

NASA-LaRC SAFETY NEWSLETTER

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STAY ALIVE -- DRIVE SAFELY

New regulations proposed by OSHA acknowledge the fact that too many workers have accidents while driving on the job. In fact, motor vehicles are the number one cause of occupational deaths. One private study shows that 2,100 workers are killed on the highway every year and 91,000 workdays are lost due to crashes on the road.

If the OSHA rules become final, companies would be required to make certain that workers use their safety belts both on and off the highway. Safety belts would have to be used in all vehicles - cars, vans, and trucks, as well as tractors and earth moving equipment.

New employees who drive as defined by their job would have to be given driver training, with refresher briefings every three years. Employees who regularly drive a particular type of vehicle on the job would have to receive safety awareness training, too. There would be a required refresher course every three years.

In defense of the proposed rule OSHA says, "not only would employees be better aware of the safest way to drive while at work, but work habits developed in the work environment are often used in an employee's personal life and can have an effect on the employee's personal safety and health."

Even if you do not drive a vehicle at work, it is essential that you practice safety while on the road. Being careful as you drive is just as important as being careful as you work. The life you save can be more than your own.

POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The Potentially Hazardous Material Handbook, LHB 1710.12, has recently been revised to include the requirements of OSHA for the Hazard Communication Standard and the Chemical Laboratory Standard. The handbook is part of the LaRC Safety Manual and is maintained by your Facility Coordinator and Facility Safety Head. This material serves as the written program for LaRC chemical operations. All employees are encouraged to review and become familiar with these documents.

HEARING PROTECTION

The policy for issuance of ear muffs for hearing protection has been changed. Previously, the LaRC Stores Stock Catalog listed the Aural Protector, Sound (# 4240-00-022-2948) as issued upon approval of Industrial Hygiene only. The approval has been changed to the requesting employee's organizational Branch Head's approval. It needs to be noted that only one set of muffs can be issued to each employee because the muffs are to be used by individual employees.

Branch Head approval will comply with LHB 2710.1, "LaRC Noise Control and Hearing Conservation Program," in a more efficient manner. Line management is responsible for enforcing the wearing of required hearing protection devices to conserve hearing.