NORA Sector Council Bulletin
Wholesale & Retail Trade

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE FOR A SAFE FUTURE

NIOSH National Center for Productive Aging and Work

NIOSH Opens a Virtual Center: National Center for Productive Aging and Work (NCPAW)

NIOSH introduces a new source for employers in the Wholesale and Retail sector to use as they make plans to employ an older workforce. User-friendly tools and videos are available on the NCPAW website. The tools were developed in collaboration with NIOSH's partners. Employers may use these Wholesale and Retail resources as they reach out to employ productive workers from an aging workforce. The recently published *Designing The Age Friendly Workplace* contains information on Fall Prevention and Universal Design, based on principles of NIOSH's Prevention through Design initiative. Download an Excel Wholesale and Retail Checklist in the Take Action tab.

The new virtual center focuses on worker safety and health at all ages. NIOSH describes productive aging as "…an approach that emphasizes the positive aspects of growing older and how individuals can make important contributions to their own lives, their communities and organizations, and society as a whole."

The mission of NCPAW is to advance the safety and health of workers as they age. The center will also facilitate collaboration among researchers and NIOSH partners, broaden the range of age-related interventions and guidance products, and highlight best practices for creating age-friendly workplaces.

To learn more about this virtual center, visit: http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/productiveaging/default.html.

Health and Productivity: An Emerging Retail Business Strategy

A growing list of studies demonstrate that a company's productivity and profitability are linked to the employer's commitment to programs that promote worker health and safety. One of the more recent studies took place in a particularly challenging work environment, namely, retail distribution centers. Such centers require heavy physical work, and their injury and turnover rates are higher than the norm for large workplaces. Following a thorough employee assessment, the participating workers in two related plants (with 27% and 49% participation rates) were given a well-being report. This report provided each worker with a tailored action plan involving the use of on-site programs such as well-being coaching sessions, financial planning assistance, and weight loss sessions. After the six-month program ended, the participating workers completed the original online productivity and health assessments a second time. Conclusion: Employers who committed to multifaceted interventions for issues related to employee well-being had a clear impact on those participating workers' health and productivity, while also experiencing an increase in company profitability. [Rajaratnam, Sears, Shi, Coberley, Pope. J Occup Environmental Med 2014;56(12):1291–1296.]

Emerging Issues

Use Crowd Management for Large Sales Events

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Taking specific actions to avoid injuries at your workplace is wise wherever or whenever large crowds might gather, especially during the holiday shopping season. Crowd management, pre-event setup, and emergency situation management should be part of all sales event planning. OSHA offers helpful information for employers to use in planning large events.

Crowd Planning

- Contact local fire and police agencies to determine if the event site meets all public safety requirements, and ensure that all permits and licenses are obtained and that local emergency services, including the local police, fire department and hospital, are aware of the event.

- Prepare an emergency plan and train workers in the plan that addresses potential dangers facing workers, including overcrowding, crowd crushing, being struck by the crowd, violent acts and fire. Share your emergency plan with all local public safety agencies.

- Practice the emergency plan with employees. Include local public safety agencies, if appropriate.

Pre–Sales Event

- Set up barricades or rope lines for crowd management away from the immediate entrance, well in advance of customers' arriving at the store.

- Make sure that personnel outside have radios or some other way to communicate with personnel inside the store and with emergency responders.

- Consider using mechanisms such as numbered tickets to provide the earliest customers with first access to sale items. Consider using an online lottery for "hot" items.

- Display sale items in different parts of the store, to prevent overcrowding in one place.

- Give customers updates while they are waiting in line. Have signs showing the store opening times, the location of entrances and exits, and the location of special sale items within the store.

During the Sales Event

- Provide a separate store entrance for staff. Provide door monitors there to prevent crowd entry.

- Plan crowd and entry management measures for all entrances, even ones not usually used. If possible, have more than one entrance for customers.

- When the store reaches maximum occupancy, do not allow additional customers to enter until the occupancy level drops.

- Provide a safe entrance for people with disabilities.

If There is an Emergency

- Do not block or lock exit doors or restrict any means of egress.

- Keep first-aid kits and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) available, and show personnel where these are stored. Make sure your staff has been trained onsite to use AEDs and CPR.

- Instruct employees, in the event of an emergency, to follow instructions from authorized first responders, regardless of company rules.

Planning well ahead of the big event gives your employees and customers a safer and more organized shopping experience.

This is an excerpt from the OSHA Fact Sheet Crowd Management Safety Guidelines for Retailers. You can find the complete document at https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/Crowd_Control.html.