Diesel Exhaust Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Short-term exposure to high concentrations of diesel exhaust and diesel particulate matter can result in dizziness; headaches; and eye, nose and throat irritation. Prolonged exposure can increase a worker’s risk of cardiovascular, cardiopulmonary and respiratory disease, and lung cancer.
2. Using and being around diesel-powered equipment is a regular part of the job for workers in a variety of industries, including construction, manufacturing, maritime, mining and agriculture.
3. Diesel exhaust contains diesel particulate matter, a component that, according to OSHA, “includes soot particles made up primarily of carbon, ash, metallic abrasion particles, sulfates and silicates.
4. Diesel exhaust particles and gases are suspended in the air, so exposure to this pollutant occurs whenever a person breathes air that contains these substances.
5. The prevalence of diesel-powered engines makes it almost impossible to avoid exposure to diesel exhaust or its by products.
6. People with existing heart or lung disease, asthma or other respiratory problems are most sensitive to the health effects of fine particles, as are children and the elderly.
7. Working near exhaust fumes exposes you to poisonous carbon monoxide (CO) gas, which is present in large amounts in vehicle exhaust fumes. Overexposure to this odorless and colorless gas can cause death.
8. Non-cancer toxicity from chronic exposure to diesel exhaust causes such respiratory ailments as airway restrictions, reduced pulmonary function, and immunological and allergenic reactions. Acute exposure can cause tissue irritation and permanent respiratory damage.

STATS

- A study by the Environmental Health Analytics, LLC has revealed that diesel exhaust gasses can be linked to 38,000 early deaths worldwide. If action isn’t taken, this figure will climb as high as an annual death rate of 183,600 in 23 years.
- 2018 Cancer Care Ontario, Occupational Cancer Research Centre study concluded that diesel engine exhaust exposure affected about 301,000 workers and accounted for 170 lung and a suspected 45 bladder cancer cases each year in the Ontario province alone.