

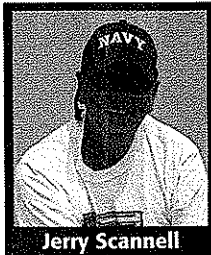
E ditorial

Frontline Safety

Revisiting Process Safety Management

A safety subject that is near and dear to my heart is the safe handling and storage of hazardous chemicals. I became intimately aware of the importance and processes around this safety activity during my time as Assistant Secretary of OSHA. As I led the promulgation of the Standard for Process Safety Management and Highly Hazardous Chemicals (PSM-HHC), I worked with petroleum companies and experts in this area to develop a way to reduce the likelihood of fires and explosions in industry. The commitment to preventing accidents and the details that needed to be kept track of were at times overwhelming, but all involved believed that whatever time or effort it took, the standard would save countless lives. Companies such as DuPont and Johnson and Johnson, as well as many other organizations, use the standard to ensure the safety of their workers and their communities.

However, I am concerned that we may be slipping in our stewardship of chemicals and our life cycle responsibility. There appears to be an increase in incidents involving highly hazardous chemicals. We need to raise the



Jerry Scannell

awareness in our country of the risks we face by paying attention to all the requirements of the PSM-HHC standard.

It has been 15 years since the standard was adopted, and industry and the business environment have changed significantly since then.

Namely, technology has created methods to easily track safety inspections, the presence of hazardous materials and the safety storage of hazardous chemicals. I recently had the honor of taking a tour of one provider of services for hazardous material safety, 3E Co. I learned firsthand the ease at which safety managers can track material safety data sheets, ensure they are adhering to government regulations, and manage emergency spill response and waste disposal. This side of the industry has come a long way in helping businesses ensure safe operations, while making more time for strategic management of the safety operation. And there are a variety of vendors to choose from, including Dolphin Software, MSDSPro, MSDS Solutions and MSDS Online. Safety professionals can choose a vendor that fits their organizational needs, as well as their budget.

My many years as a safety professional

allow me to have a broad viewpoint on how industry and the safety function have changed. I am continually astounded at the way technology has made the safety professional's job easier but also requires additional knowledge and understanding of how to make the function more efficient. I hope you will take advantage of the opportunities, as well as persevere in the challenges before you.

Chemicals can be processed safely. We also know how to respond and manage spills safely. Now is the time to redouble our commitment to handling chemicals and processes safely. We owe this to our employees, management, the shareholders and our environment. If you have feedback or comments on this column, feel free to contact me at jerry.scannell1@verizon.net.

CM

Jerry Scannell
Senior Editor

Jerry Scannell is a former OSHA assistant secretary, he served as VP of Worldwide Safety Affairs for Johnson & Johnson, and he was president and CEO of the National Safety Council. He is an avid boater and sails at Cape Cod and in Florida.

Viewpoint

Looking to a New Year

I always enjoy developing our last issue of the year, because it is focused on resources to help our readers tackle the coming year with confidence and gusto. Our annual forecast roundtable of safety trends features the comments of three industry experts on everything from new regulations and legislation to the direction of the safety industry and how it will play out in the coming year.

Recognition and honors are always exciting and this final issue of 2006 features our Commitment to Worker Safety Award winners.



Betty Hintch

Twelve products or services received honors based on their innovation and ability to provide solutions to some of the most challenging hazards in the workplace. The award recipients represent some of the latest technology and advancements in worker protection in the industry and may offer a good reference for workplace solutions in 2007.

Finally, our last issue of the year includes our annual Safety Equipment Buyers' Guide, which features a listing of products and services and how to contact the various manufac-

turers and vendors throughout the year. To make this buyers' guide even more useful, we recently added tables for four of the major personal protective equipment groups as a quick reference to manufacturers and the products they offer.

We hope this unique year-end issue will not only be of use in the coming month, but will also stay on your desk throughout the year. **CM**

Betty Hintch
Editor