

“KURTS CORNER”
Featuring
Mr. Kurt A. Petermeyer, ASP, CFEI
Area Director, Region IV OSHA

Greetings All. First off, I want to thank the Chapter for allowing me to speak to the group at the last meeting and discuss emphasis areas and provide an employment opportunity within OSHA for some of the Gulf Coast’s finest. As I described at the meeting, OSHA is substantially increasing staffing of qualified safety and industrial hygiene professionals throughout the country; and what a better place to start that search than at our chapter! Thanks to all of those members that showed interest.

With the increase in staffing across the country, we can all expect a subsequent increase in OSHA inspection activity. The Mobile Office has already added eleven new faces in the last year, and there are strong possibilities for adding additional personnel in the near future. Don’t sweat too much folks..., many of these personnel are filling existing open positions where previous employees departed; including two new Assistant Area Directors (Robert Bennett & Joseph Roesler) and all new administrative staff. I have however increased my staffing of compliance officers from ten to fourteen, which of course is a 40 percent increase. In addition, I no longer have a position for a Compliance Assistance Specialist, which all of you know was previously filled by the legendary Bill Bice.

In regards to areas of emphasis for the coming year, the Mobile Area OSHA Office will be focusing efforts in the following:

- Silica, lead, & hexavalent chromium exposures NEP (National Emphasis Programs)
- Chemical NEP (manufacturing/processing facilities) – limited implementation for FY2010 in Region IV. Site Specific Targeting (SST), complaints, accidents, etc. will be expanded to comprehensive under the NEP if a referenced SIC code under the NEP.
- Trenching NEP
- Amputations NEP
- Combustible Dust NEP
- “New” Recordkeeping NEP, which will target various high and low rate sites. Inspections will include full recordkeeping audit and comprehensive inspection of facility
- Pandemic Flu (compliance assistance)
- Falls Regional Emphasis Program (REP)
- Overhead Power Lines REP
- Landscaping REP
- “New” Scrap Metal Recycling REP, focusing on health exposures
- “New” American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (stimulus work) emphasis, focusing on green building, highway projects, infrastructure improvements, and certain manufacturing SIC’s

New Standards forthcoming:

- Combustible dust - advance notice of proposed rulemaking October 21, 2009
- Hazard Communication standard to be altered to incorporate the Globally Harmonized System of Classification – Out for public comment September 30, 2009

As Safety and Health professionals, we each have a vital responsibility in protecting America’s workforce and I have no doubt that each and every day we make a difference. Keep up the good work! As always, please feel free to contact my office for any

assistance or information @ (251) 441-6131. You can also obtain additional information from the OSHA website (www.osha.gov).

See you at the next meeting.

Kurt