

- **Main Topic - occupational safety and health Policy**

- Introduction of workers' health monitoring system

- Number of noxious factors subject to special examination to be expanded to some 200 kinds involving 35 projects in 4 fields

- Starting from the following year (Ministry of Labor) -

As there have been many cases of presenting problems recently in relation to the special medical examination system and increasing trend of occupational diseases, the government drew up a plan for monitoring of workers' health.

On 29th May, the Ministry of Labor presented a plan, "An establishment program for workers' health monitoring system", which included securing practicality of special medical examination to discover occupational diseases earlier, construction of occupational disease monitoring system and other 35 projects in 4 fields relating to occupational disease. In this respect, the Ministry decided to enforce the system starting in 2003 after amending related laws.

According to the program, the Ministry plans to add some 80 kinds of noxious factors including the dimethylacetamide, the toxic hepatitis derivative, to the current 120 kinds, making it approximately 200 factors in total. The normal medical examination will include musculoskeletal diseases placed under highlight recently. The special medical doctors' qualifications have been strengthened to those of occupational medical specialists and licensed doctors. The Ministry will also establish the appropriate number of persons to be checked by a doctor per day.

The amendment of related laws will have new obligatory provisions for the owner to provide convenience to workers so that they can receive medical checkups at their desired time. In case any worker shows abnormal symptoms at the initial medical examination, the 2nd medical examination shall not be conducted at the workplace. In addition, the Ministry decided to find a way of using a special medical check card as a first medical opinion issued by a doctor when a man with occupational diseases requests occupational medical treatment compensation.

As the occupational disease monitoring system which has been operated from 1998 as a model case shows good effect. Likewise approximately 1,400 occupational disease carriers including asthma patients were discovered through it. The ministry intends to expand the system all areas of the nation. As a beginning, the Ministry will start operating the monitoring system in 6 local areas with emphasis placed on occupational asthma, musculoskeletal diseases and newly found occupational diseases.

Furthermore, in order to prepare for the occurrence of new occupational diseases that cannot easily be categorized as occupational diseases based on only the occupational diseases judgement criteria, the Ministry will operate an occupational disease mechanical survey team at all times. To effectively solve the problem related to the shortage of industrial medical specialists, the Ministry of Labor will push various programs to support and foster industrial medical specialists by promoting their status and treatment.

- Ministry of Labor establishes pneumoconiosis preventive measures in casting industry
 - Supervisor's responsible management system to be launched, and the cycle of special medical examination to be reduced to 1 year -

Recently, there have been reports that workers engaged in casting were exposed to pneumoconiosis. The Ministry of Labor revealed that it will establish and implement supervisors' management responsibility system under which the casting industries operating in 546 areas will be monitored by rating.

On May 17, the Ministry said that, of the 456 foundries, there are 433 (79%) small-scale foundries with employees less than 30. The Ministry, therefore, decided to start the supervisors' management responsibility system earlier, centralized control of noxious factors, voluntary improvement at the site of foundries and the provision of guidance and inspections. The Ministry will inspect and prevent not only the dust problem pointed out this time but also noise and musculoskeletal diseases. For any workplace where occupational diseases occur, the Ministry will appoint a supervisor to effectively manage operation, and will take judicial action in case a workplace reduces or hides the occurrence of occupational diseases.

In the meantime, diagnostic radiologists will be required to read radiography to discover pneumoconiosis early. The Ministry intends to examine a way of reducing the cycle of special medical examination to 1 year from the current 2 years as in the case of mining workers.

The Ministry also plans to commission research institutes to study the appropriate level of mineral dust generated from foundries with an intention to revise the exposure limits to a level befitting the situation of Korea.

As part of a plan to strengthen support to foundries, the Ministry will preferentially support the project of clean 3D health technologies and health help for small-sized foundries.

- OSH Statistics

- Construction sites suffering from shortage of workers are "Hotbeds of accidents"

- The number of occupational injuries in construction site during 2001 increased by 24% compared with the year earlier -

During last year, there were 2,700 work-related fatalities in all industrial sites. Classified by industries, the number of injuries and accident rate have increased in all industries except electric & gas, water supply works. The number of persons who were injured or died at construction sites has risen sharply. There were more accidents as the smaller the workplace is, and many persons who did not have experience in their work were injured.

