



- **Main Topic - Occupational Safety and Health Policy**
- Ministry of Labor establishes railroad safety standards
- Qualifications of construction safety specialists to be tightened significantly

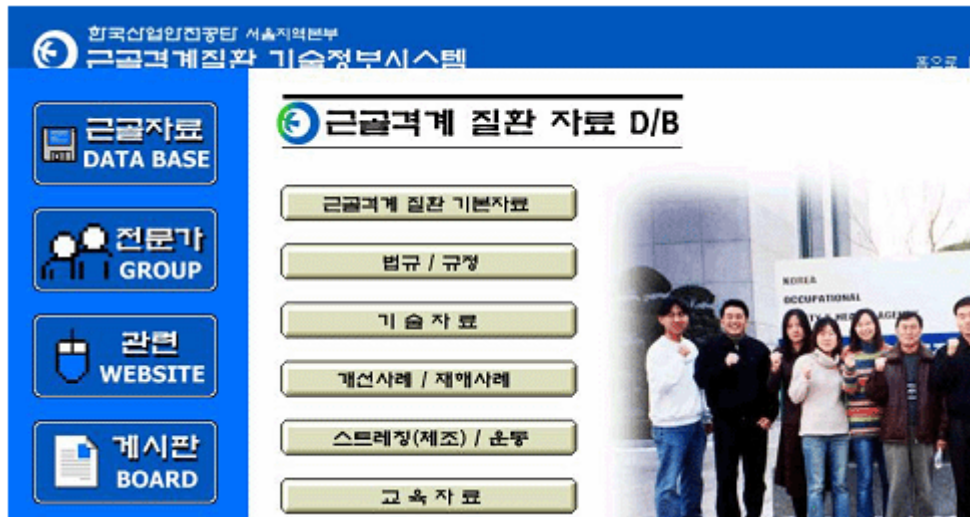
Industrial workers are exposed to various types of risks. When a worker repeats same, simple work, it is highly possible that he/she may suffer diseases affecting wrist, waist and other body parts. Approximately 30% of all diseases occurring at the domestic industrial sites is such musculoskeletal disease.

"Bikal" of KOSHA (www.kosha.or.kr) is a knowledge team organized to systemize and share all knowledge, prevent musculoskeletal diseases that might easily be ignored at the industrial sites and to inform risks involved. Seven persons including Deputy Director of the Industrial Health Support Bureau organized Bikal in September last year. They began to search domestic and overseas essays, academic journals and Internet to gather and analyze all knowledge related to musculoskeletal diseases. Bikal is the name of a well-known lake in Siberia. "Bikal in Turkish language means a rich lake", said Deputy Director Ko. "I went there 3 times during vacation, and I named it Bikal because it seems to well match with the knowledge team.

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The team members get together several times a month and accumulate knowledge through brainstorming. As a result, they now possess information on musculoskeletal diseases as though they were specialists in the particular field. "We plan to expand the expert groups and build a knowledge network", said Deputy Director Ko. "We will develop the system into one that can link with experts in each field."

Date: March 3, 2003 (Mail Business Newspaper)



- National Assembly decides to install a Disaster Control Administration

-Daegu subway disaster... Government declared Daegu as a special disaster area

A fire occurred in the Daegu subway in the morning of February where approximately 300 casualties were reported..

The government declared the Jungang-ro station area of the Daegu Subway, the site of the tragedy, a special disaster area, and began to establish safety measures and put into operation.

Safety experts pointed out that insufficiency of the social safety system was the cause of the accident. They requested the establishment of the i⁰Fire-defense Administrationi⁰ promised by President Roh Moo-hyun or an organization that can effectively control accidents and disasters.

At approximately 9:55 a.m., February 18, a fire occurred on the third passenger car of the train No. 1079 that was passing through the Jungang-ro station of the Dae-gu Subway line 1, located Namildong, Jung-gu, Dae-gu City. The fire occurred when a passenger took out a plastic bottle of what was believed to be flammable materials out of a briefcase, lighted it with a lighter and threw it to the floor of the passenger car. The fire spread through the 6 passenger cars of the train No. 1079, and to the train operating on the opposite direction, completely burning down 12 passenger cars.

It is estimated that approximately 100 passengers have died due to this arson, and approximately 140 injured. The injured were taken to nearby hospitals for treatment. Due to the power shutoff immediately after the accident, the area around the Jungang-ro subway station fell into great confusion. Large amount of toxic gas was discharged through the station entrance, traffic on the downtown street was paralyzed.

