

2006 Newsletter

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- **OSH Statistics**

- Industrial fatalities shrink - A total of 2,493 fatalities or a decrease of 11.8% compared to the previous year

The number of fatalities in industrial accidents dramatically decreased last year compared to the previous year.

According to the announcement made by the Ministry of Labor, the rate of industrial accidents for 2005 stood at 0.77% or 9.4% lower compared to 2004. A total of 85,411 casualties were recorded, representing reduction of a mere 3.9% compared to the previous year. In particular, the number of fatalities stood at 2,493 or fewer by 332 (11.8%) compared to 2004, which was a considerable reduction in the accident rate.

Such reduction in the number of fatalities is the second highest, next to the 12.2% reduction achieved in 2003. This is twice the reduction rate recorded in 2002 (5.2%) or more than thrice the reduction rate posted in 2004 (3.4%).

The Ministry of Labor believes that the "Fatal Accident Prevention Program" launched in 2005 contributed greatly to the significant reduction in the number of fatalities. In particular, the number of fatalities caused by the 10 most vulnerable construction works including those performed near openings or those performed without installing scaffoldings decreased by more than 32% compared to the 335 fatalities recorded in 2004.

Workplaces with less than 50 employees recorded 59,742 casualties or 69.9% of the total number of casualties. This suggests that small workplaces are still vulnerable to accidents. As such, the Ministry of Labor seeks to reduce the accident rate to 0.74% in 2006 by expanding its financial support to workplaces that are vulnerable to accidents including those with less than 50 workers. (13 April, Daily Safety News)

- **Main OSH Policy**

- "Accident Forecast System" launched - Forecast to be issued in the form of Information, Watch, and Warning

The National Emergency Management Agency (administrator: Won-Kyong Moon) launched last April 5 the "Accident Forecast System" to protect the life and property of people from various accidents. In connection with this, the "Mountain Accident Watch" and "Children's Play Facilities Accident Watch" were introduced before and after the Children's Day and Buddha's Birthday on May 5, respectively. More than

150,000 cases of accidents are recorded every year. Even though they frequently and repeatedly

occur during specific periods such as the thawing period, accidents such as dabbling in the water could not be prevented effectively due to the absence of a forecast system that can tell how to prevent and tackle accidents.

Korea's very first "Accident Forecast System" covers accidents that repeatedly and continuously occurred during specific periods in the past, including typhoons, local downpour, heavy snowfall, and other accidents that may cause and spread damage continuously during a short period of time. Forecasts are classified into Accident Information, Watch, and Warning.

The agency recently analyzed the status of the accidents that occurred for the past three years based on the number of rescue operations it has overseen and other data. Mountain accidents and accidents involving children made up the bulk of the total during May. Thus, the Agency launched the "Mountain Accident Watch" covering the period beginning May 5 to May 7 and "Children's Play Facilities Accident Watch" covering the period starting from May 1 to May 7.

(25 April, Daily Safety News)

- **Update in KOREA**

- KOSHA to meet with labor attaches

- Providing information on the hotlines for foreign workers' accident compensation

Korea Labor Welfare Corporation (president: Bang, Yong-Seok) plans to meet with the labor attaches of the 11 foreign diplomatic missions stationed in Korea including Bangladesh on June 9 at the Seoul Migrant Workers' Center.

Such meeting seeks to identify possible areas of cooperation with the labor corporation to enable foreign workers to receive compensation for industrial accidents quickly.

(KOSHA, February 24, 2006)

According to statistics provided by Korea Labor Welfare Corporation, a total of 4,117 foreign workers figured in industrial accidents last year and required a total of KRW60 billion as compensation. Unfortunately, 37% of these foreign workers are illegal workers. These illegal workers tend to apply for compensation under the workmen's compensation system through human rights and/or religious organizations instead of directly visiting the branches of Korea Labor Welfare Corporation for assistance; hence the delay in the issuance of compensation. According to the labor organization, there is a need to promote the existing hotlines connecting to the labor attaches of foreign diplomatic commissions more often considering the frequent changes in the labor attaches.

In connection with this, Korea Labor Welfare Corporation will give a briefing on matters related to the insurance and welfare business and provide welfare guidebooks translated in ten languages to enable foreign workers to understand the workmen's accident compensation insurance easily.

After the meeting, it will distribute these guidebooks to 22 foreign diplomatic missions as well as some 50 organizations dealing with foreign workers operating nationwide.

