



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Utah Chapter

December Newsletter

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Editor: Ed Henkels

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

This month's message is from Trevor Hinckley, Chapter Treasurer.

Having indulged in roast turkey and pumpkin pie, we now look forward to that most wonderful time of the year. This can be a trying time for those of us with a heightened sense of risk awareness. We cannot help but cringe as neighbors brazenly scale their snow laden roofs to install jolly lights, erupt with righteous anger at motorists who speed haphazardly through a blizzard, or wince as pedestrians slip on icy sidewalks. Being diligent safety professionals, we set the example and help others mitigate their festive wintertime risks. Not only do we clear the snow off our own walks but we might also help our neighbors do the same, littering the pavement with ice melt as we go. We teach people to walk like penguins and remind our workforce to use safe winter driving techniques. Some of us may even chose to setup the kind of outdoor Christmas decorations that don't require us to leave the ground. I need not mention the monumental effort to stay focused at work during this time of holiday distraction and year-end performance reviews. Whatever your risk mitigation efforts may be this season, we hope you have a very merry, and safe, Christmas season. Happy Holidays!

REGIONAL & CHAPTER NEWS

December Coat & Blanket drive

Thank you to all those who donated to our coat and blanket drive for the Road Home shelter.

Book Review:

Pre-Accident Investigations -An Introduction to Organizational Safety

Author: Todd Conklin

Pre-Accident Investigations – An Introduction to Organizational Safety –

Author – Todd Conklin

As safety professionals, we have learned and utilized many foundational safety principles to keep our co-workers safe. Over the years, we have developed many strategies and tactics to reduce workplace risk and minimize the likelihood that incidents and injuries will occur. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of Systems Thinking in the form of Human Performance research and teachings. While this topic is broad, one of the main areas of focus is gaining a better understanding of “Human Errors” and how organizations can truly learn from them to develop better defenses that protect workers, help them fail safe and assure safe operations.

Todd Conklin Ph.D. is a Senior Advisor at Los Alamos National Laboratory which is one of the world’s foremost research and development laboratories, in the human performance and safety integration program. Over the past 15+ years, Todd has been working on the Human Performance Program at Los Alamos. He has been able to unite his research with practical application with many opportunities to be involved in industrial incident investigations around the world. His work and teachings concentrate on the relationships between line workers and the organization’s systems, processes and programs. He defines safety: “Safety is the ability for workers to be able to do work in a varying and unpredictable world.”

In his book “Pre-Accident Investigations”, Todd teaches that the old definition that a good safety program consists of an organization that has gone a long time without having an accident is a myth. They may have been very lucky, and risks were all over the place ready to become the next incident or injury. In his book he explores some very compelling questions like: “What were the human errors in your workplace today?”, “Were there any consequences?”, “What did you learn from those errors?”. In this book we learn that Human Performance is a safety philosophy that recognizes that workers make errors and will continue to make errors. Since most of the time nothing negative happens, we continue with our work feeling smug and secure. Conklin teaches that these employee errors are a treasure of information for the organization, if the organization will use them to learn not to blame

employees.

He explores how you can create a culture where these every day errors are recognized and seen as opportunities to learn. It stimulates thought regarding risk and incident information that your employees could be providing to your organization. You might ask, "Are our employees sharing risk, near-miss, and incident details to the company? Are they afraid of punishment to making a mistake? This book explores this in some detail and helps us realize that blaming and punishing employees for mistakes is a losing strategy. It will not help gain necessary insights to reduce risk, improve operations and keep employees engaged in meaningful safety work. Conklin uses stories to teach key principles of Human Performance. Rather than writing an academic book with lots of theories, he has written a book with time-tested practices. He brings Human Performance Safety to life. He provides tools and resources that can be used by any organization. One of my largest customers researched books on Human Performance to help their company integrate the teachings and philosophy into their safety process. Most of the books were very academic and expounded on theories. When they reviewed, Todd Conklin's book, they knew they had a winner for their company. It is packed with easy to understand Human Performance information and examples. I'm sure we would all agree that it is better to prevent tragic events than to investigate them after the fact. I highly recommend that you get a copy and read this book. There are many insights that can help any organization enhance their existing safety process.

Contributed by Robert K. Gardner

UPCOMING EVENTS

January Chapter Meeting

Thursday, January 16 from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

February Chapter Meeting

Fifth Annual Dinner & Silent Auction

February 20, 5:30 pm - 8pm

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

We will post the jobs in the EH&S field to our website at no charge, but the chapter is always accepting donations to our scholarship fund. Your contribution is appreciated.



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