

FLORIDA OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND ILLNESS COALITION JOURNAL

MAY 2017

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Coalition is to promote and improve the health and safety of Florida's workforce by building partnerships among stakeholders in occupational health, developing strategies for effective outreach and education, and advocating for the implementation of best practices that protect worker health and increase awareness of worksite safety issues.



WHO WE ARE

The Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) at the Florida Department of Health was established to characterize work-related injuries and illnesses and to use this information to provide information on prevention activities that will improve the health and safety of Florida's workforce. The OHSP is funded by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), which is part of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). As part of the NIOSH grant, the OHSP established the **Florida Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition**. The Coalition is a statewide, voluntary partnership of organizations and individuals committed, through community and state-level actions, to improving the surveillance, prevention, and control of occupational illness and injury in Florida.

Each year the Coalition convenes for a one day conference where representatives from all parts of the State gather for the purpose of networking, building partnerships, and learning about the work of other stakeholders in occupational health and safety. Additionally, the Coalition hosts periodic webinars on various occupational safety and health issues. For more information on the Coalition please visit our website at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/occupational-health-surveillance/index.html>.

Florida Works Together Safely!

2017 ANNUAL COALITION CONFERENCE

On February 23, 2017, the Florida Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition met in Winter Park. The 2017 conference location was kindly provided by an American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) member in the Brasfield and Gorrie Company Conference Room. The one-day conference provided a great opportunity for coalition members from all over the State to meet in person to discuss and collaborate on timely occupational safety and health issues, as well as present current projects they are involved with.

PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FEBRUARY 23, 2017 COALITION CONFERENCE



NIOSH Chemical Carcinogen Policy Summary

Edward Maurer, Continuing Education Director, Driver's Training and Occupational Safety & Health Programs, SUNCOAST SAFETY COUNCIL, emaurer@safety.org

Occupational exposure to chemical carcinogens still presents risks to many in the workforce. To aid in the prevention of occupational cancer, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) develops guidance to protect workers from adverse effects of occupational carcinogens. Accordingly, NIOSH no longer uses the term recommended exposure limit (REL) for chemical carcinogens; rather NIOSH will only recommend an initial starting point for control, called the Risk Management Limit for Carcinogens (RML-CA). For each chemical identified as a carcinogen, this level corresponds to the 95% lower confidence limit of the risk estimate of one excess cancer case in 10,000 workers in a 45-year working lifetime.

Collaboration to Improve Worker Protections for Farmworkers in Florida and the U.S.

Jeannie Economos, Pesticide Safety and Environmental Health Project Coordinator, Farmworker Association of Florida www.floridafarmworkers.org, <http://apopkaquiltproject.blogspot.com/>

The Worker Protection Standard to protect farmworkers from pesticide exposure was first issued by the EPA in 1992 and was not implemented until 1995. While an improvement over previous minimal protections in years past, the standard was still very weak. For more than 20 years after the first WPS was promulgated, farmworker organizations and farmworker advocates have been working toward an improved WPS with stronger health and safety protections for agricultural workers in our country. Over the last seven years, a small coalition of organizations has worked together using many tools and strategies, including using social media, involving scientists, lawyers, sustainable farmers, advocates, but most importantly, personal testimonies from farmworkers themselves, to campaign for enhanced protections against pesticide exposure. In 2015, all that hard work paid off as the EPA issued a new standard that included, among other things, required training once a year instead of every five years, elimination of the 5-day grace period for training, and a minimum age of 18 years old for pesticide handlers - protections that most all other workers have enjoyed for decades. The coalition that worked collaboratively for years did not win everything we had hoped for, but we won more than we expected. Now, we just have to hope that proposed budget cuts to EPA do not hinder the implementation, enforcement of and compliance with the new WPS.

