



The SSE Elucidator *Office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE)*

“Elucidator”: to give clarity through explanation and analysis.

July 2004 Newsletter

A Message from Cliff Wendel

I am very pleased to announce that the Office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE) has extended its outreach efforts by producing a bi-monthly newsletter. This newsletter is intended to help achieve our goal of “Safeguarding and Protecting Resources through Competence and Commitment”. We hope to use this newsletter as a resource to exchange information and ideas, highlight new and important activities, and announce new projects, events, and people. The Word “Elucidator” in the title comes from the word elucidate meaning to give clarity through explanation and analysis. Our goal for this newsletter is just that; to provide clarity.

In each newsletter, we will have the following:

- A *Spotlight Article* on one of the organizations involved with the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC),
- Two or more Feature Articles on current events or topics of interest

We have included a contact person on page 8 with whom you can feel free to share comments, suggest topics and provide announcements for inclusion in future newsletters. Enjoy the newsletter!

Sincerely,

Cliff Wendel, Chief SSE

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This newsletter's spotlight article will focus on the creation of the Office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE) at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) Headquarters at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

In 2003, the USAMRMC established the office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE) in order to consolidate efforts in biological and chemical surety, environmental protection, and safety and health.

SSE RESPONSIBILITIES

Establishment of the SSE meant a new management approach and additional responsibilities, such as:

- Providing staff assisted audits and programmatic review,
- Making determination for policy needs,
- Making recommendations for policies and standards, and
- Establishing guidelines for the implementation of new policies and standards.

Over the last year, the SSE team has been working with, and visiting each subordinate command, identifying success stories and areas of improvement. The SSE team understands that as this program develops and grows, there will be an increased need to share information on a wide range of topics throughout the command.

Following are a few examples of the type of compliance related activities that the SSE team in Fort Detrick is currently working on:

National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

Compliance: All activities directed by USAMRMC must consider NEPA requirements in all phases of proposal evaluation and contract and/or grant award through completion. To meet these requirements, NEPA must be considered in all research programs conducted at military research facilities and through contracts, subcontracts, and Cooperative Research and Development Agreements

(CRDAs) with universities, other institutions, and industry. The SSE Team is currently finalizing the publication of a guidebook which provides guidance to the USAMRMC

subordinate commands regarding the NEPA regulations and processes as applicable to research proposals and protocols. This Guidebook is expected to be ready for distribution in the summer of 2004.

Reporting Guidebook and Reference Cards for Safety: SSE is currently working on developing guidelines and updating contact information as related to the reporting procedures for accidents, injuries and illness throughout the command and its subordinate units. The purpose of the guidebook is to provide instructions on the documents required for reporting accidents (including biological defense and chemical agents). The purpose of the Reference cards is to provide reporting procedures and contact information specific to the Command and its subordinate units. The Guidebooks and the Reference Cards are expected to be completed this fall.

AR 385-69 Revision: The SSE team is supporting the Army's processes for the revision of the AR 385-69 Biological Defense Safety Program. This regulation sets forth the policies on the management of the Biological Defense Research Program (BDRP) and sets minimum safety criteria and technical requirements. This regulation also implements the Center for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health Guidelines on Laboratory Biosafety. This regulation intimately affects operations at several USAMRMC subordinate commands.

Complete list of the SSE staff and their contact information is provided under the announcement section of this newsletter.



Fort Detrick Celebrates Earth Day

Fort Detrick's Earth Day opening ceremony was held at Strough Auditorium on April 8, 2004. Since schools were closed this day, children and parents alike could enjoy the day's events, which included music, hands-on exhibits and display booths with environmental information that coincided with this year's theme: "Preserving the Environment While Enjoying Our Freedom."



Kids join Cody and BJ on stage for the environmental music show at Fort Detrick's Earth Day kick-off event this year.

In the days following the kick-off event, the City of Frederick held special activities such as a stream cleanup, a field trip to a greenhouse and an Earth Day celebration at Baker Park.

