



HEALTH & SAFETY

A NEWSLETTER FOR NYSUT'S HEALTH AND SAFETY LEADERS

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NYSUT VP Kathleen Donahue (center) is flanked by Lockport EA members Candy LaRue (left) and Patti King-Walter.

Free health and safety training available for NYSUT locals

Did you know NYSUT provides health and safety training directly to locals in regions across the state? This training is partially funded with a grant from the state Department of Labor.

Education is one of NYSUT's frameworks, the five imperatives that drive the union's advocacy. Providing continuing education and professional development opportunities to members is an important part of NYSUT's mission.

The many health and safety-related training topics include: laws and regulations, indoor environmental quality, science safety, asbestos hazards, working with children with special needs and workplace/school violence.

"NYSUT is pleased to provide these training sessions for NYSUT health and safety activists," said NYSUT VP Kathleen Donahue, whose office oversees health and safety issues for the

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— Kathleen Donahue
NYSUT vice president

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Contact your NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist through your regional NYSUT office to request training for your local with

NYSUT Health and Safety Specialist Wendy Hord. NYSUT can help you gain the knowledge needed to tackle the challenges of getting a safer and healthier workplace.



Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education and health care
For more, see www.nysut.org.

INSIDE

**Deadline for 9/11
Victims Compensation Fund**
Page 3

**Healthy purchasing for
healthy schools**
Page 4

Web resources
Pages 5-6

FREE

NYSUT Education & Learning Trust



nysut Education & Learning Trust

Advance your career. Refresh your mind.

Health and safety training available

NYSUT's Education & Learning Trust continues to offer teacher and SRP health and safety training at NO cost to locals.

- Engaging the Disruptive Student
- Addressing Aggressive Student Behavior in Schools
- Supporting Students with Autism
- Disability Awareness
- Dealing with Difficult Students

These programs are made possible by a partnership with NYSUT's Safety and Health training program, which is partially funded by a grant from the state Department of Labor.

Contact ELT for more information and to secure your professional development today. Call 800-528-6208 or see www.nysut.org/elt.



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HEALTH & SAFETY

Health & Safety is a newsletter published periodically for New York State United Teachers' Health and Safety Committee members. NYSUT locals and staff have permission to reprint all *Health & Safety* content.

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Preparing for the



HURRICANE SEASON

From SED Office of Facilities Planning

Since recent hurricane seasons have become more destructive and costly, the SED Office of Facilities Planning released some simple tips that all workplaces should follow:

- Document your buildings, grounds and vehicles. Take photos of owned assets, including computers and other equipment, boiler and ventilation systems, kitchen equipment, labs, libraries, music rooms, etc.
- Update emergency contact lists, files and records. Ensure the

building-level emergency plan, including current schematics, is up-to-date. Store a copy of the plan, including photos, off-site.

- Don't store critical documents, like student and personnel records, in areas likely to be flooded. If water is rising, move files to an area on an upper floor or other location where they will be secure.
- Move computers and other equipment away from windows and cover them in plastic sheeting.

To get additional information about planning for hurricanes, visit: www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/.

Free medical screening and treatment for illnesses related to Sept. 11

Tens of thousands of union members who worked, volunteered or lived near Ground Zero in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks are eligible for free medical screening, treatment and medication. But many may not realize these resources are available.

On Sept. 11, 2001, union members from New York state and around the country responded to the emergency at Ground Zero and worked in the recovery and cleanup efforts, which continued for many months. Thousands more worked, lived or went to school, day care or elder care facilities in the surrounding polluted area in the months that followed.

Now, more than a decade after the attacks, many union brothers and sisters are sick with persistent coughs, asthma and even cancer from exposure to the toxins released by the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. Many more may be at risk of 9/11-related illnesses — without even knowing it.

When New York City police detective James Zadroga died of a respiratory disease after participating in rescue and recovery operations, his death was attributed to exposure to toxic chemicals at the attack site.

With advocacy from the state AFL-CIO, the national AFL-CIO and affiliated unions from around the country, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 was signed into law in early 2011. The Act established the World Trade Center Health Program, which offers free medical screening and treatment to those who may be at risk or suffering from ill-



nesses due to exposure to toxins from the attacks.

If you were in the Sept. 11 dust cloud, even for a short time; were in downtown Brooklyn or in Manhattan (south of Houston Street) in the months after the attacks; or worked or volunteered in the cleanup and recovery efforts, the New York Committee for Occupational Safety And Health (NYCOSH) has information about the free health monitoring and treatment that is available to you as a survivor or responder through the WTC Health Program.

Spread the word

Spread the word about this program to your members. Go to <http://nycosh.org>.

[org/wtc/](http://nycosh.org/wtc/) for more information.

