

John Howard Reappointed NIOSH Director

Sep 8, 2009 10:57 AM, by Laura Walter

On Sept. 3, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that John Howard, M.D., will return to his role as director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) effective immediately. He will serve the dual role of NIOSH director and World Trade Center Programs coordinator for HHS.

Howard currently is a distinguished consultant at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). He served as NIOSH director from 2002 through 2008 and as coordinator of World Trade Center Health Programs from 2006 to 2008. In a controversial move that drew criticism from the safety and health community, then-director of CDC Julie Gerberding informed Howard in July 2008 that he would not be reappointed to the position. He will return to the NIOSH leadership role just over 1 year after leaving.

“Dr. Howard brings a wealth of administrative experience from his service in both state and federal governments and a long history of personal dedication and professional achievement to the field of occupational health and safety,” Sebelius said. “His leadership will serve NIOSH well in a time of unprecedented challenges and opportunities.”

In 2002, HHS began to administer \$125 million that Congress set aside for screening and monitoring of more than 50,000 World Trade Center responders, recovery workers and volunteers, and recently expanded the program to include residents, students, and other non-emergency responders impacted by the 9/11 disaster. Howard was instrumental in the allocation and release of more than \$390 million dedicated to treatment and in working with the medical and scientific communities to develop a plan to help those who are or became ill from 9/11.

“All workers should be protected against all known job and workplace hazards,” said Dr. Thomas Frieden, CDC director. “Dr. John Howard is one of the nation’s leaders in occupational health and worker safety. He’s worked with the scientists, medical professionals and workers to effectively lead investigations into new and potential health hazards, and to address workplace health and safety concerns. Importantly, he brings to this position the dedication and passion needed to achieve the safest workplaces possible.”

Howard is board-certified in internal medicine, legal medicine, and occupational medicine. He also is admitted to the practice of medicine and law in the state of California and in the District of Columbia, and he is a member of the U.S. Supreme Court bar. He has written numerous articles on occupational health, law and policy, and serves as a professorial lecturer in environmental and occupational health in the School of Public Health and Health Services at The George Washington University.

ASSE, AIHA Welcome Howard’s Return

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) and The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) rallied for Howard’s reappointment in 2008. Both organizations praised the decision to reinstate his leadership at NIOSH.

“ASSE is pleased that this administration has recognized the quality leadership of Dr. John Howard and appointed him to return to lead NIOSH,” said ASSE President C. Christopher Patton. “At NIOSH, he ably helped the talented professionals take their leadership roles in occupational safety and health and set a visionary direction for NIOSH that, with adequate resources, can address the rapidly changing risks in today’s workplaces.”

AIHA also welcomed Howard’s return and highlighted some of his accomplishments during his previous tenure at NIOSH:

- Establishing a “Research to Practice (r2p)” office to foster transfer and diffusion of NIOSH-generated knowledge to partners and stakeholders.

- Creating access to NIOSH research and results through the use of the Internet and electronic communications means resulting in increased stakeholder contact with and input provided to NIOSH scientists.

- Positioning NIOSH as one of the key partners in the National Nanotechnology Initiative by recognizing the early potential importance of nanotechnology.

- Assuring that NIOSH policy decisions were grounded in and based on sound science.

“Since the creation of NIOSH back in 1970, the agency has been well served by directors with an understanding, dedication and knowledge of occupational health and safety,” said Cathy Cole, AIHA president. “However, I believe I am safe in saying that never in the history of the Institute has a director been as successful and respected by partners and stakeholders as Dr. John Howard.”

Career Opportunities

The current state of the economy has affected many of our members and/or their families. This space is devoted to free advertisement of safety-related openings that might be of interest to our membership.

<i>Safety Director</i>	<i>First Health of the Carolinas</i>	<i>Pinehurst, NC</i>
<i>Senior EHS Specialist</i>	<i>Novartis Vaccines & Diagnostics</i>	<i>Holly Springs, NC</i>
<i>NC Association of County Commissioners</i>	<i>Risk Control Manager</i>	<i>Raleigh, NC</i>
<i>City of Greensboro, Water Resources</i>	<i>Safety Manager</i>	<i>Greensboro, NC</i>
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>EH & S Engineer</i>	<i>Eden, NC</i>
<i>Sr. Loss Control Consultant</i>	<i>Berkley Mid-Atlantic Group</i>	<i>Unknown</i>
<i>Health, Safety, Environ- Mental & Security</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>South Carolina</i>
<i>Risk Control Rep.</i>	<i>Church Mutual Insurance</i>	<i>NC, SC, & VA</i>

Please contact Elesa Hurley or Javonn Peaks if you would like to list an opening here and on our website. Check the website for more details if you are interested.

