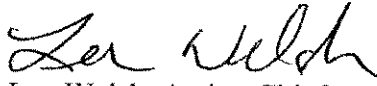


# Memorandum

Date: December 14, 2006

To: All DOSH Industrial Hygienists and Cal/OSHA Program Safety Engineers

  
From: Len Welsh, Acting Chief  
Department of Industrial Relations  
Division of Occupational Safety and Health

Subject: Update on DOSH Industrial Hygienist and Safety Engineer Classifications

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My purpose in writing this memo is to bring you up to date on the steps DOSH has taken to address the interest many of you have expressed about the description of your duties and how that relates to your classification. I share your recognition of the importance of this issue, and I believe it goes to the core of how DOSH can most effectively serve the public in carrying out our mandates under the California Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1973, Labor Code section 6300 et. seq.

Although we have all been in the habit of viewing certain functions within the Cal/OSHA Program as belonging to safety engineers and certain functions belonging to industrial hygienists, the fact is that the commonalities between the two disciplines, at least as they are expressed in DOSH, far outweigh the differences. Both disciplines exist for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and controlling workplace hazards. Either can be a springboard to becoming an expert in the specific areas DOSH and the Cal/OSHA Program are called upon to deal with in our enforcement, consultative, and rulemaking activities. Our collective mission is best accomplished by safety and health professionals who are encouraged both (1) to increase their expertise in specific critical areas and (2) to develop a breadth of capabilities that allows them to deal effectively and independently with whatever occupational hazards circumstances call upon them to address, regardless of whether the hazard in question might be considered a matter of safety or health.

The critical distinction in terms of specialization for our purposes is not whether we label a particular professional as an industrial hygienist or safety engineer, but how we track the types of expertise we develop as we confront the various hazards we are called upon to regulate. For example, an industrial hygienist might specialize in ventilation systems, which are almost purely a matter of engineering. A safety engineer might be participating in EEEEC sweeps and during the summer months be primarily focused on heat illness prevention, which is traditionally thought of as a health issue.

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The fact is that virtually every issue we address as part of the mission of DOSH can be handled either by an industrial hygienist or a safety engineer, depending on what the individual's experience and training have consisted of **since being hired**. Whether an individual was hired as an industrial hygienist or a safety engineer has no bearing on what they can ultimately do either as either a generalist or a specialist for DOSH. Therefore, we are now working on the creation of new civil service classifications that will combine the industrial hygiene and safety engineering disciplines under one working title.

This will take a certain amount of time and research to accomplish, but we have also decided upon a more immediate interim measure to begin significant movement toward recognizing and fostering the multi-disciplinary capabilities of our safety and health professionals: **Effective January 1, 2007, after the Bargaining Unit 10 Equity Adjustment of 10% takes effect, DOSH intends to transfer all Associate Industrial Hygienists to their equivalent Associate Safety Engineer class.** With the assistance of DIR Personnel we have completed the documentation needed to support this transfer, and it has been submitted to the Department of Personnel Administration.

I will keep you advised as things progress, and I wish you all a happy holiday season.

ALW/zm

cc: Vicky Heza

Ray Yee

Lynda Christy

DOSH Regional and District Managers