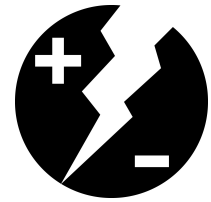

BEST News

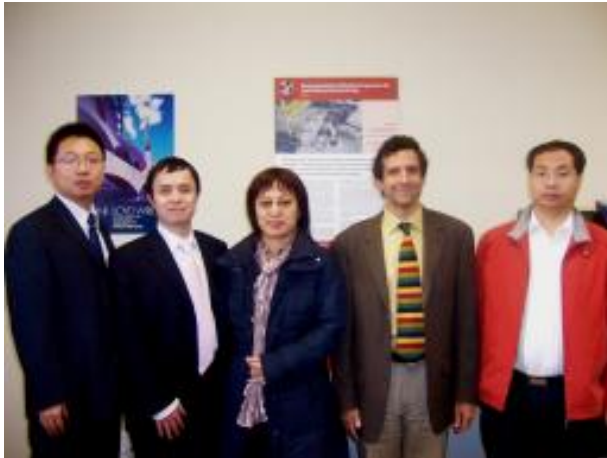
Better Environmental Sustainability Targets (BEST)
Published by Occupational Knowledge International



February 2010 - Volume 5

Chinese Auto Delegation Visits OK International

A delegation from the Chinese Automotive Technology & Research Center (CATARC), based in Tianjin, China visited OK International in San Francisco on January 26-27 to discuss plans to launch the Better Environmental Sustainability Targets (BEST) certification program in China. CATARC is a large industry association that conducts varied activities including environmental certification audits for vehicle manufacturers and parts suppliers.



CATARC delegation visiting OK International's San Francisco office

Participants discussed the benefits of partnering with OK International to bring the BEST certification program to China. As a first step the organizations are planning to organize a meeting with lead battery manufacturers and vehicle manufacturers in Beijing in the spring. Ms. Liu Yunxia, head of the delegation, indicated that her organization could also initiate the mechanism in China by which BEST 1001 would become a Chinese national standard.

In This Issue

[CATARC Visits San Francisco](#)

[Poisonings Continue in China](#)

[Silica Hazards Conference](#)

[BEST to be Featured at NCIIA Conference](#)

[EPA Proposes Changes to Lead Air Monitoring](#)

[Lead Poisoning Predicted to Rise](#)

[New OSHA Director Confirmed](#)

[Cadmium in Jewelry](#)

[OK International at ICEOM Conference in April](#)

Lead Poisoning Reported Around Lead Battery Factories in China

Since our last newsletter in September, two more mass poisonings from lead battery manufacturing plants in China have occurred, bringing the total number of reported incidents to six over the last six months. These more recent incidents involve at least 200 children who were living in close proximity to lead battery manufacturing plants. In late September the manufacturer responsible for the poisonings in Fujian Province, the Huaqing Battery Factory, was ordered closed until the facility is in compliance with local emissions requirements. Similarly in January, the Shengxiang Battery Company in Jiangsu Province, located less than 100 meters from the village where the poisonings occurred, was closed and ordered to relocate.

OK International Sponsors Silica Hazards Conference in New Delhi



Justice G.P. Mathur, Acting Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission addresses the conference.

OK International, in partnership with the Public Health Foundation of India, organized an international conference on "Silica Hazards in Mining and Construction: Reducing Exposures and Preventing Disease" to raise awareness among key stakeholders and formulate policy recommendations to reduce silica emissions. Conference attendees included representatives from government, public health experts, multi-lateral aid agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), trade associations, and silicosis victims. Mr. Harish Rawat, Union Minister of Labour, opened the meeting by calling for a national action plan that encourages businesses to reduce silica exposures while simultaneously encouraging worker participation.

The meeting resulted in a call for a national plan to identify and compensate silicosis victims and address silica hazards throughout



For recent news and updates, follow OK International on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/occupknowledge>

OK International would like to thank our program funders including:

International Finance Corporation

Environ Foundation

Goldman Fund

Deshpande Foundation

Mailman Foundation

Sigrid Rausing Trust

United Nations Environment Program

India. A list of policy recommendations to promote the use of dust-control technologies were discussed along with strategies to increase awareness and encourage a multi-sector approach to reduce silica exposures to prevent silica-related disease. An advisory committee was formed to develop an action plan that will advance policy recommendations and track future progress.



