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Welcome Ceres Solutions!

It has been our privilege to work with the Growers Co-op group headquartered in Terre Haute, IN since 1999. Growers Co-op was one of three Indiana cooperatives who recently launched Ceres Solutions, LLP, a limited liability partnership. The launch was approved by the memberships of AgroKey Co-op, Growers Co-op, and Westland Co-op. The new headquarters will be in Crawfordsville, IN and the transition to Ceres Solutions is expected to take a few months. Our EHS contacts for the new organization will be **Phil Pirtle** and **Steve Salomon**. **Dan Weber** has been named Vice-President of Agronomy for Ceres Solutions. We appreciate the opportunity to work with this exciting new organization!

Special note of thanks goes to **Joe Hill** from all the staff at the Asmark Institute for his work on behalf of the ag industry. Joe is a remarkable person and accepted a position earlier this year with John Deere so he could spend more time with his family.

Watch for the 2007 Posters!

The 2007 posters went into the mail on February 22nd. For the first time, we utilized a bulk rate mail service and special personalized envelopes. We welcome your feedback on the 2007 poster mailing. Please contact **Amber Duke** at amber@asmark.org with your comments.

New 0-45-0 Bin Sign Available

We were recently made aware of a change in the nutrient analysis of granular triple super phosphate (GTSP) from 0-46-0 down to 0-45-0. The new 0-45-0 bin signs have been printed and added to our online catalog on the website.

OSHA Revises Electrical Standard

OSHA published a final rule on February 14, 2007 that updated the electrical installation standard. This final rule revises OSHA's existing standard for electrical installations contained in 1910.302 through 1910.308. It applies, as the existing standard does, to employers in general industry and in shipyard employment, longshoring, and marine terminals. These are the only changes to the electrical installation requirements in 25 years. The revised standard strengthens employee protections and adds consistency between OSHA's requirements and many state and local building codes which have adopted updated National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and National Electrical Code provisions. The updated standard includes a new alternative method for classifying and installing equipment in Class I hazardous locations and new requirements for ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). The final rule updates the general industry electrical installation requirements to the 2000 edition of the NFPA 70E, which was used as the foundation of the revised standard. This final rule becomes effective on August 13, 2007.

Oregon Employers to Report Fatal Vehicle Accidents

According to Oregon OSHA, motor vehicle accidents have been the leading cause of fatal workplace injuries in Oregon four of the past five years. Oregon employers are required as of January 1, 2007 to report fatal,

work-related motor vehicle accidents to Oregon OSHA, under recently updated safety and health rules. **Michael Wood**, Administrator of Oregon OSHA indicated the state's need to track fatal work-related motor vehicle accidents and to treat them with the same seriousness and careful analysis required any time an employee is killed on the job. Workplace deaths must be reported to Oregon OSHA at 800-922-2689 within eight hours of the employer being aware of the incident. Workplace accidents that send three or more employees to the hospital must also be reported within eight hours, while employers must report an incident that requires the overnight hospitalization of a worker within 24 hours. [Click here](#) for more information.

ARA Praises Introduction of Ag Business Security Tax Credit Act

The Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) praised Senators Pat Roberts (R-KS) and Ben Nelson (D-NE) for reintroducing ARA-initiated legislation, the Agricultural Business Security Tax Credit Act (S. 551). This bipartisan proposal would provide agricultural retailers, distributors and other eligible agricultural businesses with the necessary financial resources to improve overall security at their ag chemical storage facilities. The Roberts/Nelson legislation is a fiscally responsible proposal that would help eligible agricultural businesses partially offset considerable security costs by providing a tax credit equivalent to 30 percent of the total amount paid on implementing qualified security measures. The legislation provides for up to \$100,000 in security tax credits per facility, with an overall company cap of \$2 million per year. ARA is working with CropLife America, The Fertilizer Institute and other organizations to secure passage of this important legislation.

IRS Announces 2007 Standard Mileage Rates

On November 1, 2006 the Internal Revenue Service issued the 2007 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning January 1, 2007, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (including vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be 48.5 cents per mile for business miles driven. The new rate for business compares to a rate of 44.5 cents per mile for 2006.

