In an effort to better serve the safety training needs of the NC Community College System, EHSI began offering online safety training presentations using WebEx.com in May of this year. So far, the new online safety training has been well received by community colleges across the state. Not only are the training sessions live, but by using a telephone or voice over internet connection, your faculty and staff members have the ability to directly communicate with the presenter. This will allow them to make comments and ask questions just like in a regular classroom.

Not only will EHSI maintain an ongoing schedule of upcoming training events that will be presented at blueridge.webex.com (see below), but we can also provide customized training online at a time that is best suited for your faculty and staff members. For example, if your maintenance department has safety meetings every Thursday morning at 9 am and you would like EHSI to present a session on a groundskeeping safety topic, all you have to do is contact your EHSI Specialist and schedule a session. When the time comes, your group can attend the training session at individual computers or in a conference setting with an internet connection.

To view scheduled training events, go to: blueridge.webex.com.

If you go to the monthly view, you will be able to see what days safety training is offered. You then have the option to preregister, or you can join the meeting at the time it begins. EHSI will maintain the records of individuals who register for the events; however, if you have a group of attendees who are watching in a conference/auditorium type setting, you will need to document those training records and send the list of attendees to EHSI.

Some of you may have noticed that we offer Hazard Communication and Bloodborne Pathogens training at the beginning of every month. Since training on these topics is required by OSHA for all community college employees, we feel that offering the sessions at the beginning of each month is a great opportunity to provide the training to new employees as close as possible to their start dates. Again, if there is a better time for you than what we have scheduled, please don’t hesitate to schedule a session that best suits your needs.

Below is a list of training events we have scheduled to take place over the next few months at blueridge.webex.com:

- Jul 20, 2010 @ 10:00 am Groundskeeper Safety - this session will cover the proper use of personal protective equipment, groundskeeping equipment, and will provide information on heat stroke/stress prevention.
- Aug 3, 2010 @ 10:00 am HazCom & Bloodborne Pathogens
- Aug 17, 2010 @ 10:00 am Slips, Trips and Falls Prevention
- Sep 7, 2010 @ 10:00 am HazCom & Bloodborne Pathogens
- Sep 21, 2010 @ 10:00 am Indoor Air Quality
- Oct 5, 2010 @ 10:00 am HazComm & Bloodborne Pathogens
- Oct 19, 2010 @ 10:00 am Fire Extinguisher Uses and Limitations

October is Fire Prevention Month and a great time for a refresher on fire prevention and fire extinguisher training.
Safety Measures

Entering into a confined space can be a dangerous assignment, but it has been and will continue to be done safely on a daily basis in the USA. Permit-required confined spaces are covered by OSHA standard 29CFR1910.146. Almost all of the 5 million annual confined space entries are covered by the standard. Approximately 100 confined space fatalities occur each year, and about 50% - 65% of the fatalities are attendants.

What is OSHA's definition of a confined space per 1910.146(b)?

"Confined space means a space that:
Is large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work; Has limited or restricted means for entry or exit (for example tanks, vessels, silos, storage bins, hoppers, vaults and pits are spaces that may have limited means of entry); and Is not designed for continuous employee occupancy."

A non-permit confined space means a confined space that does not contain or, with respect to atmosphere hazards, have the potential to contain any hazard capable of causing death or serious physical harm.

A permit-required confined space meets the three criteria above and one or more of the following: "Contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere; Contains a material that has the potential for engulfing an entrant; Has an internal configuration such that the entrant could be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor which slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section; or Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard."

Some examples of confined spaces that meet the OSHA definition are: manholes, sewers, boilers, trenches, utility tunnels, utility vaults, ducts, pits, pipes, storage tanks and many more that you can think of. OSHA has a confined space decision flow chart in 29CFR 1910.146 Appendix A that can help you determine if a confined space is a permit-required confined space. If a confined space is determined to be a non-permit-required confined space, employees may enter without a permit but the designation must be carefully documented.

If the confined space is determined to be a permit-required confined space, the employer must inform the employees by posting signs on the confined space. The employer may or may not allow employees to enter the confined space. If they choose to not allow employees to enter the confined space, positive means must be taken to prevent employees from entering. If the employer decides that employees will enter permit spaces then they must have a written permit-required confined space program.