(9 June, Daily Safety News)

- **Update in KOSHA**

- KOSHA issues warning on cereal dust-related occupational asthma - Issues KOSHA-Alert, an occupational disease warning



[Photo: Workplace handling cereals]

Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) issued a KOSHA-alert regarding the onset of occupational asthma due to cereal dust to workers involved in handling cereals, e.g., manufacture of cereal cookies, husking of cereals, bread making, or feeds manufacturing.

After one case of occupational asthma was recorded at a flour handling section of a bakery, KOSHA issued a warning on the onset of occupational asthma to workplaces and workers handling cereals. It also stressed the need for workplaces and workers to be alert for the symptoms of occupational asthma.

In general, cereal dust is produced during the process of cultivating and handling cereals, flour making, and storage, transport, and handling of the milled cereals up to the secondary processing. According to a 1997 report, six workers at a feed-manufacturing plant contracted occupational asthma. In February this year, a worker who had been handling flour was diagnosed with occupational asthma after complaining of related symptoms.

A total of 35,064 workers are engaged in the husking of cereals, flour making, confectionery and bakery business, feed manufacturing, and other cereal handling works at 1,016 workplaces, according to the 2004 survey of manufacturers by Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA).

Owing to the changes in food life, the consumption of bread and confectionery products and number of workers in this industry have increased. With the number of cases of occupational asthma expected to rise in the future, Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA) plans to strengthen activities to prevent occupational diseases.

(7 April, KOSHA News)

- Applicants for S Mark Safety Certification on the rise

Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) revealed last April 18 that the number of applications for S Mark Safety Certification has consistently increased. In fact, the number of applicants exceeded 1,000 for 2 years in a row during 2004 and 2005, according to the agency.

The S Mark Safety Certification is designed to prevent industrial accidents by ensuring fundamental safety from the product design stage. Today, not only domestic enterprises but also companies based in Japan, Britain, France, and Germany apply for the certification, which is gradually taking root as an international certification. According to KOSHA, only 44 applications were received in 1997 when the S Mark Safety Certification was first introduced. The number of applications ballooned to 428 in 2002, 484 in 2003, 1,040 in 2004, and 2,084 in 2005. In particular, 359 certifications were granted in 2002, 335 in 2003, 487 in 2004, and 753 in 2005.

Applications were received regularly not only from domestic enterprises but also those from advanced countries. As of 2005, a total of 826 cases were received from 206 companies: 710 from Japan, 59 from Britain, 28 from France, and 19 from Germany.

(19 April, KOSHA News)

- Use dust masks in case of yellow dust: KOSHA presents safety rules when working outdoors

Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) disclosed last April 24 that it would install and operate a "Clean Call Center" to promote customer satisfaction over the financial support provided to clean workplaces and/or other places and to ensure transparency in all financing projects.

The "Clean Call Center" shall implement various kinds of work to secure transparency in the financial support provided by KOSHA. They include the clean project wherein financial support is provided to workplaces with employees numbering less than 50 to improve their working environments, financial support provided to prevent musculoskeletal diseases, financial subsidy given to workplaces generating high noise to improve their environments, and financial support provided to prevent industrial accidents.

KOSHA expects to improve the work process and customer satisfaction by monitoring customer complaints in relation to the subsidies and loans provided for accident prevention facilities.

"In today's world, only institutions that enjoy the trust of customers can survive," stressed Im Sung-won, Director General for Planning and Management at KOSHA. The agency vows to "exert efforts to win the trust of customers and ensure their satisfaction by quickly responding to customer complaints through the operation of the Clean Call Center."

(25 April, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA to operate a "Clean Call Center" - Seeking to promote customer satisfaction over financing projects

KOSHA, JISHA meet, explore possible areas of cooperation - Yohtaro Sawada, president of JISHA, visiting KOSHA

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA) and the Japan Industrial Safety and Health Association (JISHA) met last May 4 at KOSHA's office to discuss possible areas of cooperation. Kil-sang Park, president of KOSHA, and Yohtaro Sawada, president of JISHA, talked of exchanging technologies and information and other cooperative programs between the two countries.

After receiving a briefing on the current status and business of KOSHA, President Yohtaro Sawada vowed to provide full support to enable many industrial safety and health officials to participate in the successful hosting of the 18th World Congress on Safety and Health at Work to be held in Korea.



"Korea and Japan are considered Asia's powerhouses, playing important roles in the international community," said President Kil-sang Park during the meeting. He proposed that the two agencies exert efforts to contribute to the development of industrial safety and health in Asia by maintaining close ties between the two parties.

As a juridical entity established in 1964 by the Industrial Injury Prevention Organizations Law, the Japan Industrial Safety and Health Association consists of business groups as members. This civilian accident prevention organization was founded to support activities aimed at increasing the business owners' production and promoting industrial accident prevention activities.