The opening ceremony offered many exhibits, such as groundwater monitoring and bluebird displays. Youth Services even built a bluebird house for the occasion. Information was available on Fort Detrick's recycling program, which helps reduce medical and municipal waste while conserving resources, and the carpooling program partnership with Frederick City TransIT, which promotes the community's efforts to reduce vehicular emissions and guarantees a ride home if an emergency occurs.

There were many fun and interactive environmental programs at this year's opening ceremony. Entertainers Cody and BJ, a husband and wife team from Virginia, performed. They kept the children hopping by teaching them various songs written by Cody that teaches the importance of working together "one by one" to make the world a better place for its people, animals and the environment.

BJ demonstrated how strong a parrot's beak is by giving their pet Macaw parrot, Cheyenne, a shelled walnut while the children watched as the bird's beak easily cracked open the shell. Cheyenne was not the only animal on the premises that day. Representatives from Scales and Tales and the Catoclin Mountain Zoo dropped by with various critters in tow for the afternoon's displays and exhibits. A bee display was also set up for the afternoon.



Catoclin Zoo brought several animals and reptiles to Fort Detrick's celebration at Strough Auditorium. People were encouraged to hold the animals, as seen in the picture above.

PREVIOUS EARTH DAY THEMES AND ACTIVITIES

1998: *One Mission, One Environment, One Future: Preserve the Balance* – Earth Day Run, riparian buffer planting, plant give away by USDA.

1999: *America's Army & the Land We Defend* – recyclable art contest, soil conservation, Frederick trees.

2000: *Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future* – clowns, bee display, wetland planting.

2001: *Transforming the Army...Sustaining the Environment* – composting demonstration, field trip to a greenhouse.

2002: *Protect Our Home* – field trip to Fountain Rock Nature Center, Chesapeake Bay Program workshop.

2003: *Preserving the Environment While Protecting Our Freedom* – stream cleanup, visit from local veterinarian.

Students toured the educational Rolling Rainforest housed in a semi-trailer where they could take a virtual walk through a rain forest complete with music, trees and plants. Those who looked carefully could even spy a giant beetle, sloth or frog among the realistic jungle trees. They learned that cashew nuts grow on top of a fruit and saw nutmeg and coffee bean trees.

Earth Day was founded by former U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson and first celebrated in 1970. In 1995, at the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day, the Army's Earth Day program became centrally coordinated by its Environmental Center. Since then, the Army has expanded its Earth Day celebrations. The program helps increase awareness of the Army's environmental initiatives. It also provides an opportunity for the Army to partner with the greater community.

For example, Fort Detrick partnered with the City of Frederick to celebrate Earth Day at Baker Park on April 18, 2004 with other local groups such as Scales and Tales, Animal Welfare League, Department of Agriculture, Days Inn Horse Rescue, and Community Commons, an environmental non-profit organization.

Both events this year were well attended. Planning for next year's celebrations will begin this Fall. If you are interested in setting up a display, or have an idea to offer for future Earth Day events, Please contact Mrs. JoLane Souris at: jolane.souris@amedd.army.mil



Ergonomics Program Aims to Keep Workers Safe

Ergonomics is the field of study that strives to fit jobs, tasks, and work places to the worker. Implementing an effective office ergonomics plan can reduce the number of work-related injuries, which can lead to work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs), and increase the productivity, product quality and the worker's job satisfaction.

Here are some tips on how you can be actively involved in the Ergonomics Program. You can prevent injuries and ensure your continued safety in your office by doing the following:

1. Ensure that your workstation is set up properly.
 - Position your computer monitor directly in front of you. It should be about an arm's length away.

