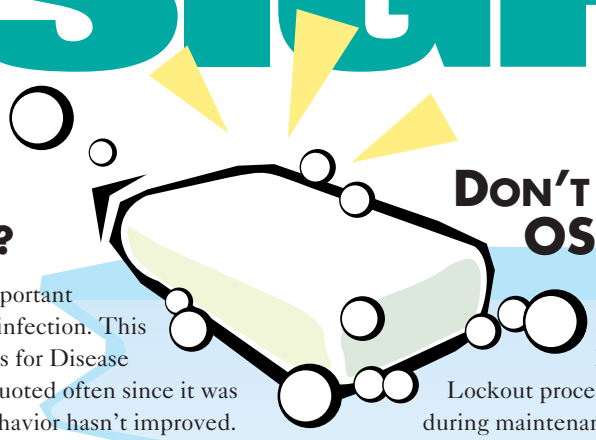
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INSIGHTS

Vol. XIII No. 6, June 2001

Handwashing
How important is it?



Handwashing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection. This statement from the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been quoted often since it was made in 1990, but handwashing behavior hasn't improved. In fact, it has worsened.

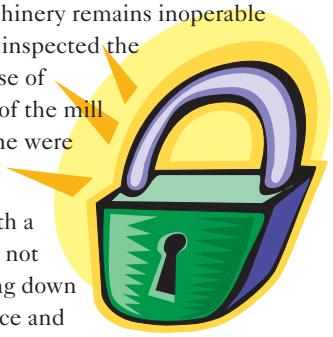
The American Society of Microbiology (ASM) recently repeated a survey on handwashing that it had originally conducted in 1996. According to the study, 95% of men and women surveyed say they wash their hands after using a public restroom, only 67% of people actually do. In observations in five cities around the country, ASM reported that handwashing frequency has declined – even more among men than women.

Pareto Analysis tells us that 20% of the causes result in 80% of the problems, and that these 20% should be addressed first. HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) gives us the same message: focus on the points in the flow of food production and handling where a simple control can prevent the contamination of food. Addressing improper or neglected handwashing, which causes about half of all foodborne illness, might help reduce a primary source of contamination.

Handwashing involves soap, and ChemStation has formulated a sanitizing hand soap you may want to consider. It's available in a clear form or dyed with D&C Orange #4…can be unscented or scented with Irish Spring…whatever combination suits you. If you would like more information, give your ChemStation representative a call. ■

Source: AAMP

Don't Mess with OSHA's Lockout Rule



OSHA is serious about punishing violations of its lockout rules, a fact that was learned the hard way by a paper manufacturer in Alabama. Lockout procedures ensure that machinery remains inoperable during maintenance and repair. OSHA inspected the facility in question after an accidental release of hydrogen sulfide gas caused an evacuation of the mill and sent six employees to the hospital. None were seriously injured.

OSHA subsequently cited the company with a $65,000 proposed penalty because they did not have a written lockout procedure for shutting down hazardous material tanks during maintenance and didn't lock out equipment even though outside contractors had on several occasions warned the company about the necessity of doing so.

Additional penalties totaling $7,650 were imposed for deficiencies in the company's emergency response plan, failing to identify and evaluate respiratory hazards, failing to provide respirators for employees working where hazardous vapors could be generated, not conducting annual audits of the lockout program, and failing to inform outside contractors about hazardous chemicals in their work areas. ■

Source: Environmental Manager's Compliance Advisor

Certified!

ChemStation International is proud to announce that we have another Research Chemist who has completed the Basic Course and the Validation and Verification Course for HACCP Certification. That makes four staff members who are HACCP Certified, providing ChemStation International with a solid base of professionals with certification in the food processing industry. ■

A Look at June

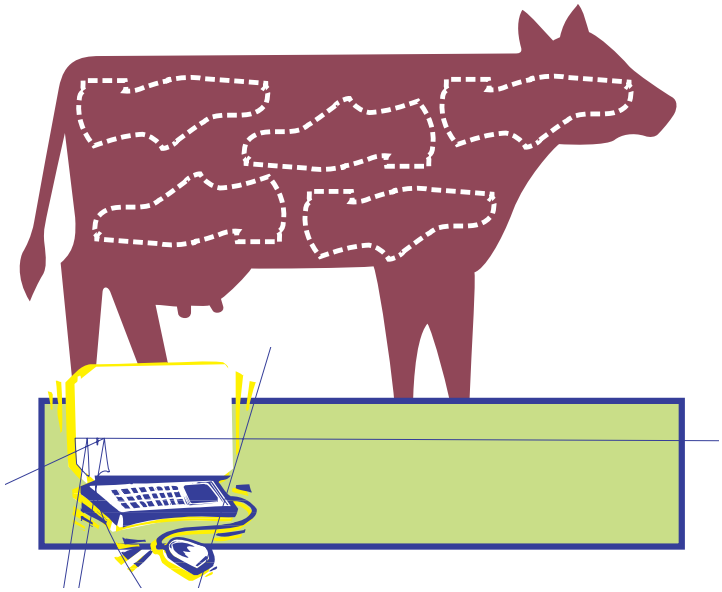


The American Society of Safety Engineers has designated June as Safety Month… so get out there and take a good look at your safety programs. June 6 is the 57th anniversary of D-Day (we'll also see a full moon that night). Display "Old Glory" on June 14 in recognition of Flag Day, and remember your Father on Sunday, June 17 with a new tie, a bottle of shaving lotion, or embrace the fond memories.

Petting Zoos Can Expose Kids to *E. Coli*

Kids visiting petting zoos, or petting animals on farms or at county fairs run the risk of picking up the dangerous bacteria *E. coli* O157:H7, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. CDC said *E. coli* outbreaks last year in Washington and Pennsylvania from farm visits sickened 56 people and led to 19 hospitalizations. The Center said people became infected by touching animals and then putting their hands in their mouths. CDC said managers of zoos and parents should take action to prevent this. Petting zoos should install hand-washing facilities, parents should make their children wash their hands, and stop kids from putting their hands in their mouths after petting animals. ■

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