

# RICOSH ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018

The RI Committee on Occupational Safety and Health {RICOSH} is a (non-profit) resource center for occupational and environmental health and safety. Our primary focus is to prevent occupational and environmental disease and injury. RICOSH pursues this goal in three broad areas: advocacy, training, and technical assistance.

### **An Advocate for Occupational & Environmental Safety & Health**

- RICOSH continues to advocate for policies to protect workers in state and local resiliency and response/adaptation plans mandated by the Resilient Rhode Island Act, the state's comprehensive climate change legislation; and the Governor's Resilient Rhody Strategy.
- We are advocating a new policy to address climate change for the entire community by proposing the creation of a greenhouse gas emissions infrastructure bank to the Rhode Island Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council and RI's Chief Resiliency Officer (RIIB) who are both charged to develop comprehensive state policy on climate change. RICOSH continues to work for improvement for public transit systems, especially as a key remediation to climate change impacts.
- We joined with a new coalition *Fix Our Schools: a Coalition for Healthy School Environments* to address deteriorating conditions of many RI school buildings. The coalition succeeded in helping to enact a statewide referendum and many local district/municipal referendums to provide hundreds of million of dollars to 'fix out schools'.
- RICOSH's has been providing background information to the RI Congressional delegation on the impact of policies and programs proposed by the Trump administration regarding the US Chemical Safety Board, US OSHA and the US EPA.
- RICOSH has joined with a national coalition of unions and occupational health professionals and advocates to address occupational heat stress issues especially as one key impact of our changing climate will be more frequent days of extreme heat.
- RICOSH developed outreach information for public safety and emergency response regarding impact of the opioid crisis.

{{Organizations or groups that we have partnerships with or in which we are members that work on occupational and environmental health issues:

*RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (ECC)*

*Local Emergency Planning Committee #2*

*RI Department of Health*

*RIPTA Riders Alliance*

*Civil Alliance for a Cooler RI*

*Fix Our Schools*

*National Council for Occupational Safety and Health*

*Working RI*

*RI AFL-CIO*

*Protecting Workers Alliance*

*Brown Climate Development Lab*

## □ Training and Education

*'Throughout decades of workplace and environmental health and safety advocacy, RICOSH has educated and trained workers - as well as community members and agencies and professionals - about classical job hazards like asbestos, lead and carbon monoxide and emerging hazards like nanoparticles and emerging infectious diseases.'* (New England Consortium Quarterly, UMASS/Lowell)

Worker-centered health and safety training is fundamental to any attempt to prevent and control workplace hazards.

We trained over 160 young, new, immigrant, minority and low wage workers on job health and safety issues and OSHA in 2018 through a US OSHA Susan B Harwood grant. All told, since 2010 **RICOSH** has trained over 1040 workers in recognition of workplace hazards and the role OSHA under the Harwood grant awards.



### **[TNEC-CSEA)**

*Since 1987, The New England Consortium (TNEC-CSEA), a partnership of the University of Massachusetts Lowell in the Department of Community Health, and five New England COSH groups and the Civil Service Employees Association, Local 1000, AFSCME funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences through the National Worker Education Training Program. TNEC-CSEA has conducted top quality learner-centered participatory hands-on Hazardous Waste Worker and Emergency Responder Health and Safety Training throughout the region.*

**RICOSH** trained in twenty five TNEC/CSEA programs on hazardous materials, emergency response, work zone safety, OSHA10 Construction, confined space safety, disaster preparedness. For the following entities:--

- Sunoco Worldwide
- Boston Water & Sewer Commission
- MADPW Granite Shore Power
- RI Safety Assn
- Tufts Medical Center
- Catseye Pest Control
- Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency
- Institute for Labor Studies and Research's MAP Program
- EPA Urban Service Group RI
- PEL Environmental
- Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
- Narragansett Bay Commission
- US EPA Lab -Narragansett RI

As part of the TNEC collaboration RICOSH develops new training materials, projects, and modules as well as assisting to administer and market training.