On February 19, the day following the accident, the Minister of Construction and Transportation

came to the 'Blue House' to recommend the accident area to be declared as a special disaster area as recommended by the Central Safety Committee. President Kim Dae-jung approved the recommendation. President-elect Roh Moo-hyun visited the Jungang-ro station, the site of the disaster of the Daegu Subway, on the 20th of the month. "I will have the responsible person conduct safety inspections covering all subway systems as soon as possible. I will set up special budgets and conduct safety inspections starting with the Daegu Subway", disclosed the President-elect.

"We will immediately set up safety measures as if the government is in an emergency", said the President-elect Roh. "We are making necessary preparations to establish a "disaster management administration" to effectively cope with disasters, and I will have the plan expedited."

In the meantime, the Special Disaster Committee of the National Assembly held a general meeting on February 20, and adopted a resolution requesting the government to establish a "Disaster Management Administration". "We will first inform the Presidential Transition Committee the necessity for the establishment of a Disaster Management Administration, and deliver the special resolutions passed on the 20th to the Prime Minister of the new government", said Kim Young-jin, Chairman of the Special Disaster Committee.

Date: March 1, 2003 (Industrial Safety News)



- Construction accidents to be reduced by half
- Ministry of Construction and Transportation establishes Basic Plan for the Promotion of Construction Technology

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Date: March 1, 2003 (Industrial Safety News)



- **Update in Korea**

- "Citizens' Virtual Safety Hall" in Seoul open -Scheduled to be officially opened in the middle of March, now pre-opening for the elementary school and middle school students, very popular.

In the afternoon of February 27, many children gathered in front of the virtual storm room on the first floor of the 'Citizens' Virtual Safety Hall' located at the side of the 'seoul Children's Park'. They wore raincoats and boots prior to entering the simulation chamber. When approximately 10 children entered the chamber, the door closed and there was a strong wind with velocity 30m/second together with a rainstorm. Some children screamed but they endured the experience well while firmly holding the handle.

After the experience, everyone of them said, "It is a lot of fun".

"At first, I was afraid of entering the chamber due to strong wind, but after I went through this experience, I now have self-confidence", said Park Sung-ju (age:9) who came with his mother. Prior to officially opening the simulation chamber on March 6, the Seoul City's Fire-fighting and Disaster Control Headquarters started operating the 'Citizens' Virtual Safety Simulation Hall' as a model case since last month. There were 300-400 users per day indicating the Citizens' Virtual Safety Simulation Hall is highly popular.

This building was constructed to cultivate abilities of prevention against accidents and effectively cope with disasters by virtually experiencing disasters including fires, earthquakes and collapses. This building consisting of 3 ground floors and 1 basement floor houses 20 virtual experience rooms including earthquakes, storm and floods and smoke shelters. The first floor houses a 'storm and flood simulation room' and 'earthquake simulation room'. At the virtual earthquake chamber built like a kitchen where earthquake measuring 5~7 degrees on the seismic scale is demonstrated, the users learn the technique of turning off the gas range and electric utilities and taking shelter underneath the table. Inside the storm and flood simulation chamber, large blowers and sprinklers simulate a wind with a velocity of 10~50m/second and a rainstorm of 200mm at the maximum, demonstrating a simulated situation of heavy rainstorm.

When a visitor enters the 'Virtual Smoke shelter room' on the second floor, smoke is filled and the lighting turned off and the visitor attempts to escape from the place under a simulated condition of actual fire. A group of 50 persons from Lotte Department Store visited this simulation room as though the people's interest in escaping from smoke in case of a fire has increased after the Daegu Subway disaster.

Visitors learn the technique of escaping disasters through the use of a slow descending equipment or shelter ladder in the "Emergency Rescue simulation chamber" or personally perform artificial respiration or apply resuscitating technique by using a mannequin in the 'first-aid simulation chamber',

At the mountain rescue simulation site installed on the exterior wall of building, the visitor learns how to rescue mountaineers who fall or miss step while climbing rock. At the 3-D video room installed on the 1st basement floor, the visitor acts as a fire-fighting man who puts out fires riding the 'space fire truck' in the 3-D film while sitting in the rider (moving chair).

Currently, visitors are allowed in free of charge. Visitors are required to make reservation 2 days prior to desired visit through Internet (<http://safe119.seoul.go.kr>) or by telephone. The hall is closed on Mondays.



