

RICOSH ANNUAL REPORT

{2019}

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. {This annual report covers the period Jan/2019-Nov/2019}

An Advocate for Occupational & Environmental Safety & Health

'In the history of efforts to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in RI, the work of the RI Committee on Occupational Safety and Health was a "tipping point" in terms of advocacy.'
- Peter Simon, MD, past president RI Chapters of American Pediatric Association

RICOSH has joined the National Heat Protection Campaign 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. This past summer we partnered with local OSHA (OSHAPAO) with workshops and info alerts on heat stress threats and prevention programs for outdoor and indoor workers throughout RI.

RICOSH has been invited to join the Brown University Center for Emerging and Complex Contaminants [Beacon] as a government and stakeholder liaison and a research-translation coordinator. Beacon is part of the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences Superfund Research Program to investigate the human health consequences and management of chemical contaminated sites in Rhode Island and other post-industrial sites.

RICOSH was invited to join with RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) on a joint USEPA, Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association, and Toxics Use Reduction project to encourage the janitorial and housekeeping community in Rhode Island and Southeastern New England to switch from hazardous to safer cleaning chemicals.

RICOSH developed outreach information for public safety and emergency response agencies regarding impact of the opioid crisis. RICOSH materials were used by OSHAPAO for its staff in-service training on this issue. And RICOSH participated in the New England Wide Community Stakeholders Meeting on the Opioids Workplace, Prevention & Response - sponsored by NIEHS/ National Clearinghouse for Workers Safety and Health.

RICOSH continues to participate with the RI Executive Council on Climate Change and the Civic Action for a Cooler RI (CACRI), to address climate change impacts, especially as they impact the health and safety of workers.

RICOSH continues to support the expansion of public transit as a green solution to climate change and social equity issues as part of the RITransit Riders Alliance and RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4), Civil Alliance for a Cooler RI, and the Environment Council of RI Climate Crisis campaign.

*{{Organizations, agencies or groups that we have partnerships with or have an affiliation with:
 RI AFL-CIO, Working RI Coalition, Providence Emergency Planning Committee #2,
 Safety Association of RI, National Council on Occupational Safety and Health, Association of
 Occupational and Environmental Clinics, the New England Consortium (TNEC-CSEA),- University
 of Massachusetts Lowell, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences- the National Worker
 Education Training Program. the RI Institute for Labor Studies and Research, RI TransitRiders
 Alliance, Worker Health and Safety Advocate Public Citizen, RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating
 Council (ECA), Brown School of Public Health, Civil Alliance for a Cooler RI, Protecting Workers
 Alliance, Environment Council of RI Policy Committee, Brown University Superfund Research Project.}}*

□ 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.

Since 2010 **RICOSH** has trained over 1040 workers in recognition of workplace hazards and worker rights through the US OSHA Susan B Harwood grant program.



[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 New England COSH groups and the New York State 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 TNEC/CSEA programs on hazardous materials, emergency response, work zone safety, OSHA10 Construction, confined space safety, disaster preparedness. For the following:--

- UMass Lowell-EHS-TNEC
- Boston Water & Sewer Commission
- Urban Services Group RI
- PAL Environmental
- Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
- Narragansett Bay Commission
- US EPA Lab -Narragansett RI
- National Facilities SCV

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

RICOSH conducted independent workshops on:-

- **RI Transit Master Plan** -RI Transit Riders/RIPTA
- **OSHA and Controlling Hazards in Healthcare.** Genesis Ctr
- **Heat Stress: Hazards And Prevention** RICOSH/OSHAPAO Prov
- **Heat Stress: Hazards And Prevention** RICOSH/ILSR

This year RICOSH joined in an official alliance with Institute for Labor Studies and Research's project on a partnership to provide guidance, workshops, and access to training resources to new, immigrant, and limited literacy workers; as well as working Rhode Islanders in order to help them recognize workplace hazards and methods and regulations to prevent injury and illness in the workplace, particularly by understanding basic hazard recognition, the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act). In developing this partnership ILSR and RICOSH recognize that we have a responsibility to create and implement workshops and training programs that respond to ongoing changes in the workplace environment.



Inservice and Professional development

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

- Taking Legal Action against Sexual Harassment NatCOSH
- Fighting Ebola in DRC: New Tools & New Challenges--Doctors without Borders
- EPA Tier 2 Refresher IEPC
- Suspicious Activities around Chemical Storage Facilities- Dept. of Homeland Security
- PFAS Removal from Municipal Drinking Water --Water Environment Federation.
- Assessment and control of exposures to ISOCYANATES in industrial coating applications CPWR/ UMASS Lowell
- Disaster Response: Lessons from Texas-- Security and Sustainability Forum
- Costal Futures: Design for the Green New Deal- RISchool of Design
- Blue Sky Climate Conference Inst at Brown for Environment and Society
- Northeast Regional Conference on Occupational Health Network
- Preventing Injuries and Opioid Use Disorder among Construction Workers CPWR/NIOSH
- Nanomaterials unique properties to safely develop drinking and industrial wastewater treatment processes. — Brown Superfund Research Program Seminar
- Am Industrial Hygiene Conference
- OSHA Summit - Andover MA
- Northeast Diesel Collaborative Partners Meeting, NEDP Prov RI
- Pilot Training Program: Opioids and the Workplace, Prevention & Response NIEHS—
- OSHA Outreach Refresher for authorized trainers



□ 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}.

Recent comments on our latest newsletter:-

Medeiros, Maryann director OSHAPAO - *Nicely done*

Goins, John IH - OSHAPAO - *this information looks great*

Marcella R Thompson, Assistant Professor of Nursing, University of Rhode Island
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, Brown University

-*Great articles Jim - Marcella*

Blanton, Galen Director OSHARegion1 -*This is great, thanks for sharing*

Paul MacDonald Prov Central Labor Council—*Always a timely and informative newsletter.*

One of RICOSH's primary functions is to supply accurate information about environmental and occupational hazards, regulations, and methods of control. Sample of agencies, institutions, officials, and organizations that requested information and technical assistance:

RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4)/ RIDOH- OSHA Consultation program/ Protecting Workers Alliance //Narragansett Bay Commission//RI Department of Environmental Management// US Post Office // Heat Stress Coalition // RI Labor History Society//National Heat Stress Campaign //NEARI//SEIU-1199// 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// ECO RI//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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