Unseen but Not Undetectable: The Co-morbidities, Syndemics & Occupational Health of Florida's Diverse Im/migrant Populations

Alayne Unterberger, PhD, Founder/Research Director, FL Institute for Community Studies (FICS), alayneu@ficsinc.org

Data was presented from a number of studies across Florida that involve im/migrants employed across various occupations, including farm labor, construction, warehousing and lawn maintenance. Described were the precarious nature of the work, the im/migrants' shared acceptance of the risk(s) they run in these dangerous jobs and the cumulative nature of injury and illness across the lifespan. Im/migrants acknowledge that they are replaceable workers and identified the practice of working "job scared," spurring them to work unsafely or too quickly, for fear that they might otherwise lose the job. This presentation also interrogates how occupational and environmental health questions should be situated and how we, as researchers, treat risk and morbidity. Do we situate our research within the knowledge that the "healthy worker effect" is in operation? How do we really assess the extent of multiple, concurrent and pernicious injuries, illnesses, environmental and occupational exposures? At this point, we discussed a more recent anthropological approach that is capturing these multifaceted processes, referred to as syndemics - or "the synergistic nature of health and social problems facing the poor and underserved" (Singer and Snipes 1992: 225). Syndemics mark a more recent understanding of the social and behavioral determinants of health and reflect that "the biomedical sciences have slowly shifted away from singular etiologies and toward an increasingly holistic approach" (Weaver 2016: 435). Even within this more nuanced syndemics framework, we examined some "confounding" findings from the FL BRFFS section on quality of life, which only shows how much more work is needed in this complex, yet exciting, research on the intersections of individual behavior, culture, occupation and environmental exposures. For more on these topics, please see: *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, Special Focus on Co-Morbidity, V. 30(4) – 2016, edited by L. Weaver.

Teaching Temporary Employees About Competencies in Health and Safety (TTEACHS) Study

PI: Alberto J. Caban-Martinez DO, PhD, MPH, CPH¹, **Researchers:** Katerina Santiago¹, Jessica Wendorf Muhamad¹, Melissa Baniak², Melissa Jordan², Lauren Menger³, & Andrea Okun³

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The Caban-Martinez Lab at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Health and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), is kicking off a new study on temporary workers in the construction industry. This mixed methods study is set to be completed by June 30, 2017 with the primary goal of adapting and evaluating NIOSH's existing Safe, Skilled, Ready Curriculum for temporary workers in the construction industry. We will recruit temporary construction workers in South Florida from various temporary staffing agencies to participate in our focus group discussions related to 1) general health and safety, and 2) the NIOSH safety curriculum. Surveys will be administered to each study participant prior to the start of each focus group. This study will advance our understanding of this workforce and help characterize their health and safety experience. The knowledge gathered from the qualitative discussions with this workforce regarding their overall health and their safety experience and practices will serve in the development of future interventions to prevent injuries and improve their work conditions. For the first time, a safety training curriculum will be adapted and evaluated for temporary workers in the construction industry. If the curriculum is shown to be effective in adequately preparing temporary employees for commonplace situations and experiences on construction worksites, it can serve as baseline training materials for all employed by the construction industry. Stay tuned for the results of the TTEACHS Study!