[Photo] Guide to major virtual rooms on the 2nd floor of the Citizens' Virtual Safety Hall

Date: March 1, 2003 (The Kyong Hyang Shin Mun)

- The Ministry of Labor conducted extensive safety inspection at workplaces handling carcinogenic and/or toxic materials

The government conducted special inspections on workplaces handling carcinogenic and toxic materials to strengthen management of new chemicals being continuously manufactured or imported.

To protect workers handling new chemical materials, the Ministry of Labor on the 25th of January notified each applicable workplace to take appropriate measures to protect workers from diseases, such as the installing of ventilation systems and the supply of individual protective gears for 348 new types of chemicals manufactured or imported during the previous year. The Ministry conducted special inspections and took strong action by imposing a fine of 10,000,000 won to those who failed to fulfill these requirements.

Twenty-seven workplaces were specially inspected during this period. These workplaces has handled materials suspected of being carcinogenic or toxic materials as reported in the toxicity inspection report submitted last year on new chemicals. As the use of new chemicals is expected to increase continuously, the Ministry of Labor installed a Toxic Factor Control Committee and established exposure levels of working environment. This Committee will conduct a separate toxic test and evaluate toxicity and risk to prevent occupational diseases resulting from the use of the above materials. The Ministry disclosed that it will improve overall system of controlling new chemical materials by expanding the range of materials to be submitted and by simplifying procedures related to the toxicity tests.

Date: February 1, 2003 (Industrial Safety Newspaper)

- Pneumoconiosis Welfare Center to be constructed in Cheolamdong, Taebaek city

The construction of a pneumoconiosis welfare center, the long-cherished desire of the pneumoconiosis patients had finally begun in full-scale after undergoing various problems. The Ministry of Labor and the Korea Labor Welfare Corporation that plan to build a pneumoconiosis welfare hall held a meeting of the Pneumoconiosis Welfare Hall site Selection Examination Committee on the 10th of the month. It was disclosed that the Committee agreed to construct a pneumoconiosis treatment center at Cheolam-dong, Taebaek city, and began full operation of the project, requesting Taebaek city for full operation in the project.

The decision thus made after so many problems has cleared all worries about the delay and difficulty of pushing the project which had originally been scheduled to be completed by 2004.

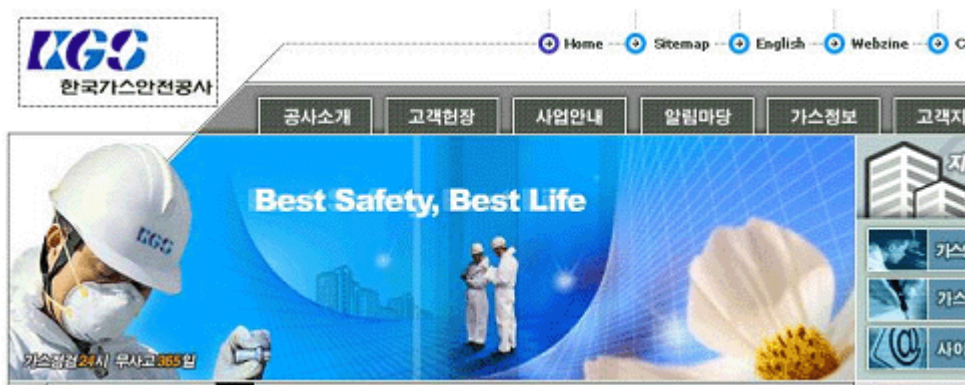
The pneumoconiosis welfare center will be constructed at a cost of 15 billion won in Choelam-dong, Taebaek city on a site of approximately 110,000³. It will house various kinds of welfare facilities

on the 1st and 3rd basement floor. They include 100 guest rooms for residence, bath house, barber shop, health center and entertainment rooms. Approximately 200 pneumoconiosis patients who need long-term hospitalization or long recovery period will be accommodated here.

Date: March 25, 2003 (The Kyong Hyang Shin Mun)

- CE mark for gas equipment can be acquired domestically -Korea Gas Safety Corporation designated as a CE marking testing agency by TUB BB, Germany

TDomestic gas equipment makers are required to obtain CE (European Community) mark at site prior to exporting any gas equipment to Europe; however, they can now acquire such mark from the Korea Gas Safety Corporation from now on. This will provide many opportunities for the Korean gas equipment makers to advance to European markets.



