either project had attempted to conduct the direct mailings on their own.

While direct mailing is not the only source of outreach, it is one of the most necessary for reaching the large and dispersed group of former DOE workers across the country. ■

TRIVIA QUESTION

Since the implementation of SERT in October 2012, how many records requests have been processed electronically to DOE for response?

- a. 741
- b. 1741
- c. 7414

WHPP VIDEO ACKNOWLEDGED

The Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP), one of the Office of Health, Safety and Security-funded FWP projects and is jointly run by the United Steelworkers, the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, and Queens College, currently serves workers from 13 DOE sites. WHPP recently received runner-up status for its submission during the American Public Health Association's (APHA) 140th annual meeting for the Occupational Health and Safety Section's inaugural Digital Technology Award contest.

The submission was a short digital clip entitled, *Saving Lives, One DOE Worker at a Time*, which was originally created as an outreach tool to inform former workers of the availability of the program and to document the positive health impact the program has had on former workers' lives. The clip was assembled from footage of a group of former Oak Ridge K-25, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Y-12 National Security Complex workers who sat down with staff from Queens College in January 2012 to have their portraits taken, to discuss their work for DOE, and share their experiences with the FWP. WHPP then edited the collected footage and created a digital clip that continues to be used to spread the word about the importance of medical screening for former DOE workers.

The call for the APHA contest asked participants to "develop a short presentation with the best or most attractive use of technology and digital video media that communicates, describes, delivers, trains, raises awareness, connects or collects - *occupational safety and health, occupational health and safety issues or products.*" The best presentations were selected by their ability to reach the Occupational Health and Safety community and beyond.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE *cont.*

compensation can hinge on the requirement for 250 days of employment. For some claimants, literally one additional day of employment can make the difference in their case adjudication.

While going through a formal QC checklist and making sure that the request was sent to the correct site departments is important, the critical part of QC is the knowledge and attentiveness of the reviewer. It is important that site staff use their experience and judgment to determine if additional document searches are necessary. For example, if the worker has claimed 20 or 30 years of employment, does the file look like a compilation of 20 to 30 years of records? If the employment is listed in an area where staff know the workers were issued dosimetry badges, are there corresponding dosimetry records? If the worker was a construction subcontractor and no records have been located, has staff researched to see if the construction company is/was a known subcontractor at the site? If the company is not listed anywhere, have project files or other records been reviewed for verification that the company did perform work at the site?

There have been instances where site staff recognized something about the case that didn't look right or that the response file didn't seem complete, and the site staff took it upon themselves to search further. While records cannot always be found on every individual, a critical review of the final records package is key in making sure that staff are able to provide the most complete and accurate records package to the Department of Labor and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. ■

1 Additional information on SEC can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ocas/ocassec.html>

Calendar of Events



June

- 4 8:00 am FWP Event
Mound Retiree Breakfast
Bob Evans, 220 Byers Road, Miamisburg, OH
- 9:00 am Local Event
Y-12 Retiree Meeting
Shoney's, 204 S Illinois Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN
- 5 7:15 am Local Event
X-10 Retiree Meeting
Shoney's, 8529 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN
- 9:00 am Local Event
Y-12 Inspector Group Meeting
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 11:00 am Local Event
Y-12 Guards Meeting
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 4:30 pm FWP Event
ATLC Council Meeting
ATLC Union Hall, 10-9 Viking Road, Oak Ridge, TN
- 6 9:00 am Local Event
X-10/Y-12 Asbestos Retiree Meeting
Shoney's, 3739 W US Highway 9, Lake City, TN
- 6:00 pm FWP Event
K-25 AGRE Meeting
USW Union Hall, 133 Raleigh Road, Oak Ridge, TN
- 11 9:00 am Local Event
X-10 Plant and Equipment Meeting
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 11:00 am FWP Event
Fernald Retiree Meeting
Fernald Nature Preserve, 10995 Hamilton Cleves Highway,
Harrison, OH
- 13 9:00 am Local Event
X-10 Guards Meeting
Shoney's, 1100 US 321, Lenoir City, TN
- 18 12:00 pm Local Event
X-10/Y12 Machinist Local 480 Meeting
Local 480 Hall, Oak Ridge, TN
- 20 11:30 am FWP Event
Mound Retiree Meeting
Golden Corral, 8870 Kingsridge Drive, Miamisburg, OH
- 5:00 pm Local Event
Y-12 Gage Lab
Gondoiler, Oak Ridge, TN

For a complete list of calendar events, visit:
http://www.hss.doe.gov/healthsafety/FWSP/Formerworkermed/events_calendars.html

WHPP *cont.*

WHPP submitted its already completed clip as they felt it met the criteria requested. During APHA's October 2012 meeting in San Francisco, an LCD monitor was dedicated to showcasing both the winning and runner-up presentations at the Occupational Health and Safety booth. The APHA conference was attended by over 13,000 national and international physicians, administrators, nurses, educators, researchers, epidemiologists, and related health specialists.

Based on the success of the initial photo essay, WHPP plans to expand its digital outreach to other program sites in 2013.

To view *Saving Lives, One DOE Worker at a Time*, visit the WHPP homepage at www.worker-health.org ■

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Trivia Answer: 7414