

IAPA launches machine safety course

In an effort to drive down the rates of people injured by machinery, the Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA) created a new machine safety course, Interlocking Devices: Selection and Use.

“Most workplaces don’t realize they have a problem until the Ministry of Labour does an inspection or a machinery accident occurs that involves critical injuries that have lasting effects for the injured party, their co-workers, and the organization,” says Jim Armstrong, IAPA’s director of consulting services. “IAPA’s new course targets those employees trusted with ensuring machinery is safe to operate with the skills and knowledge to make better assessments of what interlocking devices are appropriate for different pieces of machinery and operations.” The Association of Workers’ Compensation Boards of Canada reported that in 2005 there were more than 17,368 machinery-related lost time injuries in the workplace.

The IAPA says people working with and around machines face several types of hazards including loading, set-up, maintenance, cleaning, adjusting troubleshooting and repairs. The hazards can also occur:

- when materials are fed into the process;
- when a machine cuts, turns, drills, shapes or punches materials; and
- when working with power transmission equipment such as gears, wheels, cylinders, belts, rollers, chains, cables and sprockets.

The IAPA says its course is led by expert consultants who will help attendees better understand the correct use of interlocking devices, review the applicable CSA standard Z432-04 and look at the technologies available. The training will also allow users to interact with real interlocking devices

Safety video wins award

A Calgary, Alta.-based firm won a prestigious award for a new health and safety video.

Danatec Educational Services was granted the 2007 Platinum MarCom award for outstanding achievement in the Video/Training category for its production of *WHMIS – Tell Me Your Story*.

Danatec was one of only 13 Canadian firms among the 5,000 entrants to be recognized with the Platinum award. The international competition is for communication and marketing professionals in a broad range of disciplines, and not just health and safety. “This proves that using the stories of real people is a very effective way to teach workplace safety,” says Kairiin Bright, co-producer of *Tell Me Your Story*, in a news release about the award.

WHMIS – Tell Me Your Story is designed to teach the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). The producers say their video explores lessons in workplace safety using real stories of six people who have experienced the consequences of not following WHMIS guidelines. “They realize that these dangers are real and these events can happen to them,” says Ronald Martin, president of Danatec. “In the video, as well as our print and online materials, we show people how to use the WHMIS basics to protect themselves.”

For more information, visit: www.danatec.com



giving them some hands-on experience.

For information about course offerings, visit www.iapa.ca.

Researchers think some brains better equipped to handle stress

Some people’s brains might give them a better shot at fighting off stress, according to new research by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

The study hasn’t yet been conducted on humans, but in research on mice, they’ve discovered the ability to adapt to stress is driven by distinctly different molecular mechanisms, than the tendency to be overwhelmed by stress. The researchers mapped out the mechanisms — components of which exist in the human brain — that govern both types of responses.

Researchers have been trying to figure out why some people are more resilient to stress, and this new research, according to a news release, indicates that resistance is not simply a passive absence of vulnerability mechanisms, as was previously thought. Instead, it is a biologically active process that results in specific adaptations in the brain’s response to stress.

“We now know that the mammalian brain can launch molecular machinery that promotes resilience to stress, and we know what several major components are. This is an excellent indicator that there are similar mechanisms in the human brain,” said NIMH director Thomas R. Insel, MD.

Results of the study were published online in *Cell*, in October.

Vulnerability was measured through behaviors such as social withdrawal after stress was induced in mice by putting them in cages with bigger, more aggressive mice. Even a month after the encounter, some mice were still avoiding social interactions with other mice — an indication that stress had overwhelmed them — but most adapted and continued to interact, giving researchers the opportunity to examine the biological underpinnings of the protective adaptations.

Looking at a specific part of the brain, the researchers found differences in the rate of impulse-firing by cells that make the chemical messenger dopamine. Vulnerable mice had excessive rates of impulse-firing during stressful situations. But adaptive mice maintained normal rates of firing because of a protective mechanism — a boost in activity of channels that allow the mineral potassium to flow into the cells, dampening their firing rates.

CSAO: Beware of heater hazards

The Construction Safety Association of Ontario (CSAO) is reminding its members to be careful when working with heaters in cold weather.

The CSAO advises that workers should choose an indirect-fired heater instead of a direct-fired heater to heat an enclosed space.

An indirect-fired heater vents combustion by-products outdoors. A direct-fired heater releases combustion by-products

into the heated area and can lead to dangers of explosions, fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.

The CSAO also reminds workers to pay attention to the following:

- don’t block openings for ventilation;
- keep the cylinder connected to the heater at least 10 feet away;
- keep the flame end of the heater pointed away from the cylinder and from flammable materials.
- make sure the heater has a supply of fresh air to operate efficiently and to prevent carbon monoxide from building up;
- place the heater on a firm, level surface to keep it from tipping over; and.
- test heated areas for carbon monoxide.

You can download a safety talk PDF document on heaters in construction at: www.csa.org/uploadfiles/safety_talks/heaters.pdf.

Ottawa to invest in emergency preparedness

Gary Lunn, Canada’s minister of natural resources says Ottawa will spend \$150,000 to fund an online project to help improve information exchange about Canada’s critical infrastructure to support emergency preparedness and response.

“Our government is committed to the safety of Canadians and the security of our energy infrastructure,” says Lunn. “The partnership I am announcing today will assist public safety decision makers in planning for and responding to emergencies.”

Since Canadians rely heavily on connected and interdependent infrastructures, such as pipelines, transportation networks and electrical power networks, public safety officials need more information about them in the event of an emergency or disaster.

This project involves GeoConnections, and makes use of the Geomatics high-tech mapping technology originally developed to manage natural resources.

The government says that the GeoConnections Critical Infrastructure Information Identification Project will help develop standardized ways to share, merge and map infrastructure data using the Internet.

For more information visit www.geoconnections.org.

New machine safety site launches

Canada’s leading business-to-business magazines that promote workplace and machine safety have joined forces to help Canadian manufacturers and safety professionals learn more about machine safety and introduce them to the latest technologies.



Canadian Occupational Safety, Manufacturing Automation and Design Product News magazines have created a new online resource, www.SaferMachines.com, to help machinery builders create safer machines and help manufacturers understand how to use technology to make their machines safer and protect workers.

Visitors to [SaferMachines.com](http://www.SaferMachines.com) will find relevant articles and case studies, video

demonstrations, links to industry events and training, and can source new products and technologies from machine guarding and safeguarding, to safety switches, light curtains, optical guards, safety mats, perimeter and area guards, and industrial automation technology.

Safety professionals are keenly aware of the regulatory changes and other pressures that are forcing them to adopt technologies to make their machines safer. But they need access to the technology and suppliers that can help them.

Improper machine safeguarding is a consistent source of violations, results in heavy fines and penalties from regulators and inspectors, and far too often results in injuries and deaths to workers

[SaferMachines.com](http://www.SaferMachines.com) will help machine builders source and specify the parts and technologies they need to build safer machines, and it will also help the owners and operators of existing machines learn how they can retrofit and add new devices and technologies to their current machinery.

[SaferMachines.com](http://www.SaferMachines.com) will draw on content from leading automation and safety magazines, industry experts, standards and regulatory bodies, and the leading technology providers, suppliers and distributors.