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TOP 10 NEWS

OHS, FIRE SAFETY, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, LABOUR LAW, FIRST AID

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TRUST AT WORK – TOP-VALUE ASSET

Research has shown that trust is the foundation of work safety, having an indirect impact on key factors in organisation of OHS in the workplace, including above all those having impact on workers' commitment to safety - leadership and climate of safety.

Inter-worker trust has become an even more important asset given the dynamically changing conditions of work. Today, work is performed in a social and organisational environment which is complex and barely transparent, and is conditioned by modern social forms, such as the mass society and increasing global interdependencies.



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MOBBING AND WORKERS' MENTAL EFFICIENCY

Impolite or hostile behaviours at work adversely affect workers' performance. Besides such implications as mental health disorders, increased negative emotion or professional burnout, victims of mobbing suffer deterioration in cognitive functions, i.e. their ability to perform complex tasks and creativity are reduced. Aggression experienced at work also results in reduced ability to provide feedback and solve complex problems. This also affects witnesses to violence.



IMPACT OF NOISE ON HUMANS



Noise, infrasound and vibration contribute to distraction of attention by accelerating and aggravating fatigue. Yet, this is not all – they also reduce the audibility of human speech and warning acoustic signs, dull the acuteness of vision and perceptiveness, hence increasing the risk of serious accidents, including road accidents. Every day, many people exposed to noise during the day and unable to rest from it at night are liable to cause or suffer work or traffic accidents.

Exposure to noise is a predictor of premature withdrawal from professional life due to overall health. Moreover, noise with intensity of 55-60 dB undermines one's motivation to undertaking challenging tasks.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – PANACEUM FOR STRESS AT WORK

Work-related stress contributes to the creation and deterioration of many health disorders, is conducive to work accidents and reduces productivity, thereby disturbing business operations and entailing financial losses. Stress is also bad for the state as it increases the costs of worker treatment and compensation benefits to workers due to deteriorated health. Doing physical activity is helpful in fighting stress, helps distance oneself from work-related problems and also has a positive impact on workers' overall quality of life.



NIGHT-TIME ARTIFICIAL LIGHT POLLUTION

Excessive exposure to light at night may not only cause sleep disorders, but also increase the risk of disease, such as: hypertension, obesity, depression, diabetes and even cancer. There is evidence of increased risk of cancer in those who regularly work at night.

The term 'light pollution' has been adopted in science as the sum total of all adverse effects of excessive night exposure to light for the environment and man. Night illuminations, e.g. of monuments and historical sights, which are being abandoned by certain cities as a result of the recent energy crisis, is viewed by scientists as a step in the right direction. However, protective measures can also be taken within the four walls of one's home, e.g. by using warm, amber-like light sources rather than havn with a considerable content of blue light.



HARMFUL BIOLOGICAL FACTORS IN AIR-CONDITIONED CARS



AC installations usually provide conditions conducive to the development of harmful biological factors (mainly bacteria and fungi). They are created by surfaces contaminated by dust particles or increased humidity caused by AC ducts of small diameter, air filters, air coolers, etc.

Most microorganisms present in car installations pose no threat under normal circumstances. However, some of them exhibit pathogenic, allergising and toxic qualities.

Illnesses caused by AC equipment include those induced by Gram-negative bacilli of *Legionella pneumophila*, being the etiological factor in legionellosis. Legionellosis is takes the form of serious pneumonia with high temperature (over 40°C), shivers, bad mood, dry cough, diarrhoea, neurological symptoms, damage to liver and bradycardia.



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ELECTRO-MOBILITY. CHALLENGES TO FIRE SAFETY



The development of energy systems for the e-car industry, being a key focus area for vehicle manufacturers and suppliers in recent years, has been driving electro-mobility. Notably, 'fire is inevitable' and the risk of fire cannot be eliminated. Educating the relevant services which will face the challenges both in fire-fighting and proceeding with technical standards proves to be of paramount importance.

Even if the fire of an electric car seems to be extinguished, its battery could reignite. It is for this reason that is essential that fire-fighters be trained in extinguishing fire in newly-manufactured hybrid and electric cars, whose numbers on the roads are rising rapidly. Li-Ion battery manufacturers recommend extinguishing them with water, which allows the battery to cool and prevents fire from spreading. However, one is not in a position to effectively put out such a battery using a handheld extinguisher as much as 11,000 litres of water is necessary to extinguish it fully.

HANDLING BURNS

As regards burns – as well as any other medical condition – the most important thing is prevention. However, if skin tissue is damaged, support in treatment is normally sought from the chemists'. How to handle burns properly?

The first 48 hours from the moment a burn appears is the so-called rescue period. The first-aid depends above all on the extent and depth of the burn. If a burn covering at least 30% of the body surface and is qualified as 1st or 2nd degree burn, then the only correct solution is the transport the patient to a specialist burn-treating unit. Nevertheless, 90% of the burns count as inextensive 1st or 2nd degree burns, which may be successfully treated at home.

HANDLING BURNS

Specialists agree unanimously – it is hydrogels that are the best choice when treating burns. Those which designed specifically with burns in mind are the most efficacious. These are professional products, which take over the initial function of running water – i.e. by absorbing excess heat energy from the tissue. It is such behaviour – rather than cooling the tissue by providing an external cooling agent – allows for an efficacious treatment of burns.

CSR – PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Each year, the melting snow in forests, small roadside woods, around cities and towns, in entertainment areas uncovers... litter. Luckily, there are people and business who are disturbed by such sight and are beginning to take action. Brands are increasingly frequently taking pro-environmental initiatives as part of their CSR or employer branding.

A joint trip out of the city to take care of the natural environment – clean the nearby forests, parks or beaches – is among the most popular ideas. It should be remembered, however, that during a cleaning initiative workers may be exposed to dangerous substances, which may be potentially contained inside disposed objects. Moreover, it should be noted that an employer considering organising such an initiative should consider taking out an accident insurance for its staff participating in it (unless such staff member volunteer as part of a public-good organisation – which then insures volunteers).



FALL FROM HEIGHT

A person who has fallen down from a height or has been knocked over is an injured patient. In addition to arm or leg and internal organ injuries, two things should be suspected: spinal injuries and traumatic brain injuries. If the victim is lying on the side and breathing, to not touch them and wait for the paramedics to arrive. If they are lying on the back, the best solution is to stabilise the head between one's knees in an unchanged position, i.e. providing a collar in the form of one's knees and mandibular luxation, i.e. pulling the mandible above the jaw, which automatically raises the tongue from the back wall of the throat, thus clearing the airways. In such a case, avoid moving or turning the injured person. An exception to this rule is where the patient starts vomiting. In order to prevent choking, one must definitely turn the patient on the side.





Heart for work

Campaign aiming at preventing cardiovascular diseases among workers

Nationwide information campaign 2023

www.ciop.pl/serce-do-pracy

Heart for work – nationwide information campaign

The ‘Heart for Work’ campaign is an initiative aiming at encouraging employers to take action to prevent cardiovascular diseases (CVD) among their workers. Such action includes promoting pro-health programmes in the workplace as well as educating staff on how they can switch to healthier lifestyles, hence preventing CVDs.

The key occupational risk factors include:

- considerable physical strain (static and dynamic),
- toxic/chemical factors (carbon disulphide, carbon monoxide, nitro-glycerine, lead),
- physical factors (noise, hot or cold microclimate, electromagnetic field),
- shift work,
- occupational burnout syndrome,
- work-related stress.