Accidents in construction, mining and manufacturing industries increase every year = Last year, redevelopment and reconstruction projects were uncommonly boomed. At the same time, the number of accidents also increased because so many people who didn't have skill or much experience were employed in construction site

The number of victims in the construction industry increased to 16,771, which is increased 3,271 by number and 24.33 % by rate comparing with 2000. The accident rate indicating the percentage of victims was 0.69%, an increase by 0.08% points (13.11%). During 2001, the number of fatalities at construction sites reported to Korea Labor Welfare Corporation was 45.

"Recently, demands for houses including apartments have increased and the domestic construction orders have increased by approximately 13%", said Song Hong-suk, Safety Policy Section, Ministry of Labor. "For this reason, newly employed workers and elderly people vulnerable to accidents participated in the construction work in large number. The number of occupational accidents has also increased."

Traditionally, mining industry had the large number of accidents, and last year was no exception. The accident rate which stood at 4.51% in 2000 jumped to 7.35% last year, and there were 40 fatalities among victims. Skilled mining workers have left their workplaces one by one as in the case of construction business, and many unexperienced mining workers faced many accidents.

The number of accident victims is on a steady increase in the manufacturing industry where the largest number of employees are working.

Last year, the manufacturing industry reported 2,157 new victims. This makes the total number of victims to 35,506.

There were more accidents as the smaller the workplace is = According to the Ministry of Labor, 70%

of the total occupational accidents occurred at small workplaces with the number of workers less than 50. This proves that, unlike large workplaces having all safety facilities, small-medium workplaces are more vulnerable to accidents.

The total number of industrial victims at workplaces with employees less than 50 was 56,250 or an increase by 11,833 (26.64%) compared with that of 2000. Among numbers, 9,185 victims appeared at workplaces having employees less than 5. The workmen's accident compensation insurance became applicable to such small workplaces starting in July, 2000.

In particular, the number of accidents that occurred at petty workplaces with the number of workers less than 5 accounted for 21.3% of the total number of victims, indicating that safety problem of the laborers working at such petty workplaces is at a serious level.

Surveys also indicate that more accidents occur involving unexperienced and unskilled workers.

Repetition of falls, collisions and other traditional accidents = Analyzing the total accidents that occurred in the line of duty by types, conventional types such as stuck by objects, overturning, falling, collision and being struck by flying objects.

Classified by the day of week, the large number of accidents occurred on Friday (16.5%) while Sunday (6.48%) showed the smallest. During December, the year-end, there were highest number accidents (9.77%) compared with other months, while January showed the smallest number of accidents (6.9%). People in the age group of 40~44 (69.6%) showed the largest number of fatalities or injuries, and there were more accidents occurring at small-medium size workplaces having employees less than 50 than at large workplaces.

- **UPDATE in KOREA**

- Nurses not benefited by maternal protection

According to the recent survey took by the Health and Medical Labor Union covering 86 hospitals to check the actual conditions of maternal protection, the hospitals which totally prohibit pregnant workers from working at night were only 16(18.6%). It shows that maternal protection is not adequately provided.

The union says 26.7% amongst hospitals surveyed prohibited pregnant workers from working at night only when she is in early stage and the end; 13.9% of the hospitals had pregnant employees work at special departments and/or wards; 19.7% had a plan to prohibit pregnant workers from working at night as soon as more workers are assigned.

The Union also stated that 40% of 82 pregnant Union members had been working at night. During the past 3 years, 7.9% of the pregnant employees who worked at night had experienced abortion (natural abortion) or stillborn, 8.8% showed signs of abortion, and 7.9% had premature birth or under-weight baby birth. The Union contended that it is urgent to provide maternal protection for female employees working at hospitals.

○ **Korea-Japan-China Industrial Health Seminar ended successfully**

- Bang Yong-seok, Minister of Labor, asks "Cooperation for the development of Industrial Health among the 3 countries" -

The seminar so-called "Korea-China-Japan Industrial Health academic round-table" which began in 1984 to exchange information, to cooperate and to protect the labor's health was held in Korea with health-related participants attending.

