



Editor's Briefs

Last month, I mentioned the recent October 30th 5.6 magnitude earthquake centered in the foothills east of San Jose. This month I wanted to recapitulate on some of the more significant California earthquakes dating to the beginning of the century listed below to show that unlike other natural disasters, there is no warning for earthquakes:

- Northridge, magnitude (M) 6.7—January 17, 1994
- Landers, M7.3/Big Bear, M6.7— June 28, 1992
- Humboldt County, M6.9—April 25, 1992
- Sierra Madre, M5.8—June 28, 1991
- Upland, M5.5—February 28, 1990
- Loma Prieta, M7.1—October 17, 1989
- Whittier-Narrow, M5.9—October 1, 1987 Aftershock, M5.3—October 4, 1987
- Palm Springs, M5.9—July 8, 1986
- Morgan Hill, M6.2—April 24, 1984
- Coalinga, M6.4—May 2, 1983
- Kern County, M7.7—July 21, 1952
- San Francisco, M8.3—April 18, 1906

What I learned in Physical Geology 101 is that the earth is divided into three main layers—a hard outer crust, a soft middle layer and a center core. The outer crust is broken into massive, irregular pieces called “plates.” These plates have been moving very slowly for billions of years, driven by energy forces deep within the earth. This movement has shaped the physical features of the earth to include mountains, valleys, plains and plateaus. Earthquakes occur when these moving plates grind and scrape against each other.

In California, we have the northwestward Pacific Plate grinding past the North American Plate at a rate of about two inches per year. Parts of the San Andreas fault system adapt to this movement by a constant shift resulting in frequent, but moderate, earth tremors. In other areas, movement is not constant and strain can build up for hundreds of years resulting in strong earthquakes when it is released. I believe that, yes—it's time to update that disaster preparedness plan.

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

January 8: Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standard - Mr. Carlos Vasquez, Commander of the Department of Homeland Security for the western states, will review requirements to be in place by the 2008 deadline.

February 12: Lock out Tag Out (LOTO) - Mr. Jay Jamali, CSP, CHMM, CHCM will present on how to develop and implement an effective LOTO program as well as equipment specific procedures. State of the art LOTO devices will be demonstrated during the presentation.

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Diacetyl – It Smells Like Butter, But It's Bad for the Lungs

Source: State Compensation Insurance Fund Loss Control Bulletins, <http://www.scif.com>

Diacetyl is an artificial flavoring that smells like butter. It is used to give food products such as popcorn, chips, candies, and pastries a buttery taste. Workers in facilities that use or produce food flavorings may breathe vapors, dusts, or mists containing diacetyl. This puts them at risk of developing bronchiolitis obliterans, a serious and irreversible lung disease that can lead to lung transplants and death.

Bronchiolitis obliterans is characterized by inflammation and scarring in the smallest airways of the lungs. Symptoms of the disease include a persistent cough, shortness of breath upon exertion, and wheezing. Symptoms are typically mild at first and gradually become worse. Sometimes, however, severe symptoms can occur suddenly.

Other health effects associated with diacetyl exposure include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat from breathing the vapors. These vapors can even cause chemical burns to the eyes. Skin contact with diacetyl can cause irritation and dermatitis, an inflammation of the skin characterized by redness, flaking, and cracking.

To reduce exposure to diacetyl, recommendations by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the California Department of Health Services include:

Substitution. Use flavorings known to be less hazardous, if possible. Alternatively, use flavoring formulations designed to release less vapors or respirable powders into the air during handling.

Engineering Controls. Use closed processes to transfer flavorings. Isolate the mixing room and other areas where flavorings are handled, and maintain these areas under negative pressure relative to the rest of the facility. Use local exhaust ventilation at sources of potential exposure. If flavorings are heated, keep the temperature as low as possible to minimize emission of chemical vapors.

Administrative Controls. Restrict access to areas where flavorings are openly handled. Use work practices that limit the release of vapors and dusts. Keep containers tightly sealed when not in use. Maintain good housekeeping. Clean up spills promptly. Do not use compressed air for cleaning up flavorings. Use caution when cleaning tanks or containers with steam or hot water, as the heat may release more chemical vapors.

Respiratory Protection. For routine operations, respirators may be needed until other control measures can be implemented or to supplement them. They may also be needed during maintenance activities and emergencies. At a minimum, use half-mask respirators equipped with organic vapor cartridges and particulate filters. However, in some situations, more protective respirators may be appropriate.

