Please provide Newsletter comments, news, recommendations and submissions to Calhoun@mpinet.net
April Chapter Meeting Recap

Ten members were in attendance at the April meeting of the Star Valley Chapter. New and old business was discussed including:

- Chapter Officer Elections. The membership stepped up to provide a full slate of officers for 2016-17. The election is being conducted through ASSE Headquarters. The election runs from April 15 – 29. Election results are to be announced on May 2nd.
- An interesting roundtable discussion broke out regarding recent local information in reference to increased OSHA fines. It was also noted that former situations in which fines were not normally issued may result in fines now. Plans are being made approach this topic at the June meeting.
- End of the year plans. Chapter meetings are being planned with the June topic to feature the new OSHA silica standard and other news on the occupational safety and health front.
- Meeting presentation. Jimmy Calvert and Daniel Ashworth provided an interesting and informative discussion of Online and Advanced Degrees in Occupational Safety & Health. The options and intricacies of safety and health degrees were presented as well as possible pitfalls and things to consider. This presentation will be uploaded to the Star Valley webpage for access by the membership.

The meeting was convened upon the conclusion of the presentation.

2016 Virginia PRIMA (Public Risk Management Association) Spring Conference

The 2016 Virginia PRIMA (Public Risk Management Association) Spring Conference will be held at the Virginia Beach Hilton Garden Inn Ocean Front Hotel on May 19-20, 2016. This year’s conference will offer an “exciting host of educational topics ranging from Safety & Loss Control to Enterprise Risk Management.” The conference offers information that every Virginia Risk, Safety and Loss Control Professional should know.

For those that are not already VaPrima members, the membership fee for the first year will be waived and the membership conference rate of $145.00 will be offered.

Meal times and social hours afford participants plenty of opportunities to network and relax with your peers.

Visit the VaPrima website at http://vaprima.org/ for more information.
This year the ASSE Foundation celebrates 25 years of strengthening the safety profession through education, leadership development and research. The Foundation Board of Trustees has challenged every member to give $25 to the Safety Matters Fund in celebration of 25 years. The Safety Matters Fund has been determined to be critical in sustaining the Foundation’s programs that direct benefit to members and the profession and provides start-up dollars for new innovations.

**What is the challenge?**
The Foundation is challenging all ASSE members, chapters, and regions to give back to the community and support Safety Matters, the Foundation’s signature fund. The three ASSE regions that show the greatest combined growth in number of individual donors and dollars raised for Safety Matters win the challenge.

**When will the challenge take place?**
The challenge dates will be from September 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016. Donations made during the House of Delegates presentation on June 26, 2016 will also count.

**What do the winning regions win?**
The top three regions will earn Foundation program bucks, which can be used to fund Foundation-related programs such as scholarships or grants in their region, based on the total amount of donations raised for Safety Matters:
- First place – 8% of total amount raised for Safety Matters
- Second place – 5% of total amount raised for Safety Matters
- Third place – 2% of total amount raised for Safety Matters

**When will challenge winners be announced?**
The winning regions will be announced at SAFETY 2016, June 26-29, Atlanta, GA.

There will be more news to follow. To keep updated regarding the status, the statistics will be posted on this website: [http://foundation.asse.org/challenge/](http://foundation.asse.org/challenge/)

The Foundation is the charitable arm of the ASSE, focusing on educational programs that advance the profession we serve, developing tomorrow’s safety leaders, and supporting research to expand the knowledge of the safety community.

See the ASSE Foundation website for more information and to contribute to this worthy cause: [http://foundation.asse.org/](http://foundation.asse.org/)

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NIOSH Publication Addresses Job Stress

The April 2016 edition of NIOSH’s Research Rounds discusses Job Stress. The publication defines job stress as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

The concept of job stress, as presented in the Bulletin is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge is an important ingredient for healthy and productive work. It energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When we face a challenge and handle it well, we feel relaxed and satisfied. The importance of challenge in our work lives is probably what people are referring to colloquially when they say, “a little bit of stress is good for you.” In reality, while challenge can be good for personal growth, stress is never good by any measure. One form of stress under investigation at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is job strain, which occurs when high job demands combine with low job control.

NIOSH, as part of its commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for all workers, studies job stress to understand its causes and association with health effects. Most importantly, NIOSH studies how to prevent job stress and related health effects from occurring in the first place. In the April 2016 issue of NIOSH Research Rounds, five recent research projects on this complex and costly issue for today’s workers and workplaces. One is addressed below: **Job Control in Many Occupations Linked to Decreased Risk of High Blood Pressure**.

Some questions for you: Does your job provide a variety of tasks? Do you have the opportunity to develop your own special abilities? Are you able to make work-related decisions on your own? Do you have the freedom to decide how you do your work? If so, you may have a job that gives you a high level of control. This kind of control correlates with a **decreased risk of high blood pressure** in many occupations, according to a study by NIOSH with university partners.