On the 13th of the month at the grand conference room of the Agency, the Korea Gas Safety Corporation received a certificate of designating CE marking testing agency from TUB BB (A European certification agency for boilers) operating under the control of TUB Buddeuschland, Germany.

"In the past, many Korean gas equipment makers desiring to export products to the European markets had undergone much difficulties in acquiring CE mark, a prerequisites for export to Europe. However, the laboratory of the Korea Gas Safety Corporation can now perform all related tests, considerably saving technological aspect or expenses and time. This will significantly contribute to the development of Korea's gas industry", said Andrea Roll, President of TUB Korea in his congratulatory speech.

"The fact that the Korea Gas Safety Corporation was designated as a gas boiler CE mark testing agency objectively proves that the Corporation's gas boiler testing ability has reached a world level. It will promote reliability of the test results and the external credibility", said President of the Korea Gas Safety Corporation in response.

Prior to that and to obtain designation as a CE marking testing agency, the Korea Gas Safety Corporation in June 2000 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), regarding mutual cooperation to be provided in conducting CE mark testing for gas burners, with TUB Product Service operating under the control of TUB Buddeuschland, Germany. In November last year, the Korea Gas Safety Corporation was finally designated as a testing agency after undergoing rigid examination of the appropriateness of the testing equipment and environment, expertise and proficiency of the testing personnel.

Date: December 31, 2002 (Industrial Safety Newspaper)

- **Update in KOSHA**

- Health helper service to be provided to workplace with less than 5 employees

TKOSHA will continue Health helper service¹ project this year following last year to provide consulting about health care to the workers of small workplaces. In general, the health condition of employees working at small workplaces with less than 5 workers is relatively poor, and Health consultant will visit these workplaces to provide free technical support. KOSHA plans to provide support to some 10,000 workplaces this year.

Any workplace desiring to receive this service should apply to KOSHA's regional office, or to the Medical Support Team of Guidance Centers. KOSHA operates 83 Help nationwide this year to provide satisfactory support.

The health consultant visits each workplace and provides ia follow-up management and medical consultation service regarding the results of medical examination, ia guidance on workers' physical exercise and nutrition, ia first-aid medicines, protective gears and technical materials, and ia simple check (blood pressure, fat accumulation) and guidance.

This particular project is launched to prevent brain disease, cardiac or musculoskeletal diseases centering on workplaces (workplaces where occupational diseases have occurred or are likely to occur) with less than 5 workers that have submitted an application for the [Support of health consultant] to effectively manage workers' health.

Date: March 1, 2003 (Bi-monthly Safety and Health News)

- The musculoskeletal disease preventive team of KOSHA commenced its full operation

T- Various methods including campaigns, technical seminars, development of manuals and other projects-

On January 29, the "Musculoskeletal disease preventive team" organized and began its full operation at KOSHA main office to establish preventive measures for the increased musculoskeletal diseases and to revitalize the preventive activities. This team charged with the prevention of occupational musculoskeletal disease plans to launch a nationwide musculoskeletal disease prevention campaign to promote the consciousness of the labor and the management. It will also hold technical seminars so that the prevention techniques used by the workplace or the improvement examples can be expanded to and applied by the workplaces owning similar processes.

The Team will also provide technical consulting services by fostering experts capable of supporting the fixation of programs related to the investigation into toxic factors and the prevention of diseases. It will develop and distribute manuals related to the operation of the programs to induce voluntary prevention of the musculoskeletal diseases occurring at the workplaces.

In addition to this, the Team will evaluate risks, taking into consideration the size and the characteristic of the workplaces having record of frequent occurrence of musculoskeletal diseases or owning risky processes, and present realistic improvement measures. Starting in the latter half of the year, the Team intends to operate an Internet home page so that more workplaces can obtain information related to musculoskeletal diseases.

Date: February 15, 2003 (Bi-monthly Safety and Health News)

- Suwon branch office of KOHSA Developed OHS model in order to apply in pharmaceutical industry

TKOSHA developed OSH model for Pharmaceutical Industry to teach safety technologies through special sites and to prevent occupational diseases, including the occupational asthma that occurs on pharmaceutical company workers.

On the 23rd of January, Suwon branch office of KOSHA (Director: Baek Nak-mun) held a briefing session at the auditorium of the Project Cooperative Association located in Hyangnam Pharmaceutical Complex regarding the distribution of the OHS model in Pharmaceutical Industry. The meeting was attended by the labor unions of the companies housed in the Complex and some 50 safety-related officials.

