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Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health (NIOSH)
National Personal Protective
Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)
626 Cochran Mill Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

March 11, 2003

LETTER TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Announcement of a Public Meeting to be held on April 10, 2003, to Discuss Standards for Respiratory Devices Used to Protect Workers in Hazardous Environments

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) is planning to conduct a public stakeholder meeting on April 10, 2003, from 12:30 – 5:00 p.m. at the Marriott Key Bridge Hotel, 1401 Lee Highway, Arlington, Virginia.

NIOSH is conducting research for new comprehensive standards for multifunction Powered Air Purifying Respirators (PAPRs). These respiratory protective devices may include protection against other types of threats or hazards. Some devices can include vision protection, hearing protection, or head protection as well as isolation from environmental contaminants, making them multifunctional. Such devices could be very useful to emergency responders, miners, and construction workers, to name a few.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for an exchange of information between the Agency and respirator manufacturers, industry representatives, labor representatives, and others with an interest in respiratory protection. Attendees will be given an opportunity to ask questions; submit verbal and written comments they wish to have included in the public record; and provide individual input into potential changes to the applicable regulations and policies. A formal notice of this meeting will be posted in the Federal Register in the near future.

Besides providing respiratory protection, multifunction PAPRs must allow wearers to perform their assigned duties without posing additional burdens. Vision, communications, heat exchange, and ability to fit into tight places must meet meaningful testing criteria to have reasonable assurance that they will be acceptable. In addition, loose-fitting PAPR equipment must be able to supply enough filtered air that the wearer does not breathe contaminated air during heavy exertion.

Currently, appropriate standards are not available. Such standards, which address all the elements that go into making the equipment multifunctional, must be developed and validated. The purpose of this meeting is to identify comprehensive standards for all elements of multifunction PAPRs.

NIOSH is considering that standards will be needed for:

- (1.) Respiration;
- (2.) Vision;
- (3.) Communications;
- (4.) Wear Ability;
- (5.) Hearing Protection.

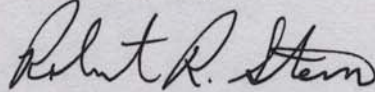
Interested parties should make hotel reservations directly with the Marriott Key Bridge (703-524-6400 / 800-327-9789) in Arlington, Virginia, before the cut-off date of April 3, 2003, referencing the NIOSH/NPPTL Public Meeting. Interested parties may confirm their attendance to this meeting by completing the enclosed registration form and forwarding it by fax (304-285-4459) to the Event Management Office, or obtaining an electronic registration form from the NIOSH Homepage (www.cdc.gov/niosh) by selecting Conferences, event, and then e-mailing (confserv@netl.doe.gov) the form to the Event Management Office.

Requests to make presentations at the public meeting should be mailed to the NIOSH Docket Officer, Robert A. Taft Laboratories, M/S C34, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226, Telephone 513-533-8303, Fax 513-533-8285, E-mail niocindocket@cdc.gov. All requests to present should contain the name, address, telephone number, relevant business affiliations of the presenter, a brief summary of the presentation, and the approximate time requested for the presentation. Oral presentations should be limited to 15 minutes.

After reviewing the requests for presentation, NIOSH will notify each presenter of the approximate time that their presentation is scheduled to begin. If a participant is not present when their presentation is scheduled to begin, the remaining participants will be heard in order. At the conclusion of the meeting, an attempt will be made to allow presentations by any scheduled participants who missed their assigned times. Attendees who wish to speak but did not submit a request for the opportunity to make a presentation may be given the opportunity at the conclusion of the meeting, at the discretion of the presiding officer. NIOSH also invites all interested parties to schedule individual stakeholder meetings.

For further information, contact the Event Management Office, P.O. Box 880, 3610 Collins Ferry Road, Morgantown, WV 26507, Telephone 304-285-4750, Fax 304-285-4459, E-mail confserv@netl.doe.gov.

Sincerely yours,



Co Roland J. Berry Ann
Acting Branch Chief
Respirator Branch
National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory

Enclosure

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NIOSH/NPPTL/RESPIRATOR BRANCH/REHAK/EG&G/BELL/03/03/2003
Spelling Verified by: EG&G

bcc:

RB Reading File

Notebook for "Letter to All Manufacturers"

Concur:

Acting Branch Chief, RB _____

Section Chief, CE&T, RB _____

Acting Section Chief, P&SD, RB _____

Acting Section Chief, LTFE, RB _____