

World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2013 - Commemoration
PAHO/WHO Workers' Health/Environmental and Occupational Risks (ER), Area of Sustainable
Development and Environmental Health (SDE)

Prevention of Occupational Diseases:
***Occupational Hygiene: a necessary science for the prevention and
diagnosis of Occupational Diseases***

Webinar 1: 8 April 2013 – PAHO/WHO World Day for Safety and Health at Work

(In English with simultaneous translation to Spanish)

Time: 09:30 am - 12:00 pm - EST (Washington, D.C.) To check local time in WDC against your
time zone, see the World Clock at: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/meeting.html>

Occupational Diseases (ODs) are hugely under-diagnosed and under-registered, although ILO estimates that they are responsible for 2.02 million deaths and 160 million new incidents per year at Global level. Regional data indicates that they are a hidden epidemic of old, new and emerging occupational pathologies that are not timely and adequately recognized by health care services, or by the scarce occupational health services available in the Region. This situation is critical in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) because not all working populations have access to them. On the other hand, Non-Communicable Diseases (NDCs) are the leading cause of death in the world and our Region, occurring mostly during the productive period of life and probably being acquired at work. It is highly probable that many chronic OD such as cancers and respiratory diseases are immersed and unidentified amongst the statistics of NCDs, simply because they are not detected and diagnosed. This is aggravated by the long periods of latency between occupational exposures and the onset of the clinical presentation of the diseases.

Identifying ODs requires the combined practice of very important occupational health sciences such as occupational medicine and occupational hygiene. Together they are capable of identifying and assessing exposures to work hazards, and establishing correlations with the pathologies found on workers' health and wellbeing. Occupational Hygiene is the key science that focuses on identifying, assessing and controlling hazardous conditions present at the workplace. Through its practice, hazardous exposures are eliminated, reduced or minimized; workers' health can be satisfactorily protected and ODs completely prevented.

Knowing the huge need to strengthen its practice, PAHO planned this first seminar with the purpose of sharing and discussing with experts in this field about the needs and strengths that Occupational Hygiene offers for preventing and diagnosing ODs; as well as exchanging knowledge and experiences in education and research for the successful practice of Occupational Hygiene.

The Expert guests for this seminar are:

1. Eng. Berenice Isabel Ferrari Goelzer, MIH IH, former Global Advisor on Occupational Hygiene for WHO for 35 years; and a very well-known scientist, researcher and promoter of this occupational science, to which she has made long life contributions with research, practice, numerous publications and teaching many people around the world.

2. Prof. Rudolf van der Haar, MSc IH: He worked as technical advisor for PAHO for 10 years developing several occupational health projects in Latin America. Currently he chairs the Department of Occupational Hygiene at the MC-Mutual in Spain; holds a professorship appointment in the Pompeu Fabra University and is a researcher at the Research Center for Occupational Health, CISAL.
3. Prof. David Zalk, MPH CIH: He is the Director of Occupational Hygiene, GPOHP Online Course at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Adjunct Assistant Professor and Researcher at UIC. He was President of the International Occupational Hygiene Association IOHA, and collaborated in several projects with NIOSH, PAHO and WHO.

Dr. Julietta Rodriguez Guzman, PAHO Regional Advisor on Workers' Health, SDE serve as Moderator of the Seminar; and Dr. Carlos Santos-Burgoa, PAHO Coordinator of Environmental and Occupational Risks Program, SDE will make the closing comments.

Suggested readings:

ILO World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2013: Prevention of Occupational Diseases.

Available at: http://www.ilo.org/safework/events/meetings/WCMS_204594/lang--en/index.htm

Article on the Future of Occupational Hygiene Education and Research (2012) at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15459624.2012.700270>

International Hygiene Association. Strategy Document 2011-2015, at:

<http://www.ioha.net/strategy.html>

Visit the webpage of the Latin American Associations on Occupational Hygiene, at:

<http://www.alaho.org/>

Agenda

- 09:30 **Introduction**
Dr. Julietta Rodríguez Guzmán, Moderator
- 09:35 **Welcome Greeting**
Dr. Jose Romero Teruel (TBC) - Dr. Luiz Augusto Galvão, SDE Manager
- 09:40 **Strengths and Importance of Occupational Hygiene for Preventing ODs**
Eng. Berenice Goelzer
- 10:10 **Evolution and challenges of Occupational Hygiene in Latin America**
Prof. Rudolf van der Haar
- 10:40 **Education and Training Programs in Occupational Hygiene**
Prof. David Zalk
- 11:10 **Comments from the Moderator**
- 11:15 **Debate**
Questions and Comments from participants
- 11:50 **Closing Remarks**

How to participate

All Seminars will be open for participation in person at PAHO Headquarters, or via Elluminate. Some of the Seminars will be in English; others in Spanish and all will have simultaneous translation.

For those who cannot follow the live seminar, we will have the summaries available later online in our webpage.

In person:

9:30 am to 12:00 pm ET
PAHO/Headquarters
Room B
525 23rd St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Online: via Elluminate link:

- Spanish: <http://www.paho.org/virtual/saluddelostrabajadores>
- English: <http://www.paho.org/virtual/workershealth>
- Twitter: @pahowho / @opsoms

About the ODs Seminar Series:

The World Day for Safety and Health at Work declared by the International Labor Organization (ILO) is an international commemoration for the workers who suffered injuries, diseases or were fallen at work. It also celebrates those health events that were successfully prevented. As every year, PAHO has joined it, aiming to strengthening capacities in the countries for improving and promoting worker's health and wellbeing, and to preventing Occupational Diseases (ODs) in the Americas. To meet this goal, we have organized a short series of **three webinars** aimed to raise awareness and share knowledge about the creation and implementation of policies and strategies to prevent and diagnose ODs. The ODs Seminar series will take place as follows:

1. **Monday, 8 April 2013:** *"Occupational Hygiene: a necessary science for the prevention and diagnosis of Occupational Diseases."*
2. **Monday, 29 April 2013:** *"Occupational Diseases: the global path for prevention and diagnosis."*
3. **Wednesday, 29 May 2013:** *"Launching of the Knowledge Network on Occupational Diseases: a regional effort to improve prevention and diagnosis of Occupational Diseases."*