At the meeting, the Suwon branch office of KOSHA introduced the OSH model for Pharmaceutical Industry edited based on the results of surveys conducted on the status of pharmaceutical industry, and the pharmaceutical industry safety and health information plaza (<http://pamkosha.net>), which delivers accident prevention technologies through Internet.

The pharmaceutical industry safety and health information plaza (<http://pamkosha.net>) is a site

operated for the first time in the nation for the intended purposes. It contains regulations related to the pharmaceutical industry, cases of working environment improvement, related reports and other matters essential for the prevention of accidents.

Date: February 2003 (Industrial Safety News)



- "Baikal", knowledge team of the knowledge management system of the Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA) - Ask all about any muscle diseases

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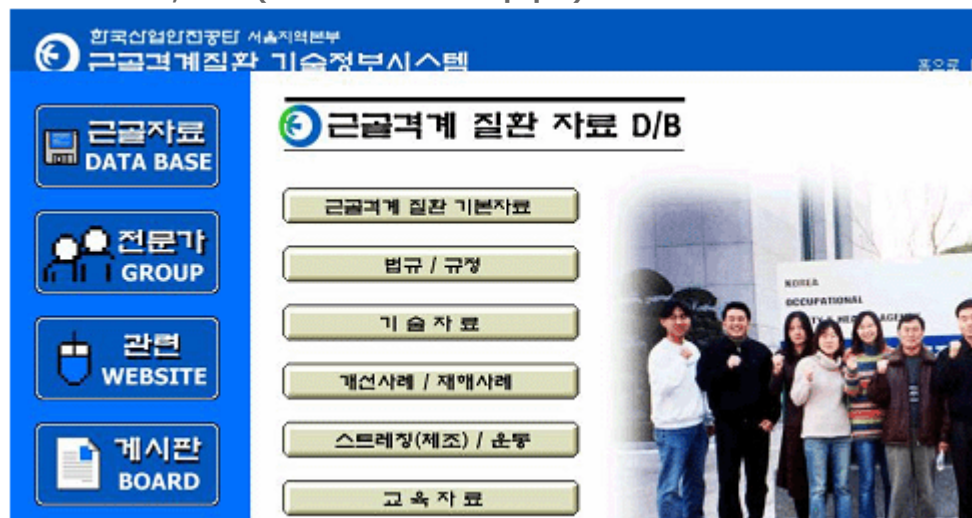
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Date: March 3, 2003 (Mail Business Newspaper)



- **NEW MATERIALS**

- Occupational Disease Preventive Activities / Environment Handbook



A book for prevention of occupational diseases¹ was published with an aim to protect workers from the occupational diseases that seem to increase annually since the IMF crisis. This book is expected to help that workers can work in safe and health conditions at workplaces.

The Federation of Korean Trade Union (FKTU) (Chairman: Lee Nam-sun) disclosed on the 23rd of January, 2003 that it plans to publish a book titled 'Prevention of occupational diseases to ensure health of workers' in pace with the environment where industrial safety at workplaces and the prevention of occupational diseases are emphasized. These books will be distributed to all subordinate organizations.

Starting with this year, FKTU will participate in the environment movement and launch full-scale activities by separately appointing environment specialists within the organization. It will also publish a brochure named 'Environment handbook' and this is projected to revitalize the environment movement which is still in the infantile stage in the labor world.

This book explains in easy term the concept and types of occupational diseases, preventive measures, prevention of musculoskeletal diseases, prevention of the cerebro-cardiovascular diseases and other fields. It helps field workers understand the seriousness of the occupational diseases and actively participate in the preventive activities.

The book also introduces in detail the occupational diseases that have occurred at workplace in the past, such as the noise-related deafness, oscillatory neuritis, pneumoconiosis, occupational asthma, heavy metal intoxication, occupational skin diseases, and occupational cancer, stressing the importance of prevention.

Additional information is also provided in the book regarding the application for recognition as occupational diseases, preparation of application for occupational disease treatment, application for salary covering non-working days, application for the transfer of hospitals, application for examination, application for re-examination, and the method of instituting an administrative suit.

The 'Environment Handbook' contains basic information on water-quality, air, wastes and noises to help understand the meaning of the environmental activities carried out by the labor union and overall environmental matters. The book is expected to provide good reference materials for the workers to renew their consciousness with respect to environment.

Publisher: Federation of Korean Trade Union (FKTU)