The Korean Industrial Health Association (Chairman: Yun Im-jung) held the 14th Korea-Japan-China Industrial Health Seminar at the Hotel Paradise, Haeun-dae, Busan for 3 days from May 16 to May 18. Approximately 300 persons related to industrial health from 3 countries participated including Lee Seung-han(Former chairman of the association), Okubo Toshitatsu, President of the College of Industrial Medicine, Japan, Wangsheng, professor from Beijing University, China and Song Ji-tae, Director of Industrial Safety Bureau, Ministry of Labor.

"This Korea-Japan-China Industrial Health Seminar that has been held for some 20 years is not just a simple scientific gathering but is a venue where we discussed industrial health and safety problems through friendship," said Lee Seung-han, honorary professor at Catholic University and Korea's representative at the opening ceremony, adding "Industrial health is not pure natural science but features strong social aspects. We should make efforts to pass the tradition of cherishing human relationships to the next generation."

Song Ji-tae, Director of Industrial Safety Bureau, Ministry of Labor who read the congratulatory message on behalf of Bang Yong-seok, Minister of Labor stated, "The 3 Northeast Asia countries are closely related to each other regionally and historically, and it is highly meaningful to discuss industrial safety with each other. I hope that the 3 countries will make more efforts for the development of industrial health by sharing their experiences."

A workshop was held on the first day under the theme of "Lung diseases resulting from occupation and environment", followed by the opening ceremony on the second day. Keynote presentations came in next on the industrial health problems faced by the 3 countries, with posters and the speech subjects presented next.

In the keynote presentation, Jeong Ho-geun, Chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute spoke on the national strategies aiming at the development of Korean industrial health. On the other hand, Norito Kawakami, professor at Okayama College of Japan presented national strategies aiming at promoting occupational mental health, and Ziansung Hwang, Director of Gunagdong Occupational Disease Prevention and Treatment Center, China presented research covering the toxicity caused by the 1 and 2 dichloromethane. On May 18, the last day, a symposium was held under the theme of "Problems relating to the elderly laborers and solutions." During the 3-day seminar, there were a total of 113 presentations - 26 from Korea, 50 from Japan and 37 from China.

The Korea-Japan-China Industrial Health Seminar was held in Korea and Japan alternatively since 1984. Starting with the 7th meeting, China began to attend the seminar as an observer. Then China became an official member and the 13th seminar was held in Beijing last year.

- ISO TC11 International meeting held

An ISO TC11 (Boiler and pressure equipment expert committee, ISO) international meeting was held for 3 days at the Hotel Oriental, Jeju from April 14 to April 16. A total of 25 representative from 8 countries, including Chairman Kevin Ennis of the U.S. attended the meeting.

The meeting was promoted by Korean Agency for Technology and Standards under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy, with the Korea Gas Safety Corporation participating as a management agency. In addition, experts in the preasure equipment sector from Korea Electrical Safety Corporation, Korea Energy Management Corporation and other related institutions attended to discuss and relay Korea's opinions in the establishment of international standards.

ISO TC11 has been pushing to integrate and establish the boiler and pressure equipment standards which are different from country to country into the criteria of ISO Standard (international standards for pressure equipment) commonly used internationally.

The draft for the DIS 16528 Standards was rejected at the last meeting held in 2001. At this meeting, therefore, it was agreed to use the TS (Technical specification) recommended by the ISO TBM until a unified ISO standard is established.

- Civil affairs regarding employment and industrial accident compensation insurance can be accepted through the Internet
 - Transparency to be acquired by disclosing the handling process and maximization of business efficiency -

In the future, employers and employees can send civil petitions related to employment and/or industrial accident compensation insurance through the Internet for quick processing without having to visit the Korea Labor Welfare Corporation.

The Korea Labor Welfare Corporation (Chairman: Kim Jae-young) revealed that it had supplemented problems that existed on the temporarily operated Internet civil petition receiving system, and that the system will be fully ready for operation starting on June 1.

