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Tougher Occupational Exposure Limits To Protect Workers

Introduction

On July 15, 2008, Ontario Regulation 248/08 was filed and amended O. Reg. 833, Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents. This regulation lowers exposure limits for some existing chemicals, adds exposure limits for new chemicals and removes some chemicals from Part 4 of O. Reg. 833.

Background

The Ontario government has committed to reduce workplace injuries and occupational illnesses. To achieve this goal, the Ministry of Labour hired 200 new health and safety inspectors and has been reviewing and updating occupational exposure limits (OELs) to both chemical and physical agents. OELs restrict a worker's exposure to hazardous substances on the job. Ontario currently has OELs for over 725 hazardous chemical substances.

Who is Impacted?

Under O. Reg. 833 *"Every employer shall take all measures reasonably necessary in the circumstances to protect workers from exposure to a hazardous biological or chemical agent because of the storage, handling, processing or use of such agent in the workplace"*.

Changes:

Some of the changes introduced with Ontario Regulation 248/08 include:

- Lowered the OEL for:
 - toluene (20 ppm),
 - tetrahydrofuran (50 ppm),
 - n-propanol (100 ppm), and
 - trichloroethylene (10 ppm).
 - Addition of particle size requirements for six (6) chemical agents.
 - Addition of seven (7) chemicals with OELs that were not listed previously including: dimethyl disulfide, 1-methyl and 2-methyl naphthalene, hexafluoropropylene, alachlor, dimethyl carbamoyl chloride, and 5-nitro-o-toluidiine.
 - Removal of two (2) chemical agents from the O. Reg. 833, Part 4: calcium carbonate and limestone
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Future Changes:

On July 18, 2008, The Ontario Ministry of Labour issued a notice for the proposed adoption of new or revised occupational exposure limits (OELs) or listings for 21 chemical substances.

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Helpful Web Link

The new regulation can be found at the following web site:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2008/elaws_src_regs_r08248_e.htm

How can LEHDER Assist?

LEHDER personnel would be pleased to assist you with any issues in regards to the new regulation. Our services with respect to biological and chemical agents include:

- Conduct workplace monitoring to assess worker exposure to biological or chemical agents
- Recommend control measures to mitigate risks via engineering controls, work practices and procedures and personal protective equipment
- Develop specific health and safety training for workers about risks and control measures
- Perform health hazard assessments of new and existing processes and products, including designated substances.

Please visit the Occupational Hygiene area of the LEHDER web site for services provided by LEHDER www.lehder.com/occupationalhygiene.cfm

Questions?

For further information or questions concerning the introduction of O. Regulation 248/08 or proposed changes, please contact:

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About LEHDER

LEHDER is one of the largest Air Quality Management consulting companies in Canada. Our team of consulting professionals is built around our core strength in industrial environmental, health and safety management. LEHDER recognizes our client's need to make decisions that provide for operational flexibility while meeting regulatory, economic and social requirements.

Visit our web pages at www.lehder.com

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