## RICOSH's conducted independent workshops on:-

- **Climate Change Impacts on Worker H&S**-Brown SBRP
- **OSHA's HazCom standard**
- **Struckby/Drop Zone** Northeast Tree safety conference
- **OSHA and Chemical Safety** ILSR/RIDOL&T Summer Youth Worker's Rights Program.
- **Communicable Disease in the Workplace** RI Labor History Society
- **OSHA 10 Hr Gen Industry ISLR./MAP**

And once again we joined with Institute for Labor Studies and Research's project on Summer Youth Workers Rights Training as part of RI's Labor Force Development Board grant and loan project to increase for the fourth year in a row



### *Inservice and Professional development*

To maintain technical proficiency and skills staff attended the following in-service training programs, conference and workshops:

- COSH CON Convention
- FM Global Resource laboratory Safety Assn of RI
- Update on Nanomaterials in Construction: Epidemiology, Exposures, and Awareness CPWR
- Oxidation remediation of toxicant/BSRP Brown
- Climate Futures, Design and the Just Transition – Arizona State University
- Non-Toxic Cleaning and Safety- SoCal Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health
- Opioids and Your Workforce-RI Building and Construction Trades/OECRI
- After the storms- Lessons from Harvey, Irma and Maria, and on-the-ground efforts today
- Work Injuries and Opioid Addiction: Getting to the Root of the Problem NationalCOSH
- Designing Climate Solutions for Post-Carbon Cities-Security and Sustainability Forum- Arizona State University
- Managing Respiratory Protection Programs- OH&S Webinar
- AGA Fire Study and Takeaways for Fire Hazards OH&S
- Reframing Carbon Capture and Reuse: Building a New Industry Arizona State University
- Bipartisan Conversation on Pricing Carbon Emissions Arizona State University
- Immigrant Rights: a Climate Justice Issue, Climate Reality Check team
- Protecting Workers from Deadly Heat in a Climate Changed World.
- 9th Annual Rhode Island Energy, Environmental, & Oceans Leaders Day Sen. S Whitehouse
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences -Trainers Exchange

- Health Impact Assessment Training- RIDOH
- Climate and Health- Brown IBES
- Identifying and Managing the Hazards of Combustible Dust- OH&S Webinar
- Reshaping Chemical Lab Safety: Creating a Dynamic and Adaptive Safety Environment Am Chem soc.
- Population Based Risk Assessment-SBRP seminar
- Painting a Brighter Future with Chemistry: Innovating with Higher Performing and More Sustainable Pre-composite Polymers-ACW webinar

## □ Information & Technical Assistance



***"You produce a great newsletter! You have done a great job at solid technical, diverse and useful articles."***

Janet Clark, Senior Associate Director, Toxic Use Reduction Institute UMASS/Lowell  
Center for Sustainable Production

RICOSH produces a newsletter and we have added an online news and notes memo. Additionally, factsheets and other materials are available through the national COSH website {[www.coshnetwork.org](http://www.coshnetwork.org)}.

One of RICOSH's primary functions is to supply accurate information about environmental and occupational hazards, regulations, and methods of control.

Agencies, institutions, officials, and organizations that requested information and technical assistance:

RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4)/ RIDOH- OSHA Consultation program/ RI Infrastructure Bank//Protecting Workers Alliance //Narragansett Bay Commission//RI Department of Environmental Management// US Post Office // Heat Stress Coalition Campaign//NEARI//1199-SEIU// Beacon Mutual// RI Federation of Teachers// Inst for Labor Studies & Research// Brown Climate Development Lab// New England Laborers' Health& Safety Fund // Local Emergency Planning C#2//TNEC Quarterly// Common Ground//National Council on Occupational Safety and Health// RI Public Transit Authority//OSHA// RI Environmental Education Assn// Prov City Council// Brown Superfund Research Project Progreso Latino//RI Dept of Environmental Mgmt.



*Sources of funding: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences National Worker Education Training Program, Susan B Harwood OSHA grant, unions' dues and individual supporters as well as fees for service*

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