With the introduction of this Cyber business processing system, employers, hospitals and work-related injuries can now submit civil appeals, receive consulting services and check results from home or workplaces without having to use mail or fax machines.

To provide the better services, the Corporation also developed UMS system used to immediately advise the results of processing through E-mail, cellular phones or fax.

"The Internet-based Cyber business processing system can get the transparency of business by disclosing the handling process and results, and promote business efficiency by reducing the processing time. We can now offer better services to civil petitioners." said an official from the Corporation.

Contents of civil affairs

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Civil petitioner	Special service	Common service
Employers, associations	Application, collectind of insurance fee, notification, submitting civil petitions and Checking results of civil petitions	Civil counseling service Cyber bidding/auction
Medical institutions	Checking results of civil petitions. Checking medical expenses and payment	Reserving condominiums by workers. Video civil affairs consulting
Accident victims	Checking results of civil petitions Checking details of salaries Checking information on civil affairs related to loans	Cyber charnel UMS
Ordinary people	Checking information on civil affairs related to loans	

- LG Caltex operates an environment-health-safety integrated management system

LG Caltex disclosed at the end of April that it has developed a web-based EHS integrated information system for the first time in the industry. The system will comprehensively manage environment,

health and safety.

This system has been developed for the better environment, health and safety at Yeosu plant, the major workplace of LG Oil Refinery. It has integrated some 70 important control items including the air quality, water quality, wastes, private health information management and accident management which can be managed on a real time basis on the web page. The company explained one of the features of the system is the minimization of the potential environment-related accidents.

LG Oil Refinery had already maintained pollution level to 20% of the basic legal value. LG disclosed that with the construction of the EHS integrated information system, it can now reduce the frequency of exceeding its own allowable pollution level by more than 50%. Ultimately, LG stated it will challenge "no accident level on environment" including the discharge of pollutants. LG added that it will increase medical counseling service rate to more than 90% to significantly promote satisfaction index of its employees. This can be realized because the health manager can monitor the health status of all employees on a real time basis and provide related counseling services.

- **UPDATE in KOSHA**

- Accident prevention technical support to be strengthened during the World Cup period
 - Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency(KOSHA) strengthens safety measures at the site of shipbuilding and construction industry. -

KOSHA will strengthen its technical support to the shipbuilding, construction and hazardous machine handling workplaces in order to prevent accidents that might occur during the World Cup period.

To ensure successful Korea-Japan World Cup, KOSHA conducted special inspection at the workplaces highly vulnerable to serious accidents during the World Cup period and plans to provide technical support to each area.

Kim Yong-dal, Chairman of KOSHA pointed out that the occurrence of the conventional type diseases such as stuck by objects or electric shock is highly possible due to the accumulated eye fatigue resulting from continuous watching of TV and the overlooking of safety inspections, and that KOSHA would launch a variety of safety measures.

In connection with this, KOSHA intends to conduct inspections covering some 430 automatic electric-shock preventer and safety device manufacturers and sellers in order to stop the manufacture and distribution of defective safety devices. It will also build a monitoring system which will check the manufacture and distribution of defective devices that might have been

distributed to the workplaces using large number of safety devices and to the shipyards that also use big quantity of safety devices.

In addition to special management for accident prevention in the shipbuilding industry, KOSHA will provide technical support to small-scale workplaces having less than 50 employees to enable them to maintain clean workplaces and prevent conventional type accidents. It will also distribute publications regarding the prevention of stuck constrictions and electric shocks to workplaces operating press and other hazardous machines.

During the period of World Cup, KOSHA expects many unskilled workers and female workers will participate in construction sites because some workers might leave the construction sites to watch World Cup. KOSHA therefore intends to strengthen its prior inspections of danger factors to prevent conventional type accidents such as falls by expanding mobile safety training program and by expanding support for each workplace to conduct its own safety training.

To prevent the accidents caused by oxygen deficiency in the enclosed space such as power cable duct, water supply system, sewerage, manholes and underground pits KOSHA plans to distribute materials about prevention of oxygen deficient accident and as occupational diseases, such as lumbago, are expected to occur due to long watching of World Cup TV, KOSHA intends to provide technical support to protect the health of workers, such as the stretching technique applied prior to and after work to prevent musculoskeletal diseases.

