

The Rocky Mountain Center

Gateway to OSH

Volume 4, Issue 2

Occupational Safety and Health

First Statutorily Established Occupational Health Center in U.S.!

Senate Bill 234, a boost for RMCOEH, was signed into law on March 13, 2007. The bill was sponsored by Senator Ed Mayne (D), and sponsored in the House by Representative Roger Barrus (R). The Workers' Compensation Fund's, Dennis Lloyd, Senior Vice President, was instrumental in coordinating and developing community support.

In summary, SB 234 makes RMCOEH the first statutorily established Occupational Health Center in the U.S. It requires a 15-18 member advisory board, establishes the center's leadership, and requires that RMCOEH will annually report to the Utah Legislature and the President of the University of Utah. These reports will include advice on how to improve workplace health and safety and how to contribute to economic growth and development in Utah and the surrounding region.

SB 234 strengthens the RMC in furthering its development and reach, which in turn benefits Utah companies and the nation. For example, the RMC's contributions include:

- * Instructing more than 3,000 professionals in continuing education courses each year that promote occupational safety and health.
- * Offering master and PhD programs that benefit Utah companies—over 50 percent of the more than 360 gradu-

ates of the RMC's academic programs remain in Utah.
* Conducting several national and local benchmark studies, such as:

- "The National Children's Study"
- "Exposures in Firefighters and Police Officers: A Study of Health Effects"
- "Low Back Pain: Quantifying Risk Factors" and
- "Upper Limb Musculoskeletal Disorders: Quantifying Risks"

The RMCOEH is very fortunate in having members of our Advisory Board and community leaders that take such an interest in our activities and provide such strong support for the Center. Senator Mayne summarized the significance of the RMCOEH at the signing of SB 234 as follows:

"The Rocky Mountain Center performs critical missions to improve the health and safety of the workers and businesses. The bipartisan support for the center is deep and broad as evidenced by the unanimous floor votes in the Senate and House. There's nothing that stops a bill supported by both business and labor."

Senator Ed Mayne.



Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr. signing Senate Bill 234 into law on Tuesday, March 13, 2007. Pictured Left to Right: Dennis Lloyd, Chief Counsel WCF; Clark Richards, Paul S. Richards Foundation; Senator Curtis Bramble, Senate Majority Leader; Kim Wirthlin, University of Utah; C. David Richards, MD, Paul S. Richards Foundation; Gov. Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.; Kurt Hegmann, MD, RMCOEH Director; Michael Magill, MD, DFPM, Chair; Senator Ed Mayne, Assistant Minority Whip; Assoc. Dean Milind D. Deo, College of Engineering, University of Utah; Don Marano, IHI Environmental, Chair RMCOEH Advisory Board.

Inside this Issue:

RMCOEH: Another 5 Years!!
2

NORA
2

RMCOEH 30th Anniversary
3

Advisory Board Spotlight
4

Telecommuter Course
4

Upcoming Continuing Education
5

RMCOEH News Corner
5

National Children's Study
6

RMCOEH: Another 5 years!!!

This spring the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational & Environmental Health (RMCOEH) enjoyed the opportunity to continue being an Educational Research Center (ERC). It was in the fall that RMCOEH submitted the grant renewal to NIOSH. It totaled 3,506 pages. This represents a proposal that aims to increase existing academic programs, develop distance-based education programs, re-develop a Pilot/Small Projects Program, re-start the Occupational Health Nursing (OHN) program, and increase integration of the RMCOEH Statistical and Economic Evaluation Unit.

The Site Visit on February 13, 2007 was a huge success! There were fourteen Visitors from around the country. They were 'wowed' by our preparation for

them, each question was answered and we had the documentation to show them.

The RMCOEH Summary Statement was released on April 26, 2007. Overall the Center did very well. We received many compliments and some critiques, which will help us improve.

"The RMCOEH is an example of a Center that is greater than the sum of its individual programs and activities, it is a model for the ways in which each of the Center's components are enriched by being part of a larger center, with mutually supportive links"

RMCOEH was also privileged to have a turnout of wonderfully supportive graduates and current students, numbering almost 40, who met with the Site-Visitors and told them of their experiences at the RMCOEH.

There is "[a] very high degree of satisfaction with the training programs. The students are highly enthusiastic about the quality of their training."

News came the third week in March of the Center's overall score, on a scale of 100-500, with 100 being outstanding to 500 being awful. RMCOEH received a score of 140. According to Dr. Royce Moser, "This represents the best score the Center has ever received, and the best I have seen anywhere"

The total projected budget for the next five years is \$6.8M, most of it targeted for student training support. This grant renewal will allow us to further expand our programs. Each program showed strong growth in the past five year period, and future growth will be accelerating.