(8 May, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA, JISHA meet, explore possible areas of cooperation - Cooperative programs on industrial safety and health discussed

KOSHA to distribute guidebooks on the general support project for voluntary safety - KOSHA planning to develop the program as its priority project after implementing it as a model project
Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) disclosed last May 24 that it would distribute guidebooks to manufacturing firms employing less than 300 workers and other

safety institutions as part of its efforts to promote its general support project for voluntary safety for 2006.

The guidebooks contain information on the implementation procedure for general support for voluntary safety, details of the implementation at each stage, and expected effects. The books are highly portable, since they are published in the form of leaflets.

KOSHA seeks to provide specialized technologies based on the results of risk assessment, facilities improvement funds, training, and safety management consulting services to workplaces showing a strong will to promote voluntary safety activities. The agency plans to develop such general support project for voluntary safety activities as its priority project in the future.

In the meantime, KOSHA is currently developing technical support and business assessment models for 23 workplaces in the country. It plans to provide technical support to more workplaces by the latter half of the year.

Project information is posted at KOSHA's homepage. For more details, call the Safety Technology Department of KOSHA at 032-5100-604.

(25 May, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA holds seminar on model cases of technical support provision at construction sites - Sharing of customer-oriented construction accident prevention techniques

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) held a seminar on model cases of technical support provision at construction sites last May 25 at the KOSHA seminar room on the 5th floor. The seminar sought to share know-how among the technologies acquired during the process of implementing the construction accident prevention campaign. Such know-how is expected to be highly effective if it is applied at other construction sites.

Out of several examples from 19 KOSHA branches in the country, a total of 5 cases of providing highly effective, customer-oriented technical support through business reform were introduced during the seminar.

Some of the model cases that were introduced include the improvement of the installing cover for the opening utilizing perforated steel sheets, provision of customer-oriented preventive techniques by building a DB using Access, TAFA, improvement of the emergency stop device used when working at high places, and launching of the human-oriented inspection project.

(26 May, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA holds '2006 occupational safety and health video i contest, picks 9 winning videos - [Fostering safety consciousness] by Won Kyong-jong of Kongju Communication Arts College bagging the grand prize

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) held the '2006 occupational safety and health video 'contest for the first time this year to fuel pan-national interest and participation and to foster a sound safety culture in daily life. A total of nine works were cited, including the grand prize winner [Fostering safety consciousness] by Won Kyong-jong

(Kongju Communication Arts College) who took home the KOSHA President's award plus KRW3,000,000 in cash.

[Promise with 2400 hours] by Sim Sung-hyun (Kwangwoon University) and [Dream] by Kim Tae-woo (Konkuk University) were selected as the top videos. Each received the KOSHA President's award plus KRW2,000,000 in cash.

The KOSHA President's award plus KRW1,000,000 in cash were given to two runners-up, [Letter of safety helmet] by Lee Sung-yong (Korea Broadcasting Academy) and [One Day] by Yun Sa-ra (Kwangwoon University).

Consolation prizes (KOSHA President's award plus KRW500,000 in cash) were awarded to four videos: [Reality among realities] by Hwang Ju-won (Yongsan University); [What should we do?] by Oh Kwon (Choeuntab Company); [Safety is best] by Kim Yung-kwang (Yongsang High School), and; [Habituation safety at the laboratory and institutionalization of the safety culture] by Korea Food and Drug Administration - Gyeong-in.

Videos received from March 2 to April 28 for the competition were screened carefully by TV and radio writers, university professors, and external experts as well as the video product manager at KOSHA.

The winners of the video contest will be featured in the [Documentary Festival] during the 39th occupational safety and health campaign week. The 4-day Documentary Festival will be held on July 3~ 6 at the Pacific Hall on the 1st floor of COEX. KOSHA plans to use these videos for the prevention of industrial accidents in the future.

"I hope the occupational safety video contest held for the first time this year will fuel pan-national interest in safety and health and attract more participants," said Director for Training and Public Relations Department, Baek Nak-mun who supervised this event. He vowed to do his best to make this event a truly meaningful program on safety and health for years to come.



[Grand prize winner: Fostering safety consciousness]

(7 June, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA, Russia's NANIO CCVE ink agreement recognizing the explosive-proof equipment test results of Korea and Russia - Agreement enabling explosion-proof equipment exporters to acquire the domestic certification required by Russia

KOSHA and Russia's NANIO CCVE have concluded an agreement recognizing the explosive-proof equipment test results of both countries; thus enabling explosive-proof equipment exporters to acquire the GOST-R certification required by Russia for export items.