Lincoln Electric Explains New Rules

In response to the federal government's recent overhaul of standards for exposure to hexavalent chromium, a byproduct of the welding process, Lincoln Electric has issued a new arc welding safety CD, including its explanation of the new OSHA rules. Lincoln officials say the new standard lowers OSHA's permissible exposure limit, or PEL, for hexavalent chromium and for all chromium compounds to 5 micrograms of chromium per cubic meter of air as an eight-hour time-weighted average. The new limit is about one-tenth of the older PEL. The new standard requires industries to control worker exposure to chromium so the new PEL is not exceeded. This may be done with engineering and work practice controls or with respirators if controls are not effective. Other requirements include exposure determinations, protective work clothing and equipment, recordkeeping, housekeeping, medical surveillance, and communication of hazards and training. The start-up date for all provisions, except engineering standards, was November 27, 2006 for employers with 20 or more employees. For employers with fewer than 20 employees, the date is May 30, 2007. Lincoln's new CD (MC06-209) also includes resources on arc welding safety, fume extraction equipment, Material Safety Data Sheet updates on hexavalent chromium, and other links to industry safety and health topics. For a free copy of the CD, [click here](#).

SARA Tier II Reports - States Encounter Website Woes!

Several states have mandated electronic reporting of SARA Tier II submissions. These same states have been plagued by a rash of website woes that have in some cases taken their website completely down making meeting the March 1st deadline impossible. Submitters that have not been able to access the websites in the states of Arizona, Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota are advised to check with the state agency for possible extensions.

In Illinois, **Jean Payne**, President of the Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association (IFCA) and a coalition of industry representatives, met with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and asked for an additional extension beyond the current March 10th deadline. IEMA agreed to consider the extension and to

also remove certain fields of data added by IEMA's software vendor without their knowledge. Submitters complained when several fields of required data were added to the website this year. The software vendor had taken it upon themselves to revise the questions and IEMA was not made aware of the changes and the implications to the industry. IEMA will be sending an email to all submitters that will indicate whether or not reports have been successfully received on-line. IEMA reported that of the 7,000 companies required to submit, approximately 3,700 had been successfully received as of February 28th.

Crackdown on Trailering Rules

'Tis the season when we break out the trailers, and recent enforcement activity indicates that it might be an interesting spring season. A recent DOT memo alerted officers to the requirements for proper trailering. Federal regulations require that individual tie-down chains or straps have a working load capacity equal to one half the entire weight of the tractor, vehicle, or implement they are restraining. Each tie-down must be affixed at four separate points - on both the machinery and the trailer. That means wrapping a chain around a tractor's drawbar or clevis is not legal. Insurers are also reporting an increase in inadequate braking systems on trailers. Trailers carrying more than 10,000-pound loads must have brakes on all axles. Trailers requiring brakes must have a means for activating those brakes if the trailer becomes detached from the vehicle. For example, trailers with electric brake systems must have an emergency battery backup system, as well as a breakaway switch to provide electrical power to activate the brakes in case of a breakaway. Similarly, trailers with hydraulic surge braking must have a cable or chain connecting the vehicle and trailer that mechanically activates the trailer's brakes.

Are you performing - and documenting - your post-trip inspections?

Despite the fact that post-trip inspection reports have been required for many years, failure to perform and document the post-trip inspection has remained the number one cited critical violation for the last four years running. The post-trip inspection requirement is cited in more than 1 out of 7 DOT compliance reviews.

According to Section 396.11, each driver must prepare a driver's vehicle inspection report (DVIR) in writing at the end of each day's work on each vehicle operated. The DVIR must contain an identification of the vehicle, such as the truck and/or trailer vehicle or license numbers and a list of any defects or deficiencies which could affect vehicle safety or result in a breakdown, if any. There must also be an indication that no defect or deficiency was discovered, if that is the case, and spaces for three signatures. The original DVIR must be kept for three months from the date it was prepared.

What about pre-trip inspections? Pre-trip inspections are also required, but they do not have to be documented.

OSHA Celebrates 35th Year

OSHA's mission is to send every worker home whole and healthy every day. The agency was first established in 1971 when nearly 14,000 people died on the job. In 2005, the number of deaths was down to 5,700 people, despite the fact that twice as many people are working today. U.S. employment has nearly doubled from 56 million workers at 3.5 million worksites to 115 million workers at nearly 7 million sites.

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