Personal Protective Equipment. Chemically resistant gloves, protective clothing, and tight-fitting goggles should be worn if skin and eye protection are needed.

Medical monitoring of workers can help in early detection of the disease. This should include spirometry, a test that can measure how well a person's lungs are functioning. Employees should have lung function testing before working with diacetyl and on a regular basis while working with the chemical.

Worker education is also important. Employees must be informed if they are working with diacetyl or other hazardous chemicals. They must be trained in the control measures that have been put in place, appropriate work practices, emergency procedures, and personal protective equipment to be used.

For more information go to www.dhs.ca.gov/ohb/hesis/hesispubs.htm and www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/flavorings/.





ASSE Government Affairs

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS REVIEW — JANUARY 2008

ERGONOMICS RESPONSE

The National ASSE Governmental Affairs Manager, Dave Heidorn is still interested in California ASSE members' opinions concerning the California ergonomic standard (Title 8 California Code of Regulations, General Industry Safety Order 5110) as a workable solution to ergonomic tasks. Please send your comments to: dheidorn@asse.org.

PENDING SAFETY AND HEALTH LEGISLATIVE BILLS

Bill No: AB 515 Lieber

This bill would transfer the permissible exposure limit (PEL) setting process from the Cal/OSHA standards board to the OEHHA in Cal/EPA and would eliminate the due process and scientific consensus from California PEL development process. This bill will be considered in 2008.

Bill No: SB 570 Steinberg

This bill would require the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board to adopt a standard by July 2008 to protect workers from being exposed to excessive heat indoors. This bill is up for consideration in 2008.

Bill No: AB 514 Lieber

This bill would require the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board by Jan 1, 2010 to prohibit the use of Diacetyl (used in popcorn production) in the workplace. This bill can be considered in 2008.

Note: bill status can be reviewed on the Internet: www.leginfo.ca.gov

John T. Steele
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The 7 Words Not to Say in a Job Interview

By Lauryn Franzoni, ExecuNet, www.execunet.com

The comedian George Carlin did a famous routine about the seven words you can't say on TV. I have my own version: the seven words you can't — or at least, you shouldn't — say during a job interview.

1. "Articulate" - I mean "articulate," the adjective, not "articulate," the verb. Do the latter but don't mention the former. In other words, don't call yourself "articulate." If you say you're "articulate" and really are, you come off sounding arrogant; if you say you're "articulate" and really aren't, you come off sounding like a buffoon.

2. "Smart" - "I'm very smart." How would you feel about a person who uttered those words to you? Chances are, you wouldn't feel terribly fond of the person. You'd also probably think the person wasn't telling the truth. After all, people who really are smart don't generally say it; they display it.

3. "Integrity" - Unless you're a politician, you don't have to go out of your way to establish that you have integrity. Most people will assume that you do. If an interviewee wants to cast doubt about his integrity in the interviewer's mind, the best way to do it is to (in order of effectiveness): a. Steal the interviewer's wallet; or b. tell the interviewer "I have integrity."

4. "Motivated" - There's no need to tell the interviewer that you're motivated about the job. Your very presence at the interview says it better than your words ever can. On the other hand, you can and should explain precisely what about the opportunity motivates you and why.

5. "Good Sense of Humor" - Okay, I'm cheating. This is a phrase, not a word. But the concept is the same. Don't tell interviewers that you have a sense of humor; demonstrate it. Just keep it within bounds. Don't make jokes about politics, ethnic groups or other people. And while a smile and gentle laugh can brighten a mood and impression, interviews are serious business and there's a fine line between displaying humor and coming across as a clown.

6. "Persuasive" - Persuasiveness is another one of those traits that needs to be demonstrated. The interview is a forum to conduct such a demonstration. Don't tell interviewers you're persuasive; persuade them about something — like your qualifications for the position.

7. "Trustworthy" - If a person says "you can trust me," a red light should go off in your brain. People who really are trustworthy don't operate like this. They understand that trust is something to be earned, not asked for.

Conclusion—By now, I hope you will have discerned the central theme of this analysis. All seven of the words on my interview no-no list are qualities that employers do look for from job candidates. And indeed, the interview is the forum to demonstrate those qualities. But the operable word is "demonstrate." Simply saying that you possess the quality doesn't prove that you do; in fact, it suggests that you don't. As in life, during the interview process, actions speak louder than words.

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