Upcoming Meetings

Mark your calendar now for these upcoming events!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
9/29	HAZWOPER Training	8-5	Gboro Coliseum
9/30	LEPC/ASSE PDC	7:30—3:30	Gboro Coliseum
10/20	ASSE Meeting Dennis Parnell, NCIC	Noon	Logan's Roadhouse
11/17	ASSE Meeting (Joint Meeting with ACHMM) Todd Beck, R F Micro	5:30 PM	American Express

Watch your e-mail and our website for more information

Lunch meetings—Networking at 11:30, Lunch at 12:00.

Evening Meetings—Networking at 5:30 PM, Dinner at 6:00 P.M.

OSHA to Begin National Emphasis Program on Recordkeeping

Starting next month (August), OSHA will begin its new National Emphasis Program (NEP) on injury and illness recordkeeping with recordkeeping inspections being conducted at employers' establishments with low incidence rates in historically high rate industries, as well as inspections of a sample of construction firms. The NEP was developed after last year's Congressional hearings on the perceived problem of injury and illness underreporting, and is consistent with Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis' more enforcement-oriented approach to occupational safety and health. The inspections will be conducted over the next twelve months, and it is anticipated that the NEP will be expanded after the initial data is analyzed. Although the NEP is limited to states under federal OSHA's jurisdiction, **state plan OSHA programs [like Virginia's VOSH & North Carolina's program] are encouraged to conduct their own recordkeeping enforcement initiatives.**

The inspections will include a review of medical files for both occupational and non-occupational cases for 2007 and 2008, including 301 forms, Workers' Compensation forms, absentee reports, and audiograms, for a selected sample of employees. Compliance Officers will also interview employees and members of management to determine both whether the employer has an effective system in place for reporting injuries and whether incentive programs discourage employees from reporting new cases. Facility recordkeepers will be questioned to determine their level of training and knowledge of the recordkeeping regulations, and health care providers will be asked whether the employer has tried to influence the treatments provided and the recordability of cases. In addition, a limited walk-around inspection of the employer's facility will be conducted to determine if the hazards in the facility are consistent with the injuries and illnesses on the 300 Log, and citations may be issued for any violations that are observed.

To prepare for these inspections, we recommend that employers (1) review the cases that occurred in 2007 and 2008 to determine the accuracy of their OSHA 300 Logs and make sure there is an OSHA 301 or its equivalent for every recordable case; (2) ensure that their recordkeepers have been properly trained; (3) review the effectiveness of both the system for reporting injuries and illnesses and the routing of pertinent medical information from internal and external health care providers to the recordkeeper, and (4) if there is a safety incentive program, evaluate whether the safety incentives improperly discourage the reporting of work-related injuries or illnesses.

Scholarships & Grants Available

Dear ASSE Member:

The **American Society of Safety Engineers Foundation** is pleased to present the [2010 Scholarship Program](#) for students pursuing degrees in occupational safety, health and the environment. This year we are offering more than \$100,000 in scholarships and professional development grants.

Visit our website at <http://www.asse.org/foundation/scholarships/scholarships.php> for a list of awards, to download an application and to review our most "Frequently Asked Questions".

Applications are due **December 1, 2009** and award recipients will be announced on or around April 1, 2010. We encourage you to apply, so be sure to review the eligibility guidelines first.

Good luck!

Mary Goranson

Manager, ASSE Foundation

2008-2009 Triad Chapter Officers

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Professional Development Opportunities

LEPC/ASSE PDC, September 29-30, 2009, Greensboro, NC

(Don't Miss HAZWOPPER training on 9/29/09 for a nominal fee)

2009 Leadership Conference, October 1-3, 2009, Lombard, IL

Proactive Safety Management High Impact Workshops,

November 12-13, 2009, Miami FL

Seminarfest, February 14-20, 2010, Las Vegas, NV

Safety 2010, June 13-16, 2010, Baltimore, MD

Check out www.ASSE.org for more details!