○ International safety equipment exhibition

- Exhibition scheduled for 4 days from June 29 to July 2 at COEX



As one of the industrial safety campaign events, an Exhibition of international safety equipment, working environment improvement and fire fighting industry was held at the Pacific Hall on the 1st

floor of COEX for 4 days from June 29 to July 2.

Promoted by Kyoung yun exhibition corporation, and co-sponsored by the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA) and Maeil Economic Daily Newspaper. In this 20th international exhibition, Safety devices, working environment improvement and fire fighting industry features separately.

In the exhibition hall many kinds of things like safety and sanitary equipment, hazardous machine safety devices, gas detectors, gas alarms, traffic controls, speed limit systems and leakage preventive products were exhibited.

In the field of working environment improvement, industrial cleaners and dust collectors, hydraulic ladders and other high-working equipment, welding gas removers, pollution meters used at workplaces, pollution protective systems, safety tools, cleaning systems were shown and related technologies were presented.

- **Financial support provided to domestic safety device manufacturers when participating in overseas exhibition**

- Otos Co. receives benefits for the first time in the nation -

Starting this year, any safety device manufacturers participating in overseas exhibition can be supported by financial aid from the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA).

KOSHA (Chairman Kim Yong-dal) disclosed that as part of a plan to foster domestic safety device industry, it will provide up to 3 million won of subsidies to any domestic manufacturer when it participates in overseas exhibitions.

According to such plan, KOSHA will provide financial support for the first time in the nation to Otos Co., Ltd. (www.otos.co.kr), a manufacturer of auto darkening welding and safety goggles, that will participate in the 90th National Safety Council scheduled to open in San Diego, U.S. from October 7 to October 9, this year.

"In order for the domestic safety devices and tools to have national competitiveness, related manufacturers must participate in overseas exhibition to introduce domestic products to overseas market and obtain information on superior design and quality promptly." said an official from KOSHA, adding "KOSHA decided to support manufacturers participating in overseas exhibition to satisfy such world trends."

- Civil petitions related to safety devices through the Internet

The Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute of Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA) has opened a web site containing civil appeal documents and latest information to provide convenience to civil petitioners related to protective and safety devices.

The Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute of KOSHA (Director Jeong Ho-geun) on the 18th of the month opened a web site (<http://home.kosha.net/~stt/>) regarding the protective and safety device performance test system to provide better service to civil petitioners.

The web site introduces overall information on the protective and safety device performance test system, detailed description of the letter "Safety", products that passed test and the name of workplaces.

The Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute opened a corner where any product, among those that had passed performance test, is collected and tested again to confirm the product carries performance, which is same as the original products. The Institute will make a list of rejected products and the name of related manufacturers to induce manufacturers to produce high-quality products only.

In order for the manufacturer to better understand the International Electro-technical Commission Explosion-proof Scheme (IECEx Sheme), which is required when exporting explosion-proof products and the international flow, the Institute introduces latest information. It also provides detailed information on the Accredited certification body (ACB) internally recognized up to April 2002 and Explosion-proof test laboratory (ExTL) including Korea.

All forms related to performance tests can easily be downloaded and used. In addition, the web site introduces registration system and the business subject to safety inspection, service procedures and the application documents.

- **New Materials/Information**

- "Making a safe nation" together with the people and the government

A book suggesting ways of making a safe nation by which the people and government make together by means of promoting safety consciousness and establishing the sense of value is published.

The author of this book is Dr. Hwang Yong-Ju, Professor of graduate school of construction, Jungang University. He used to work as the Director of Safety Management Improvement Team under the control of the Prime Minister's Office. This book is a guidance of safety management because it provides much information based on the theory of safety and many years' of experience in safety

matters.

In this book, the author pointed out that too many laws related to the current safety management system and the decentralized departments make it difficult to effectively manage accidents and safety due to overlapping or lacking responsibilities. He also mentioned about the people's lacking awareness with respect to safety culture. He stated that the construction of a safe industrial community starts from the people's consciousness related to community and suggested that the government launch a pan-national campaign based on a new sense of value and ethics to make a safe nation.