Silicosis victims address the conference

See an article covering the conference in Civil Society's January 2010 edition here: <http://www.civilsocietyonline.com/jan10/jan105.asp>

BEST to be Featured at NCIIA Conference

The Better Environmental Sustainability Targets (BEST) certification program will be featured at the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA) annual conference in San Francisco. Christopher Cherry, Assistant Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Tennessee will discuss the potential for BEST certification to reduce lead exposures in the developing world. Perry Gottesfeld, Executive Director of Occupational Knowledge will also make a presentation. This session is scheduled for March 26 at 11:30 am. For more information or to register for the conference see: <http://nciia.org/network/conference/2010>

U.S. EPA Proposed Revision to Airborne Lead Monitoring Rules

On December 23, 2009 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to revise the ambient air monitoring requirements for sites with lead emissions. The proposed revision would reduce the emissions monitoring threshold from 1.0 tons per year (tpy) to 0.50 tpy. Industrial sources that emit a half ton or more lead per year would be required to monitor and report lead emissions beginning one year after the rule is finalized. The EPA estimates that these proposed revisions will expand the existing lead monitoring network by 140 sites around the country. The EPA will accept comments on the proposal through February 16, 2010. See <http://www.epa.gov/air/lead/fs20091223.html>.

Lead Poisoning Predicted to Rise in Developing Countries

Widespread lead poisoning will result from the planned distribution of a billion computers to developing countries by technology companies and charities, according to a new study. "The lead from batteries needed to power these computers will result in environmental contamination and harmful exposures unless some common-sense safeguards are taken," said Perry Gottesfeld, co-author of the study published in the Journal of Cleaner Production, December 2009. The study predicts that the lead emissions that will be released from manufacturing and recycling these lead batteries are equivalent to four times the weight of the Empire State Building.

See article here: <http://www.okinternational.org/docs/Gottesfeld%20JCLP2009.pdf>

New OSHA Director David Michaels Confirmed

On December 9, 2009, Epidemiologist Dr. David Michaels was confirmed as the new Director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Michaels' past experience includes work as the Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environment, Safety and Health and as a Research Professor at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. Michaels is also the author of the book *Doubt is their Product: How Industry's Assault on Science Threatens your Health*.

Excessive Levels of Cadmium Found in Imported Childrens Jewelry

A recent investigation found that some children's jewelry imported into the United States from China contains alarmingly high levels of cadmium, a heavy metal that causes cognitive development disorders in children and is a known carcinogen. According to the Associated Press some of the pieces tested were confirmed to have up to 91 percent cadmium by weight. Twelve percent of the pieces tested contained at least 10 percent cadmium. Additional concerns were raised when testing demonstrated that many of the items easily shed the heavy metal, leading to persistent exposure over a long period of time. All of the products tested were available and purchased at regional and national retailers including Wal-Mart, Claire's and local dollar stores.

Due to its low cost and availability, cadmium is being used as an alternative to lead in jewelry and small trinkets intended for children. Although imported children's jewelry is not required to pass a cadmium leaching test and no laws exist restricting the amounts of cadmium in these products, exposure from these products may have significant health consequences to children.

OK International Plans Conference Session on Lead Hazards in China

OK International is organizing a plenary session on lead hazards at the 5th International Conference on Environmental and Occupational Medicine (ICEOM) to be held April 7-10, 2010 in Dujiangyan, Chengdu, China. This year, the conference will focus on emerging issues in Environmental and Occupational Medicine within the context of global development and urbanization. OK International has arranged for four lead poisoning prevention experts from the U.S. to participate in this conference along with Chinese colleagues. Mr. Perry Gottesfeld of OK International will present on April 9th on the topic of "International Efforts to Eliminate Lead in Paints and Reduce Exposures from Industrial Sources." See more information including the conference agenda here:

<http://www.iceom2010.com/en/sponsors.asp>

Occupational Knowledge International

www.okinternational.org

www.bestbattery.org