Occupational Injuries and Illnesses: Examining Public vs Private Sector Rates

Maria Mitchell, Founder S-Words Initiative, Former Manager of Risk Management & Safety, Miami-Dade County
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In 2015, there were 22 million American workers employed by federal, state or local governments. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data for 2015 reported higher rates of occupational injuries and illnesses in the public sector than in the private sector. Private industry employers reported nearly 48,000 fewer nonfatal injury and illness cases in 2015 compared 2014, despite an increase in reported hours worked, continuing a 13-year trend of decline in Private Sector occupational injury and illnesses. By contrast, between 2008 and 2014 there has been an increasing trend in the rate of public sector employee injuries, with the 2014 rate remaining the same in 2015. Why are occupational injury and illness rates higher among public sector employees than private sector employees? Are public sector work tasks more dangerous? Do private employers provide better safety practices, training, equipment, incentives or enforcement? Are private sector workers safer or more skilled than public sector workers? Is there less fear of reporting injuries /illnesses in public sector? Is there more abuse of injury & days away from work policies in public sector? We may not know the answers to the above questions, but we do know that governmental organizations operate differently from the private sector. Reporting of public sector occupational injuries and illnesses is mostly voluntary and often inconsistent. Private sector reporting of occupational injuries and illnesses is mandatory (OSHA) and therefore more consistent. Workplace safety and health issues in the public sector are often not given the attention or priority that they receive in the private sector which is more focused on containing costs. It is also possible that public sector administrators and supervisors may have little information or incentive to eliminate or control workplace hazards. The data identifies the need for more research on public sector work related injuries and illnesses. The data also identifies a need for safety and health professionals to actively engage in efforts to reduce public sector employee injuries and illnesses.

IN THE NEWS

2017 Childhood Agricultural Injuries Fact Sheet: A Child Dies Every 3 Days and 33 Children Injured Each Day in Agriculture-Related Incident

An estimated 893,000 youths lived on farms in 2014, 51% worked on their farm and over 265,600 non-resident youths were hired in agriculture. Leading sources of fatalities were machinery (25%), motor vehicles and ATVs (17%) and drowning (16%). Occupational fatalities among workers young than 16 years old in the US have risen since 2008. Nonfatal youth agricultural injuries cost society an estimated \$1 billion per year and youth agricultural fatalities cost society an estimated \$420 million per year (in 2005 dollars). The National Children's Center is one of 11 Centers for Agricultural Disease and Injury Research, Education, and Prevention funded by CDC-NIOSH.

Source 1: National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety. 2017 Childhood Agricultural Injuries Fact Sheet at: doi.org/10.21636/nfmc.nccrahs.fs.2017

Source 2: Zaloshnja E, Miller TR, Lawrence BA (2012). Incidence and Cost of Injury Among Youths in Agricultural Settings, United States, 2001-2006. *Pediatrics*, 129(4): 728-734.

KEEPING IN TOUCH . . . ANNOUNCEMENTS, EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

May 17: Alliance for Central Florida Safety – Safety Day, at Orlando Hilton, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. ASSE Central Florida Chapter is a Signature Sponsor of event and CEUs provided for HSE professionals who register at the Chapter booth. For info: <http://www.acfs.org/2017-safety-day>

May 22 - 25: National Safety Council Spring Division Meetings, San Diego, CA This year's theme: "Is Worker Wellbeing Part of Your Safety Culture?" Diverse agenda activities for six divisions and technical sessions. Green Cross Awards Gala May 25th. For info: <http://www.nsc.org/join/Pages/Spring-Divisions-Meeting.aspx>

June 1: Registration Opens American Public Health Association Annual Meeting & Expo
The meeting will be held in Atlanta, Georgia on Nov. 4 – 8, 2017. <https://www.apha.org/>

June 9 - September 1: Free Respirable Silica in Construction Industry One Day Classes offered by USF OSHA Training Institute in Orlando, West Palm Beach, Tampa, Miami & Tallahassee. <http://www.usfsafetyflorida.com/>

Jun 19 - 22: ASSE Safety 2017 Professional Development Conference, Denver, CO Sessions focused on innovation in Safety & Health, trendsetting speakers, the latest products and solutions. <http://safety.asse.org/>

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Florida Works Together Safely!

We want to connect with occupational safety and health professionals!

If you would like to submit information for inclusion in the Florida Occupational Injury and Illness Coalition Journal, please send an email to our editorial team. (Use "For Coalition Journal" as your email subject line.) Please note that the editorial team reserves the right to determine content and to edit all submissions.

Join the Coalition! Call (850) 245-4444 x 2819 or email Melissa.Baniak@flhealth.gov for information on joining the Coalition or to subscribe/unsubscribe to our mailing list.