5th Annual Regional NORA Young/New Investigators Symposium 2007

April 19-20, 2007

Featured Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Thomas Waters opened the symposium on Thursday morning, April 19. He is a certified professional ergonomist and holds advanced degrees in Engineering Science and Biomechanics from the University of Cincinnati. As a researcher at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for the past 18 years, Dr. Waters has published more than 40 papers and chapters on manual material handling and prevention of low back disorders. He is recognized as an international expert, particularly known for his work on the Revised NIOSH Lifting Equation. His primary research interests include occupational biomechanics, work physiology, low back injury prevention and ergonomic risk assessment.

Dr. Philip Harber presented as the Dr. Paul S. Richards Memorial Foundation's Visiting Lecturer on Friday, April 20. Professor of Family Medicine, he joined the faculty of the UCLA School of Medicine in 1981. He has a B.S. in Natural Sciences from Muhlenberg College, M.D. from

the University of Pennsylvania, and M.P.H. from Johns Hopkins University; he is board-certified in occupational medicine, pulmonary diseases, and internal medicine. Dr. Harber serves as Director of the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Program of the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health and is Chief, Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (Department of Family Medicine/School of Medicine). His numerous research interests include computer methods in occupational health—application of artificial intelligence and database methods to occupational health and medical surveillance—design and analysis of surveillance systems in occupational health.

His presentation used occupational lung disease as a paradigm for illustrating the transformation of the field of occupational health over the past 50 years and projections for the next 50 years that included visionary

- Need for OEH expertise.
- Complex multifactor diseases instead of simple exposure models.

RMCOEH 30th Anniversary

The RMCOEH was founded in 1977 as a University-wide Center, housed in the Health Sciences Center with the Director reporting to the Vice President for Health Sciences. There were components for Occupational Health Nursing in the College of Nursing, Occupational Medicine in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine in the Department of Medicine, Industrial Hygiene in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, and Safety in the College of Engineering. John Dixon MD, VP for Health Sciences, was the creator of this governance structure.

The first NIOSH ERC grant was submitted in early 1978 with a 15-person site visit team early that year. The RMCOEH was funded on its first application, and institutional commitments included a salary line for an Associate Professor, and matching monies for renovation of the first floor of the Fort Douglas army hospital that became the RMCOEH home base. Jeff Lee, PhD, and Bobby Craft, PhD were recruited from OSHA and NIOSH respectively, to join the faculty and develop the Industrial Hygiene program, and Jim Lockey, MD, came to direct the Occupational Medicine residency. All of the courses were developed for Master's degree programs.

The Center served (and continues to serve) as a resource facility for investigating workers' health problems offering the services of an experienced field survey team composed of a diverse group of professionals (occupational medicine physicians, industrial hygienists, occupational health nurses, pulmonary specialists, cytologists, respiratory technicians, safety engineers, ergonomists and others)

At that time the goals of the Center were to reduce workplace-related disease by training occupational safety and

health professionals and by serving as a resource for the investigation of occupational and environmental questions and issues.

Thirty years later our goals have changed some as follows, but not our purpose of enhancing workplace health & safety.

•**Vision:** Be recognized internationally as a leading Center in meeting current and future occupational and environmental health and safety challenges.

•**Mission:** To protect workers and the environment through interdisciplinary education, research, and service.

•**Goals:**

1. Provide quality academic programs
2. Accomplish NORA research and translate it into practice.
3. Provide superior continuing education, service, and outreach.
4. Accomplish strong interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Rocky Mountain Center has had two homes, Building 512 and our current building in Research Park. In 1901, the designation of Fort Douglas as Regimental Headquarters resulted in the need for a larger Post Hospital. That hospital building, constructed in 1909, was acquired by the University of Utah in 1948 and converted into a dorm called Central Hall, accommodating 112 students. This building also served as the International House later on. In 1979, as part of a remodeling project, a two-story screened porch that wrapped around the south half was removed. In 1978, this building became home to the Rocky Mountain Center.

In the fall of 2003, RMCOEH moved to its present location. In this new home, there was some room to grow, although now all of the programs have filled the new space to overflowing. The conference room is booked for many classes. Every floor and wall inch is being used for office, research, storage, and information centers.

The Directors for the Center have been: William N. Rom, MD, 1977-1983; acting director, Jeffrey Lee, PhD, 1983-1986; Mario Battigelli, MD, 1986-1987; Royce Moser, MD, MPH, 1987-2003 and Kurt Hegmann, MD, MPH, 2003 to present.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY RMCOEH!!



RMCOEH today, it is larger than it looks.