According to the announcement made last June 16 by Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park), an agreement wherein Russia and Korea mutually recognize test reports on explosive-proof equipment was concluded last June 8 in Moscow between KOSHA and NANIO "CCVE," a certification agency based in Russia.

Through this agreement, manufacturers requiring certification from both countries may now apply for certification based on the IEC and EN standards in their respective countries, since both countries will honor the results of the tests conducted by each party.

"The agreement concluded between KOSHA and Russia's NANIO CCVE will not only support explosive-proof equipment exporters but also offer an opportunity to acquire explosion-proof test technologies under a cryogenic environment," said Park Doo-yong, Director General of the Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute.

NANIO CCVE is a non-profit certification agency for explosive-proof equipment. Based in Russia, the agency is registered as a certification agency with the International Electrotechnical Commission Explosion-proof Scheme (IECEx Scheme).



**[Grand prize winner: Fostering safety consciousness]
(19 June, KOSHA News)**

- KOSHA invites government officials from Asian countries for training - Technical support provided to Mongolia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other developing countries

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) invited government officials from developing countries in Asia to attend training aimed at the development of occupational safety and health in their own countries and promote accident prevention technologies.

To improve Mongolia's industrial accident prevention technologies and to strengthen friendly cooperative ties between Mongolia and Korea in particular, KOSHA plans to conduct training from June 27 to July 7 for the 16 invited government officials from the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor and occupational safety and health supervisory agencies of Mongolia; thus providing them the opportunity to learn Korea's occupational safety and health system and technologies and experience Korean culture.

Baigalmaa, State Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor of Mongolia, is also expected to participate in this training program. She expressed his appreciation for the training and consulting provided by KOSHA as well as her willingness to discuss ways of strengthening technical cooperation related to occupational safety and health in the future between the two countries.

"Korea has successfully overcome the many challenges that are currently faced by developing countries in the Asian region. KOSHA plans to provide active support to these countries by sharing with them such experiences and its technological capability to enable them to prevent industrial accidents effectively," said Kil-sang Park, KOSHA president. He believes that such efforts will be of great help to Korean enterprises in making inroads into Asian countries. As a premier agency in Asia, KOSHA vows to expand its support to such an ambitious cooperative project, he said.

KOSHA invited four government officials from Vietnam's Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs and Indonesia's Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration for one month last June 29, 2006. These foreign delegates received not only technical training on occupational safety and health but also practical education. They also visited workplaces and experienced Korean culture and took part in many other programs.

To promote the development of the occupational safety and health program and technology improvement, KOSHA invites government officials from Mongolia, Vietnam, and Indonesia every year for training as part of its cooperative programs or dispatches experts to provide consulting services on-site. It also plans to invite government officials from some ten Asian countries for training and provide technical advice in cooperation with the International Labor Organization (ILO).

(26 June, KOSHA News)

- **New OSH Materials**

- KOSHA to distribute quarterly publications to small workplaces



Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) disclosed last April 17 that it would publish and distribute to small workplaces (with less than 50 employees) that are vulnerable to accidents 240,000 copies of 3 kinds of safety and health quarterly publications containing information on the prevention of accidents.

Targeting small workplaces engaged in the manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing, and communication businesses, the quarterly publications are expected to help eliminate blind spots when it comes to safety.

For the quarterly publications, KOSHA selected three dangerous types of industry and provided examples of medium- and large-scale accidents that occur frequently in the typical industry, technical information, and other occupational safety and health information deemed essential for small workplaces. According to KOSHA, accidents occurring annually at small workplaces with less than 50 employees account for 68% of the total number of occupational accidents.

(26 June, KOSHA News)

- Korea Gas Safety Corporation releases the 2005 Gas Accident Yearbook - Causes of accidents occurring for the past five years analyzed



Korea Gas Safety Corporation (President: Dal-Young Park) came out with the 2005 Gas Accident Yearbook, which lists the domestic and overseas gas accidents occurring for the period 2001~2005 particularly those that occurred in 2005.

The 601-page gas accident yearbook consists of six chapters dealing with the law system designed

to prevent gas accidents, statistical analysis of gas accident and classification standards, and status of the gas accidents occurring in Korea for the past five years.

The annex contains statistics on gas accidents that occurred for the past ten years, list of gas accidents that occurred in 2005, and statistics related to disasters (fires recorded by the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, industrial accidents recorded by KOSHA, and traffic accidents recorded by the National Police Agency).

Chapter 6 presents an analysis of the 6 biggest gas accidents that account for 60.4% of all accidents to provide guidelines for the prevention of accidents. Each section contains information on the analysis of causes by type of accident and examples of accidents that occurred for the past five years.