In this study, workers with the highest level of job control were less likely to have high blood pressure than were workers with the lowest level of job control. This association occurred in many different job areas, including management/ professional, sales/office, and production. However, in the case of healthcare support workers (for example, home health aides, nursing assistants, dental assistants, medical transcriptionists, pharmacy aides, and phlebotomists), the pattern reversed; high job control correlated with a greater risk for high blood pressure. Although overall a greater proportion of men than women had high blood pressure, more women in healthcare support and two blue-collar job areas (production; and installation, repair and maintenance) had high blood pressure. The results were similar across racial/ethnic groups.

For more information, consult the NIOSH website [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workorg/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workorg/)

Measuring the Impact of Hearing Loss on Quality of Life by Elizabeth Masterson, PhD, CPH, COHC

Hearing loss is common in the United States. More people have hearing loss than diabetes, cancer or vision trouble. Occupational hearing loss, which is caused by exposure at work to loud noise or chemicals that damage hearing, is the most common work-related illness. It is also permanent.

Hearing loss can have a profound impact on quality of life. The effects begin small and progress as hearing loss worsens. For most individuals, it starts with others sounding like they are mumbling because some sounds cannot be heard well. The individual often has to ask others to repeat themselves, and this becomes frustrating for both parties. Both begin limiting the length and depth of conversations. As hearing loss progresses, it becomes increasingly difficult to hear others in the presence of background noise. Social gatherings and even dinner at a restaurant become isolating activities because of the inability to understand what people are saying and individuals can’t contribute to the conversation. Over time, these barriers to communication can lead to strained marriages, diminished or lost friendships and limited interactions with coworkers and supervisors.

There are other effects, such as loss of enjoyment. Sounds we want to hear become muted and lack quality. Even a person with mild hearing loss has trouble hearing softer sounds, has difficulty differentiating between the softest sounds and the loudest sounds, and has more listening fatigue. To compensate for this loss of hearing sensitivity, people with hearing loss will need to “turn it up” whenever possible. Having the TV and radio at high volume can be annoying to
others and a spouse or roommate may choose to watch TV in another room, turning a group activity into a solo activity. Safety can also be compromised. The sounds of a tea kettle, the warning beep as a fork lift backs up, and the engine of an oncoming car may be missed. There can be a general loss of situational awareness. It is also well known that workers with hearing loss are more likely to get injured on the job.

Not surprisingly, all of these challenges can affect a person’s mental health. Hearing loss is strongly associated with depression. Depressed people are also less likely to participate in activities with others, so the effects of hearing loss and depression compound and intensify isolation. Hearing loss is also associated with cognitive decline, which includes loss of memory and thinking skills. As people lose their ability to hear, they don’t use the hearing-related parts of their brains as much and these parts start to break down. It is a case of “use it or lose it”.

Often those with hearing loss also have ‘ringing in the ears’ (tinnitus). It can be an annoying buzzing, rushing or ringing noise in the ears or in the head. For some people, tinnitus is more than annoying and can disrupt sleep and concentration, increasing fatigue and affecting alertness. The symptoms can be intermittent or continuous. Like hearing loss, tinnitus can also impact mental health and is associated with depression and anxiety.

How does one assign a number to, or quantify the impact of hearing loss on these critical intangibles, such as communication and mental health?

One way to measure this impact is to calculate disability-adjusted life years (DALYs). These are the number of healthy years lost due to a disease or other health condition. For a condition like hearing loss, it doesn’t mean that a person dies younger, but rather that a person has fewer years of good health. The DALYs calculation takes into account life limitations caused by hearing loss as a lost portion of a healthy year of life, and we end up with the number of healthy years lost by a group of people over a specific time period.


http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6515a2.htm?s_cid=mm6515a2_e

Noise-exposed workers were examined because they have a higher risk of hearing loss. In our paper, we estimated the number of healthy years lost for every 1,000 workers each year. Each industry sector was analyzed separately. The CDC has found that 2.5 healthy years were lost each year for every 1,000 noise-exposed U.S. workers because of hearing impairment (hearing loss that impacts day-to-day activities). These lost years were shared among the 13% of workers with hearing impairment (about 130 workers out of each 1,000 workers). Mining, Construction and Manufacturing workers lost more healthy years than workers in other industry sectors; specifically and respectively in those sectors, 3.5, 3.1 and 2.7 healthy years were lost each year for every 1,000 workers.

Fortunately, no worker needs to lose years of good health because his or her hearing was damaged on the job. Occupational hearing loss can be entirely prevented with today’s hearing loss prevention strategies and technology. Visit our web site for more information on occupational hearing loss surveillance and links to resources to protect worker hearing.

Revised Eye & Face Standards Effective Since April 25th

An updated rule revising OSHA’s eye and face protection standard went into effect on April 25th. The update incorporates the 2010 American National Standards Institute (ANSI) requirements for personal protective equipment. The standards focus on testing requirements and minimum thicknesses for protective eyewear and light transmittance for tinted lenses.

Safety Compliance Alert™ April 15, 2016