Old Fort Douglas Post Hospital, turned Central Hall, turned Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational & Environmental Health, until 2003

Advisory Board Spotlight: Senator Ed Mayne



Ed Mayne has served on the RMCOEH Advisory Board for over 25 years, has been the State Senator for District 5 since 1994, and has continued to serve as president of the Utah Chapter of the AFL-CIO for more than 30 years.

As part of the Advisory Board, Senator Mayne represents RMCOEH on a state level. He has been instrumental in sponsoring two bills for the center, SB159 and the new SB234, which establishes the Rocky Mountain Center (RMC) as the nation's first statutorily established center for education and research in occupational health and safety.

Ed and his wife, Karen (Hibler) have spent the majority of their lives involved in causes on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley. With all of their involvement, it was Karen who was originally asked to run for the Senate because of her commitment to the community, but she realized that Ed's connections and experiences would make him the better candidate.

One of the most memorable things that Ed has done was to carry the Olympic Torch from Kearns High School to Ed Mayne Street. He was one of only three elected public officials nationwide who was asked to carry the Olympic Torch.

As Senator, Ed feels that there need to be tighter laws and regulations concerning the check-cashing businesses that are now available all over the Wasatch front, especially on the west side. His goal is to have these businesses completely regulated before he leaves office (which he isn't planning any time soon).

Ed has been an active participant in his community, and has listened to the needs and concerns of his neighbors. He is someone who represents his Senate District and the State of Utah well, a concerned voice that will be heard. He is someone who has a proven record of getting the job done.

Some of the numerous committees that Ed Mayne serves on or has served on include: Salt Lake City International Airport Authority Board—twice elected Chairman, Utah Legislative Gang Task Force, Utah State Constitutional Revision Commission, Board of Directors of BlueCross/BlueShield of Utah, Utah Council on Economic Education, Executive Board of the Utah Boys and Girls Club and Utah Committee for Drug Free Work Place. This service is just a small portion of what Ed Mayne does for his community.

In his spare time, he loves duck hunting and spending time with his family and his four-legged canine friends.

Ed & Karen recently celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary. They have two married children, Paul and Jamie. They have lived in District 5 for 46 years. Both of their parents have resided there for over 50 years.

Find out more about Senator Mayne, his family, those he represents, and his torch run on his website, www.edmayne.com.

"I want you to carry the torch to represent the people you represent."

Olympic Chairman Mitt Romney

Rocky Mountain Center Develops On-Line Telecommuter Course

Faculty of the RMCOEH have developed an on-line self-study program for telecommuters and others working at home. The course, "Home Workplace Health and Safety," consists of six modules: Emergency Planning and Preparedness, Home Office Electrical Safety, Home Office Ergonomics, Lifting and Material Handling, and Home and Yard Safety. Each module is followed by a checklist that the course participant can use to indicate whether the home workplace meets or does not meet health and safety recommendations. When all the checklists are completed, and the participant has provided a course evaluation, a certificate of completion may be printed. The student can then take

the certificate, and, if desired, a printout of the answers to the checklist to a supervisor to help assure the supervisor that the worker has a safe workplace. Although the program cannot address all of the extensive OSHA office requirements, it will help the worker to consider the most important major health and safety aspects of working at home. In addition to assisting those currently working at home, the course could be of benefit during a pandemic or other disease outbreak when it might be advantageous to have more people working at home than usual. The course development was supported by a grant from the Utah Labor Commission. There is no charge for the course, which can be accessed at <http://uuhs.c.utah.edu/RockyMtn/>.

Upcoming Continuing Education Classes and Events

July Courses

- OSHA 7505: Introduction to Accident Investigation
- OSHA 7200: Blood-borne Pathogens Exposure Control
- Chemical Compatibility and Storage
- 40-Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Course (HAZWOPER)
- OSHA 7105: Introduction to Evacuation & Emergency Planning
- OSHA 7100: Introduction to Machinery & Machine Safeguarding

August Courses

- DOT Hazardous Materials Transportation
- Hazardous Materials: Incident Command
- Asbestos Project Designer Refresher
- OSHA 2225: Respiratory Protection
- Chemical Hazards in the Workplace
- Comprehensive Review of Industrial Hygiene

September Courses

- 8-Hour Hazardous Waste Refresher Course
- Asbestos Contractor/Supervisor Refresher (Pocatello, ID)
- CAOHC-Approved Occupational Hearing Conservation

- OSHA 500: Trainer Course in Occupational Safety and Health Standards for the Construction Industry
- Pulmonary Function Testing

October Courses

- Utah Council on Worksite Wellness Conference
- 24th Annual Utah Conference on Safety & Industrial Hygiene
- OSHA 511: Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry
- OSHA 503: Update for General Industry Outreach Trainers