(19 April, Daily Safety News)

- KOSHA to publish life safety notebooks for foreign workers - Translated into ten languages including English and Thai

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) revealed last May 2 that it would publish life safety notebooks for foreign workers working at various industrial sites in Korea. The notebooks will contain training materials for the prevention of industrial accidents and list issues related to labor and living in Korea. They will be distributed to foreign workers working in various areas nationwide starting May.

The teaching materials are translated into ten languages including English, Thai, Sri Lankan, Urdu, Bengali, and Chinese. On the other hand, the notebooks contain information on the safety rules to be observed, occupational diseases, and safety at construction sites.

Published to help foreign workers adapt themselves to Korean life better, the notebooks contain information on foreign workers' legal position and rights, delay in payment, consultation on labor problems including industrial accident compensation, safety and health at workplaces, safety signs and subway line map, and key telephone numbers and blank sheets.

(3 May, KOSHA News)

- Labor Ministry to order KOSHA to publish 100,000 copies of risk assessment guidebooks - Highly portable guidebooks targeting workplaces with less than 300 employees

The Ministry of Labor recently announced that KOSHA will publish 100,000 copies of guidebooks titled "Guide to risk assessment by labor and management." The books will be distributed free of charge, targeting manufacturers employing less than 300 workers nationwide. These guidebooks are the revised versions of the book published in March called "Risk assessment guide" in the form of documents, seeking to facilitate readers' understanding. The visual effects and portability of the books are excellent, since they are produced in colored leaflet styles using A4 size paper that can be folded.

Major contents include the 5-stage procedure for risk assessment, i.e., selection of processes

subject to risk evaluation, risk calculating method, and establishment of improvement programs, and a description of the detailed execution method. The books contribute to users' better understanding by providing examples of actual report on risk evaluation and various related forms. Even though the books are distributed mainly to manufacturing workplaces, they also contain materials that can be applied to the construction industry such as examples wherein the level of risks is classified into high, medium, and low in 12 cases.

According to the Ministry of Labor, Dae Myung Contec in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province was designated as a model workplace subject to risk evaluation. Since March, Dae Myung has been evaluating risk elements for each work process with the participation of all employees and establishing improvement programs that have been receiving favorable feedback. The Incheon northern port construction site of Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co., Ltd. also used the guidebooks as safety training materials and reported satisfactory results.

These books are scheduled to be distributed in May. Any workplace wishing to procure materials and receive technical support may visit KOSHA's homepage (www.kosha.net) or contact the nearest KOSHA office.

(11 May, KOSHA News)

- KOSHA to launch major accident prevention campaign - Promotional activities on industrial accident prevention through TV

Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (president: Kil-sang Park) disclosed last May 11 that it would launch a major accident prevention campaign through various mass media including TV, radio, subway, and Internet to promote pan-national interest in accident prevention.

KOSHA produced two TV campaign videos dubbed "Safe and healthy workplaces created by labor and management" and "Safety is life." Both campaigns are scheduled to be aired sometime this month.

Dubbed "Safe and healthy workplaces created by labor and management," the video drives home the message that national power is connected to industrial sites and safe and healthy workplaces reflecting the social

atmosphere that is synonymous to the excitement over the forthcoming World Cup. On the other hand, "Safety is Life" stresses that keeping life at workplaces translates into the protection of the happiness of workers and their families.

(12 May, KOSHA News)

- Ministry of Labor distributes SCM program to workplaces

True to its word, the Ministry of Labor began to distribute Safe Climate Measurement(SCM) programs to Process Safety Management (PSM) workplaces for free.

Last May 15, the Ministry of Labor started distributing to some 700 workplaces vulnerable to fires, explosions, or leakage particularly to small and medium firms that cannot utilize external experts

for economic reasons the SCM program for free. Through this program, workplaces get to check voluntarily their own process safety management level. Users may download the program from the Labor Ministry's homepage.

The SCM program provides 13 measurement items including dangerous work management, operating procedures, and worker training. Those requiring measurement include all managers, workers, and suppliers. The procedure for using the program is executed according to the following order: Execution- Establishment of workplaces and assessors - Establishment of measurement items - Establishment of interview groups - Measurement through materials and interviews - Review of the assessment results and preparation of reports.

According to the Ministry of labor, using the program is somewhat complicated. "One needs to receive separate training to understand the program. If a safety council request for training, however, we will arrange for the local office to provide the necessary training," an official from the Ministry of Labor said. To download the materials, go to the Labor Ministry's homepage (www.molab.go.kr) and click the information plaza on top followed by archive-research service. For more details, contact any of the four major accident prevention centers in Ulsan, Yeosu, Ansan, and Cheonan.

(17 May, KOSHA News)