The state AFL-CIO is working with NYCOSH to help unions get the word out to their members. We can provide you with:

- A sample email to send or post on your website
- A link to an application to post on your website
- A sample newsletter article
- Sample informational materials for a mailing
- Sample tweets and Facebook posts
- Speakers who can attend a membership meeting

We must do everything we can to ensure that our union brothers and sisters who may be at risk for or suffering from 9/11-related illnesses know that free screening, treatment and medication is available to them.

To get request materials and to learn more about what your local can do to spread the word, call 855-4WTC-AID (855-498-2243), visit www.nycosh.org or email nycosh@nycosh.org.

Deadline to file for 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund Oct. 3

If a member of your local was injured or made ill by 9/11, he or she may also be eligible for compensation from the federal 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund. However, most injured workers must apply by Oct 3, 2013, to be considered for monetary benefits. Go to www.vcf.gov or call (toll-free) 855-885-1555 for application forms.

Healthy purchasing for healthy schools

New York's Healthy Schools Network in coordination with the Coalition for Healthier Schools has released a guidance document to help schools and other organizations choose less toxic products, equipment and services that have reduced negative impacts on health and the environment. Many may not cost your school more money and may actually save money. Purchasing these types of environmentally preferable products will ensure healthier learning and working environments.

There are several product categories in the guide: Cleaning supplies, office equipment, interior wall and

ceiling paints, office supplies, art supplies and furniture. Each category briefly outlines risks of traditional products and gives recommendations for less toxic

alternatives.

The guide also has a section on using cooperative purchasing programs to help save time and money. Samples of green purchasing

policies are shown to help employers create and adopt their own policies and purchasing specifications.

"This guide is an important tool to help folks screen and find safer, healthier alternatives," said Claire Barnett, executive director of the Healthy Schools Network. "This points people to resources that have already weeded out products that are 'greenwashed' — said to be 'safer' but really aren't."

The memo is available online at www.healthy-schools.org/documents/CHS_healthyshoppinghealthy-schools.pdf.



CDC's new iPad app "Solve the Outbreak" allows you to be the disease detective!

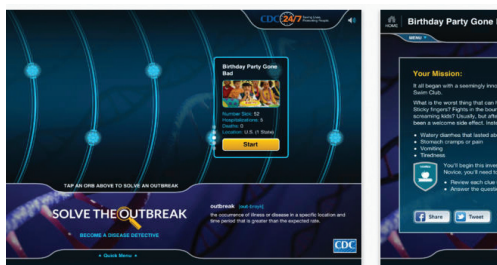
New outbreaks happen every day, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s disease detectives are on the front lines, working 24/7 to save lives and protect people. When new outbreaks happen, disease detectives are sent in to figure out how they started before they can spread. In CDC's new interactive app you get to decide what to do: Do you quarantine the village? Talk to the people who are sick? Ask for more lab results?

The better your answers, the higher your score — and the more quickly you'll save lives. You'll start out as a trainee and will earn badges by solving cases, with the goal of earning the top rank: disease detective. Perfect for teens, young adults

and public health nerds of all ages, Solve the Outbreak is a great way to take the study of epidemiology outside the classroom.

- Learn about diseases and outbreaks in an engaging way.
- See how disease detectives save lives around the world.
- Try your hand at solving an outbreak.
- Post your scores on Facebook or Twitter and challenge your friends to do better.

Download the free app today at www.cdc.gov/Features/SolveTheOutbreak/



Free online violence prevention training for nurses

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) together with other organizations, developed a new, free online course aimed at training nurses in recognizing and preventing workplace violence. The multimedia training incorporates videos depicting workplace violence incidents, testimonials from real nurses, and module quizzes. Nurses can also receive free continuing education credits for completing the online course.

The course was evaluated by 204 members of the American Nurses Association (ANA).

It is available on the NIOSH website at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence/.



Updated diabetes resource guide for families and schools available

Published by the state Department of Health, *Children with Diabetes: A Resource Guide for Families and Schools* provides comprehensive, up-to-date resources that help children with diabetes succeed in the school setting. It has practical tools and important information for school personnel, allowing children with diabetes to participate fully and safely in the school setting.

It provides an explanation of the difference between Type 1 diabetes and Type 2 diabetes, an explanation of

504 accommodations and the diabetes medical management plans and more. It also addresses the serious issues of childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes in children, and provides promising strategies to reduce risk.

Find it at: <http://schoolhealthservicesny.com/>. Click on "D" on the A-Z index and choose "Diabetes Resources."

NY Statewide School Health Services Center (NYSSHSC) provides technical assistance, resources and training to NYS school health professionals.



Guide for developing high-quality school emergency operations plans

FEMA, in collaboration with the U.S. departments of education, homeland security and others, developed this guide to help schools develop and improve their emergency operations plans (EOP).