The employer must also provide training to all affected employees as well as other safety requirements. The training can be awareness level for those employers who will not be involved in confined space entry operations and training for the employees who will make entry into confined spaces. The awareness level training will only inform employees about the confined spaces and that only trained and authorized employees can enter with an approved entry permit. The training requirements for the entry team are more involved and include training as an entrant, attendant or entry supervisor. The training shall include knowing the hazards that may be faced, use of equipment, communications, warning signs of exposure and other items that are necessary for each team position. The complete training requirements can be found in 29CFR 1910.146(g) Training.

One of the most important “take aways” from that statistic about confined space entries is that 50% of the confined space fatalities could be eliminated if the attendant didn’t enter the space to aid the entrant and only summoned help.

A confined space awareness Powerpoint presentation is available at our web site: blueridge.edu/ehsi, Resources for CC's, EHS Training Resources. Also your EHSI Specialist can discuss training for your confined space personnel.
It’s the first day on the job for a new employee at your college. Their day usually starts out in the Human Resources office where they receive information regarding benefits, holidays, vacation and sick leave, pay, insurance, etc.

This is a great time to introduce them to the safety rules and policies of the college. If safety is a priority at your college, you should communicate this to them from the start. The following topics should be discussed during safety orientation. Some of these can be handled by HR, but the employee’s supervisor should take part also. Coming from the supervisor lets the employee know that safety will be a part of their job, not just the “company line.”

Human Resources may discuss the following topics:

**Written Programs** - The new employee needs to know the location and that they are allowed access to the Bloodborne Pathogen, Exposure Control Program, Hazard Communication Program, Respiratory Program, etc. Give the employees a short explanation of the scope of these programs.

**MSDS** - Give the location and explanation of how to use a Material Safety Data Sheet. The supervisor needs to follow-up with more detailed instructions regarding specific chemicals the employee will use on their job.

**Accident Reporting** - What are the procedures for reporting injuries, accidents, and near misses? Also explain where they should go for first aid treatment.

**Emergency Response** - Let the employee know the procedures for calling EMS or the Fire Department. Who else on campus should be alerted? If the emergency call must go through the campus switchboard, they may need to dial 9, before dialing 911. At some colleges, fire alarms pull stations will alert the Fire Department. directly in some of the newer buildings, but not in older buildings.

**Evacuation or Lockdown** - If case of fire, tell them what the alarm sounds like and where to assemble after leaving their building. If severe weather strikes, show them where to assemble inside their building.

**Vehicle Safety** - If the employee will be using a college owned vehicle, the policies regarding their use should be reviewed. Also review policies regarding personal vehicle use on college roads and parking lots.

**Proper Dress** - Not the college dress code, but whether some employees may be required to have steel toe shoes or electricians will need to wear fire resistant clothing (and the college may have to pay for these type items).

After their meeting with HR, the newly hired worker may receive the following safety information from their supervisor:

**Housekeeping Standards** - Whether they are custodians or faculty, employees should keep their work area clean, neat and orderly.

**Ergonomics** - Proper lifting techniques and proper office, desk, chair, and computer (monitor and keyboard) set-up should be covered.

**Equipment Safety** - Employees should be trained and shown the hazards on everything from copy machines to ladders to forklifts.

**PPE and Safety Supplies** - New staff that will use personal protective equipment or other safety supplies such as latex gloves, dust masks, or ear plugs should be shown how to obtain these items. Some employees should be shown the locations of safety shower and eyewash locations and how to operate them.

**Fire Extinguisher and Alarm Stations** - Show new employees the locations of extinguishers and alarm pulls in their area, and train them how to use them.

**LO/TO** - New employees should be shown a Lock Out/Tag Out tag and explained how this program works and that they should never remove a lock or tag.

Safety refreshers should be conducted with long-time staff as well as new employees.

EHSI provides safety training for all NC community colleges, on your campus or now with Webex live online training. Webex training can be scheduled so your new employee can receive OSHA required training before they begin their duties on their first day of employment. Contact EHSI for details.

By: Chuck Arrowood

Volume 3, Issue 3
EHSI Hosts Annual Safety Conferences

East Conference attendees at Pitt Community College in Greenville

Cindia Wetherwax from NCDOL discusses OSHA Compliance Inspections

West Conference attendees at Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock

Attendees play GHS Jeopardy, hosted by Doug Plautz from Wake Technical Community College

The 2010 EHSI Annual Safety Conferences were held at Blue Ridge Community College on March 31 and at Pitt Community College on April 7. A total of 65 people attended the two conferences, representing 31 colleges. We hope to see you next year.