

*HER E-Bulletin of*  
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**No. 01-03**

**October, 2001**

**Calendar**

October 17            Crystalline Silica Panel Meeting, Washington, D.C.  
October 24            IMA-North America (Industrial Minerals Association),  
                                 Washington, D.C. (2<sup>nd</sup> exploratory meeting)  
October 28-30        PI North America mid-year meetings, Las Vegas

**Health, Environmental and Regulatory Issues (General)**

The draft perlite health letter is now being reviewed by Dr. Vincent Covello, an expert in the field of risk communications. Upon completion of his review the letter will be finalized and posted on the Institute's website.

It has been learned that EPA is planning to put out a supplementary proposal in the next month or so (probably October) in the Federal Register on their Final Rule (FR) to streamline the requirements for sand, gravel and rock under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to Know Act (EPCRA),. It is not known what will be in it and why EPA chose to wait so long. The PI had requested that Perlite be exempted.

ACGIH continues to be embroiled in controversy after controversy. They have now reached a settlement with Anchor Glass Container Corp. over the TLV for Trona. They have essentially issued a public apology and have agreed to withdraw the Notice of Intended Change for the substance Trona. For further information go to <http://www.acgih.org/home.htm> and click on case summaries.

A recent European Union white paper on Chemical Management has been issued that essentially says that one has to prove that any chemicals that they market are safe. It discusses testing and the issuance of basic information. The EU is taking it very seriously; with them it is an issue of principle, with the US it could be a troubling trade issue. It is probably not a problem, but it is out there and worth following.

## Cristalline Silica

John Henshaw, the new Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, appears to be anxious to move on the development of a comprehensive silica standard, so we could see a resumption of activity soon.

The latest information from the USEPA is that the risk assessment of crystalline silica under IRIS (Integrated Risk Information System) will not be completed until 2003. No reason for the delay was given.

State issues - The Massachusetts Administrative Council is still awaiting the report from their contractor on the impact of including crystalline silica in their Toxic Use Reduction Act (TURA). The Act regulates substance reporting and emissions reduction. If listed, the reporting trigger would be 10,000 pounds (annually) of releasable, respirable crystalline silica. At these levels it is unlikely that Perlite would be impacted, however the listing still would be of some concern. They are not expected to meet again on the subject until October or November. In Cheektowaga, New York, residents have filed a nearly \$400 million lawsuit against the owners and operators of three nearby landfills and a stone quarry. The residents say those owners are responsible for pollution that has caused sickness and death in the area. Ironically, the quarry, Buffalo Crushed Stone, has recently been named the winner of the New York State Mined Land Reclamation Award for 2001. The annual award recognizes a company for dedication to environmental protection through efficient mining and reclamation practices.

The EC's SCOEL (Scientific Committee for Occupational Exposure Limits) has apparently not yet held their meeting in which an occupational exposure level (OEL) for crystalline silica was to be discussed. The next meeting was scheduled for September 12 and 13, however an important member of the Commission (Dr. G. Aresini) passed away and it was not clear what impact, if any, it would have on the scheduling. Several members of the Committee believe that silicosis is a prerequisite for lung cancer, but the OEL to prevent silicosis was still being debated.

Worksafe Australia is updating its occupational exposure level for crystalline silica. While earlier they considered an OEL of 0.04 mg/m<sup>3</sup> for quartz, it appears they have reconsidered and are now considering a standard somewhere between 0.04 mg/m<sup>3</sup> and 0.1 mg/m<sup>3</sup>. The final report has not yet been received.

## Miscellaneous

An exploratory meeting was held in late-July to determine the interest in formation of a new association, Industrial Minerals Association - North America (IMA-NA). One of the speakers was Gisbert Majewski, President of IMA-Europe, who encouraged formation of such a group as a counter-part to IMA-Europe. The next meeting has been scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup>.