Districts and individual schools should compare existing plans and processes against the content and processes outlined in this guide.

The guide is organized in four sections:

1. The principles of school emergency management planning.
2. A process for developing, implementing, and continually refining a school EOP with community partners (e.g., first responders and emergency management personnel).
3. A discussion of the form, function and content of school EOPs.
4. A Closer Look," which considers key topics including addressing an active shooter, school climate, psychological first aid, and information-sharing.

Find it at: http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf

■ **FEMA funds 'Disaster Hero'** online video game for PC and Mac Disaster Hero is a free online game designed to teach students in grades 1-8, educators, and parents and caregivers how to prepare for disasters. Players are encouraged to learn about the types of disasters that might occur in their geographic region or state. The most common disasters — earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes — are used to teach users how to prepare for, and what to do during and after an emergency event.

Downloadable learning activities and checklists targeted to educators and parents are also available on the web-site. Visit www.disasterhero.com to play.



MATCH – Metadata Access Tool for Climate and Health

MATCH is a publicly accessible, online tool for researchers that offers centralized access to metadata — standardized contextual information — about thousands of government-held datasets related to health, the environment and climate-related science. MATCH is one of a growing number of tools, driven by open data, that are being made available by the Obama administration as fuel for innovation, ideas and insights — in this case, at the important intersection of climate and human health. MATCH includes:

- Monitoring and surveillance data sets
- Early warning systems
- Tools for characterizing the health impacts of global climate change

<http://match.globalchange.gov/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page>

Kick start the new school year with good IAQ by taking these simple actions! From EPA's Tools for Schools

Some school districts used the summer months to assess, resolve and prevent indoor air quality (IAQ) issues in school buildings so that students, teachers and staff, returned to clean and healthy classrooms.

If your district has not completed this process, it is not too late. Your facilities

and maintenance staff, health and safety committee members and other IAQ team members, can locate, fix and evaluate IAQ issues throughout the school year by using the Tools for Schools online action kit, available on the Environmental Protection Agency website (see below).

Conducting a building walkthrough

can give your team members a good overview of the existing conditions that affect the school air quality. The website has step-by-step information on how to prepare for and conduct a building walkthrough. There is also information about how to develop an IAQ program for your school and the frameworks to do so.

Tips to get started:

1 Learn about the six technical solutions to the common IAQ problems schools face. This section shows the day-to-day actions and effective maintenance that can help a school achieve the goals of its IAQ management plan.

2 Personalized checklists are available for school nurses, teachers, custodians and other staff. You can also view videos about school IAQ walkthroughs to help your team prepare for the building assessment.

3 Measure your program's impact by monitoring metrics, such as the number of IAQ complaints, the cost of IAQ-related repairs, the difference in school nurse visits, attendance and student test scores over time. Assessing the impact of your IAQ management program on student health and achievement is a critical step toward constantly improving your program and maximizing your return on investment.

4 Use the communications guide to inform your community about IAQ's role in student and staff performance, attendance and productivity.

The EPA also offers guidance on how to share what you learned about your school with your school district and community to gain support and recognition for the IAQ management program.

Visit the IAQ Tools for Schools website at www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/index.html for more tips, best practices and real-world examples of school districts that have successfully used these tips.



Back-to-school guide to PVC-free school supplies available

Visit the Center for Health and Environmental Justice's (CHEJ) site to download their updated back-to-school guide for PVC-free school supplies for this school year.

The sixth annual guide features the best tips to avoid phthalate-laden vinyl plastic in popular children's school supplies in more than 40 product categories, from backpacks and binders to laptops and lunch boxes. CHEJ staff scoured the Internet and store shelves to find the latest and best PVC-free products available for your family. The 2013 guide serves to empower parents, teachers and consumers across the country to find safer school supplies.

The site has a new wallet-sized version to print and take to the store.



Why shop for PVC-free school supplies?

Vinyl is the most toxic plastic on the planet. For the lifetime of a product (from production, to use, to disposal) vinyl uses and releases hazardous chemicals linked to asthma, cancer and birth defects that are building up in our children's bodies and our food supply. CHEJ's research has uncovered elevated levels of toxic phthalates in common school supplies.

Find it at: <http://chej.org/backtoschool2013/>

Updated asbestos manual available!

The NYSUT manual Asbestos: Rules and Regulations Controlling Exposure has been updated to reflect changes to New York's Asbestos Code Rule 56, which has major oversight for asbestos work done in public and private sectors in the state.

The purpose of the rule is to reduce the public health risks associated with asbestos exposure during removal, encapsulation, enclosure or disturbance of asbestos, or the handling of asbestos material. The manual also outlines the requirements of the OSHA Asbestos standard and the federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, which protects students and school employees from asbestos exposure.

Visit www.nysut.org/healthandsafety to download the manual.