



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Utah Chapter

April 2020 Newsletter

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Here we are in April of 2020. I'm not sure about you, but this *isn't* what I envisioned for 2020. We are definitely in uncharted waters. Not just the global society, but we safety professionals are reeling with information overload. Having to navigate these challenging times, I believe there are a few things we can focus on to get through this.

(Hint: This might look a lot like the Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle)

1. Get the right information to understand "your" particular workplace and its hazards.
2. Understand the risk (probability x severity).
3. Start with what you know.
4. Plan for the knowns. Don't get lost in the "what ifs".
5. Work your plan
6. Evaluate -This is where you can start looking at "what ifs."
7. Replan
8. Repeat

I am a firm believer in the basics. In basketball in the US, for high school and above, the height of the rim has always been 10' the distance from the rim to the free throw line is 15'. It's always been that way. If you practice with the right form and technique over and over you can actually get to a point where you could close your eyes and make the shot. I have seen it done. It is easier

for some than others. Even for those who cannot do it, if they learn the proper techniques and practice, they get better.

I believe it is the same with safety. We need to practice the basics continually. As we do so we will be better.

This is my last message in the newsletter as the Utah Chapter President. I am incredibly grateful. Many people do a wonderful job to support our chapter. We are all volunteers. There are great members on our board who are dedicated to our membership. I am incredibly grateful for their support. Dave Holland is the President Elect, I look forward to his leadership in helping us to continue our journey to be better. We are in challenging yet exciting times.

Thank you for all you do!

Dan Fegel, Utah Chapter President

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Here is the slate of Candidates for the 2020 – 2021 Utah Chapter Election.

All positions are non-contested.

Ballots will be sent out soon. Look for it in your email.

President:	Dave Holland
President Elect:	Sarah Galvez
Secretary:	Trevor Hinckley
Treasurer:	Danny Dilts
Membership Chair:	Joseph Knickerbocker

Contact Danielle Higley at dhigley@wcf.com or 801-557-1910 with any questions about the ballot.

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

How Will COVID-19 Change the Safety Profession?

As the world changes to combat the Novel Corona Virus, companies, workers, and safety professionals alike begin to wonder not only how this

disease will change their personal lives but how will it change their work lives. Companies are scrambling to keep their business running with a dynamic pandemic raging across the world, and change is inevitable for all.

Few companies were prepared well enough for COVID-19 early on. Some companies had to close their doors due to government requirements, but others had to close due to staffing issues or even disruption of supply chains. Larger companies had emergency action plans, but smaller companies were left to deal with significant change or even struggle for survival. Even for those with emergency planning, few plans addressed a complicated pandemic disease that has disrupted life as completely as the Corona Virus. Companies scrambled to develop plans to deal with this dynamic disease while missing key information.

The biggest challenge for safety professionals has been dealing with a contagious disease in the workplace. This is not a common concern in most industries, where there are few, if any engineering controls to reduce its spread and still many unanswered questions. Things like hand washing, social distancing, and early reporting/self-quarantine are purely administrative controls which depend mostly on employee behavior for success. Some PPE such as gloves or respirators can be used, but they are not practical in all industries, don't completely control the disease spread, and are running in short supply -with preference going to healthcare providers. Temperature screening has started in some locations as a tool to reduce the spread of the disease. But, since many do not exhibit symptoms, including an increased temperature, until well after contracting the disease, this may not work well enough to slow the spread of the disease.

COVID-19 could have some other immediate effects on health in the workplace. For example, respirators for more ordinary occupational hazards may be difficult to get. OSHA has already suspended the need for fit testing for respirators as long as other requirements of the respiratory standard are met. Occupational medicine providers have stopped pulmonary function testing due to the potential of aspiration causing spread of the Corona Virus to the provider. This also makes it more difficult to assess the health of a respirator wearer. Finally, conducting training and meetings is more difficult as social distancing has become the new norm in this Corona Virus world.

However, there may be some positive long-term safety benefits from this pandemic. With many workers working from home, exposure to some serious occupational diseases is likely to lessen. More workers may be allowed to do all, or part of their jobs at home, as companies explore this new

paradigm. Also, being at home and spending more time with family may improve some workers mental health. This can reduce stress which exacerbates some psychological conditions. It might reduce incidents of workplace violence as well. From a physical health perspective, precautions taken to prevent the Corona Virus will reduce the spread of general flu and other illnesses, especially the increased emphasis to "stay home when sick". This could also lead to changes in sick leave policies across the business landscape. Finally, worker awareness of the health side of safety is going up dramatically. This will make it easier for safety professionals to more quickly diagnose and control occupational diseases/illnesses.

So, as the world changes around us due to the onrushing pandemic discovered only four months ago, we as a profession need to change with it. Our thoughts early on are for our families and changing personal lives, but our focus in the future should shift to more positive effects. At a minimum we will all be more prepared for the next pandemic!

Pat Salandi, CSP

Utah Chapter Member At Large for Government Affairs

UPCOMING EVENTS

April Chapter Meeting

Thursday, April 16 from 11:30 - 1:00 PM

This will be online, probably on Facebook Live.

Information about the meeting will be sent to all members soon.

Newsletter Contributions

If you have something to include in the Utah Chapter newsletter, send it to edhenkels401@gmail.com with "Newsletter" in subject line.

Thank you to all our contributors to this month's newsletter.

Ed Henkels, Editor



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