- Decrease overhead lighting to reduce glare, and use a task light on your desk to properly illuminate your work surface.
- Use a document holder to place documents next to the computer screen.
- Adjust the height of the chair to keep your forearms, wrists and hands in a straight line.
- Choose a chair that has sufficient lower back support.
- Keep your mouse close to the keyboard and keep both in front of you so you don't have to twist or bend to reach them.
- Set up your workstation in an area that has sufficient ventilation and a comfortable temperature.

2. Use the correct postures at work.

- Make sure your hips and knees form a 90-degree angle and feet rest flat on the floor.
- Hold your head and neck in upright position.
- Keep your shoulders relaxed and elbows close to your body.

3. Take frequent short breaks from repetitive actions and/or motions.

4. Alternate activities throughout the day, mixing sitting activities with standing and moving activities to encourage the body to use different muscle groups.

5. Reduce fatigue and increase comfort by exercising and stretching before, during, and/or after work.

6. You should take the time to evaluate your workstation periodically and try to be more aware of symptoms and signs of discomfort, such as numbness or burning sensation in the hand, swelling or stiffness in the joints, and pain in wrists, forearms, elbows, neck or back.

ARE YOU AT RISK?



Do you experience any of the following risk factors and/or specific workplace conditions?

- Repetitive motions
- Sustained static or awkward postures
- Excessive bending or twisting of the wrist
- Continued elbow or shoulder elevation
- Forceful exertions or heavy lifting
- Excessive use of small muscle groups
- Acceleration and velocity of dynamic motions
- Vibration
- Mechanical compression
- Restrictive workstations
- Improper seating or support
- Inappropriate hand tools
- Machine-pacing and production-based incentives
- Extreme temperatures
- Extended exposure to hazardous or annoying noise
- Improper lighting
- Work organization and occupational psychosocial factors

These risk factors could lead to work-related injuries. If any of these apply to you or your job, please contact your Installation Safety Officer.

When work-related injuries do occur, you should seek medical help and alert your Command Safety Manager. Make changes to your job, task or work site to prevent further injury (*see box on this page*).

PROTECT YOURSELF



Use these methods to remove hazards from your job:

- ✓ **Process elimination** – eliminating a process that may cause injury;
- ✓ **Engineering controls** – redesigning equipment or worksite to better fit the worker;
- ✓ **Work practices** – promoting behaviors that reduce injury;
- ✓ **Administrative controls** – limiting the frequency, duration and severity of exposure to hazards;
- ✓ **Personal protective equipment** – using devices or equipment, such as gloves, to reduce or prevent injury;
- ✓ **Communication and coordination** – identifying hazard prevention and control options; and
- ✓ **Work site follow-up analysis** – verifying that controls are effective and being maintained.

For more information about hazard prevention, please contact your Command Safety Manager.

Army Ergonomics Program Background

Because of the importance of ergonomics, the Army created an Ergonomics Program in 1997 to establish a set of requirements and procedures for the control of work-related injury and illness. In July 2000, a letter was issued under the authority of the Surgeon General to prescribe the goals of the Ergonomics Program and establish an Ergonomics Subcommittee.

Specific elements of the Army's Ergonomics Program include the following:

- Work site analysis – identifying existing or potential problems,
- Hazard prevention and control – design or re-design of a job, task or work area,
- Health care management – evaluating and treating WMSDs,
- Education and training, and
- Program evaluation – identifying trends, deficiencies or corrective actions.

For more information on the Ergonomics Program, please consult the Department of Army Pamphlet 40-21 or contact your installation's Safety Officer.

Announcements

Conferences & Calendar of Events:

PCIH 2004

October 2-5, 2004, Montreal, Canada
19th Annual Professional Conference on Industrial Hygiene (AIHA), Sponsored by AIHA's Academy of Industrial Hygiene

www.aiha.org/TheAcademy/html.pcih.htm

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Do you have an announcement, comment or topic you would like to see in the next newsletter? Please feel free to contact Alex Izadpanah, Universe Technologies, Inc. (UNITEC) at 301-695-0982 or aizadpanah@unitec-md.com.