



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Office of the Chief Health and Medical Officer – Occupational Health
Monthly Newsletter March 2012

[newsletter archives](#)

◆**OCHMO Move:** The Office of the Chief Health and Medical Officer (OCHMO) is scheduled to move on March 9, with everyone scheduled to telework on that day. Please use cell phone numbers if you need to phone staff during this time. OCHMO staff members are required to report to 1201 I Street, NW, on March 12 when computers and phones should be operational. See the [OH website](#) for more details.



◆**Notification Requirements:** Just a reminder about Center notification requirements to the DASHO and Senior Environmental Health Officer per [NPR 1800.1, 4.1.4](#). Immediate notification is required for official visits by any Federal or state health and safety (H&S)-related agency to Centers or any NASA facilities. Notification is also required for: Events involving a work-related employee death or in-patient hospitalization; Center refusal of entry of any Federal/state H&S-related agency for an inspection; receipt of Federal/state H&S-related agency citations; H&S-related reports of reprisal or discrimination; reports of Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) working conditions; and H&S-related warrants/subpoenas.

◆**EHRS Update:** Medgate GX training was just completed at Ames Research Center, February 13-17, 2012. Preparations are now underway for the Medgate GX training at Dryden Flight Research Center (DFRC) the week of April 16. The DFRC “go live” is currently scheduled for Friday, April 20. The Health Unit and the IH staff will both be attending the training.

◆**NASA Buy Quiet Update:** The *NASA Buy-Quiet Process Roadmap*, an online tool for navigating the procurement of low-noise equipment, has a new home. The *Roadmap*, which has been upgraded and updated over the past several months, is part of the [NASA EARLAB Auditory Demonstration Laboratory](#). The



Roadmap guides users through a stepwise process that includes project planning, researching the marketplace, selecting an achievable noise emission criterion, and developing a specification document. The *Roadmap* also includes guidelines for identifying the appropriate government procurement strategy for each purchase, based on an assessment of the purchase-specific long-term financial and noise exposure risk. The heart of the *Roadmap* is cost of noise computations to estimate the net benefit of current noise control expenditures versus the anticipated cost of noise induced hearing loss at a later date.

◆**Meditation: A Welcome Escape:** Langley Research Center’s new EAP counselor, Mike Verano, is becoming very popular. Each Thursday in Building 1216, Mike and about 25 Langley employees take a break from their workday for about 20 minutes to meditate. The word about Mike’s meditation group spread like wildfire after its initial introduction last summer, and the attendance continues to increase from the original 4 employees to 25 or more.

"Meditation has been known to improve concentration and focus, which certainly can help people who use their brain," according to Mike. Mayo Clinic agrees meditation provides the potential benefits of managing stress, increasing self awareness, and reducing negativity. Other studies suggest that meditation may also help conditions such as anxiety, asthma, binge eating, cancer, depression, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Mike will be one of the presenters at the upcoming 2012 Safety Directors and Occupational Health Managers Meeting at Kennedy Space Center during the week of March 26.

◆**Health Promotions:** The 2012 Health Assessment (HA) is available on the Mayo Clinic [EmbodyHealth](#) web portal. Upon completion of the HA individuals can manage and improve their health based on recommendations within the plan of action provided. The first 500 NASA civil service employees to complete the HA may be eligible to receive a small incentive.

◆**Is OSHA Trying to Address PELs Again?:** In a somewhat surprising move, OSHA has placed a pre-rule stage item on the [regulatory agenda](#) entitled *Review/Lookback of OSHA Chemical Standards*. In plain English, this means OSHA is considering once again how to update the OSHA PELs. The surprise isn’t only that OSHA addressed this issue again but that it would be placed in the regulatory agenda. The agenda item doesn’t really call for rulemaking but rather a “request for information”, hopefully by August. OSHA has undertaken the issue of updating the PELs on numerous occasions over the past few years, all to no avail. This one is worth keeping an eye on.

More on IH Business Value: A FREE white paper, [The ROI of EHS](#) was recently released by BLR which describes the barriers between EHS performance and business value. It offers innovative and practical tools and techniques for selling EHS initiatives to management. The report covers barriers between EHS performance and business value; EHS functions as a business cost; linking EHS performance to business value; synopses of special programs that enhance the business value of EHS functions and performance; seven steps toward integrating EHS as a business value; and an EHS employee satisfaction survey. It should help cement some of the strategies discussed in the NASA IH Value series webinars presented a few months ago.



◆**NASA OH Center Review Calendar:**

- White Sands Test Facility, March 19 – 23
- Stennis Space Center, April 2 – 6

◆**Upcoming OH ViTS & Webinars:**

- Health Promotion Workgroup ViTS – March 6, 1:30-2:30 EST
- Environmental Health ViTS – March 7, 11:00-12:00 EST
- Exercise for Weight Control ViTS – March 8, 1:30-2:30 EST
- Employee Assistance Program ViTS – March 27, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

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Send information, comments or questions to:

◆ E-mail – linda.p.cooper@nasa.gov ◆ Telephone – 202-358-0434

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