November Courses

- Lead Supervisor/Contractor Refresher
- Asbestos Inspector/Management Planner Refresher
- Asbestos Inspector Refresher
- Lead Supervisor/Contractor Training

December Course

- Asbestos Inspector Training

Correspondence Courses (enroll at any time)

- Accident Investigation, Analysis & Prevention
- Environmental Management in the 21st Century

For additional information on CE classes, please visit the continuing education section of the RMCOEH website: <http://uuhs.utah.edu/rmcoeh/>

State of the Art Conference

The 2nd Annual State-of-the-Art Conference on Musculoskeletal Disorders was held on March 1 and 2 at the Marriott University Park Hotel. Like the 2006 conference, this two-day event was extremely successful and well attended, drawing people from all over the United States. Both the 2006 and 2007 conferences were designed to present up-to-date research findings from two prospective cohort studies (*Upper Limb Musculoskeletal Disorders: Quantifying Risk* and *Low Back Pain: Quantifying Risk*), along with the results of studies being performed by other major researchers performing (NORA) musculoskeletal disorders research. Topics included carpal tunnel syndrome, evidence-based medicine, sciatica and low back pain, and upper extremity disorders.

Research findings continue to suggest that MSD's are extremely complex. Risk factors appear to be different for different disorders and include physical, individual, psychosocial and work organizational factors.

RMCOEH

News Corner

Please join us in congratulating Kathleen Kincade as the recipient of the Outstanding Student Award from the Utah Section of AIHA. Kathleen is currently a second semester student in the IH/HSAT program pursuing a Public Health degree. She received the award in recognition of her hard work, curiosity and willingness to share ideas and information in and out of the classroom. We believe this recognition shines brightly not only on Kathleen, but also members of the Rocky Mountain Center and the Public Health program within DFPM.



The RMCOEH has again added three more Board-Certified Occupational Medicine Doctors, as Drs. Thobe, Ross and Vokt all passed. Thus RMCOEH has continued to maintain a 100% pass rate!



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National Children's Study Update

Congress authorized the planning and implementation of the National Children's Study with passage of the Children's Health Act of 2000, and Congress recently appropriated FY 2007 funds for the first phase of implementation of the National Children's Study. The purpose of this Act is to authorize the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to conduct a national longitudinal study of environmental influences (including physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial) on children's health and development. The goal of the Study is to improve the health and well-being of children. Researchers will analyze how these issues interact with each other and what helpful and/or harmful effects they might have on children's health. More specifically, the study is designed to investigate basic mechanisms of developmental disorders and environmental factors, both risk and protective, that influence health and developmental processes.

Findings will be made available as soon as possible as the research progresses. The Study can also allow scientists to find the differences that exist between groups of people, in terms of their health, health care access, disease occurrence, and other issues, so that these differences or disparities can be addressed.

The University of Utah applied for and was selected as one of the first seven Vanguard Centers (VCs) for the National Children's Study (NCS) and funded to conduct the study in Salt Lake County, Utah. It is expected that a total of approximately 35 study centers will be identified with each center being responsible for 2 to 4 study areas. Being one of the initial VCs, Dr. Ed Clark, Director of Pediatrics at the U of Utah and Principal Investigator, is a member of

the steering committee for the entire study. In addition, Dr. Rod Larson of the RMCOEH is head of the environmental monitoring portion of the study for U of Utah, and is also a member of the Environmental Team (E-Team) for the entire study.

Current monitoring plans call for collection of environmental samples in the residence and workplace prior to conception, again after conception, and again after delivery. After delivery, any location where the child may spend 30 or more hours a week (e.g., daycare for working mothers) will also be added to the monitoring locations. The environmental samples to be collected include air, surface(s) (e.g., floors, counter tops), soil, drinking water, and food. Dr. Leon Pahler of the RMCOEH will supervise the field monitoring teams. Besides coordination and supervision, he will also be responsible for training and for assuring uniformity in application and use of sample collection and processing methods with the other study centers across the U.S.

Current activities include development of the infrastructure in preparation of enrolling women who desire to become mothers, and in some cases, pregnant or new mothers in the study. Enrollment of these women is expected to begin in late summer or early fall of 2008, with plans to reach a total of 1250 children for the Salt Lake County portion of the study. These children will be followed for study purposes until they reach age 21.

In addition to the activities noted above, the U of Utah VC recently submitted a proposal to add two additional areas to Vanguard Center portion of the NCS study. These areas are Cache Valley, Utah and a tri-county area including counties in SE Idaho and SW Wyoming. Each area would add an additional 1000 children to the population studied by the Utah Vanguard Center.