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85 Percent of Safety Professionals Surveyed at NSC Congress Report Observing PPE Noncompliance in the Workplace

Kimberly-Clark Professional Survey Explores Reasons for Noncompliance And Top Workplace Safety Issues

ROSWELL, Ga. (March 12, 2007) – If there is one thing all workplace safety experts agree on it is the need for proper protective equipment when undertaking hazardous tasks.

Yet 85 percent of the safety professionals surveyed by Kimberly-Clark Professional at the National Safety Council (NSC) Congress in November 2006 said they had observed people in their organizations failing to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when they should have been. Nearly half said this had happened on numerous occasions, while 38 percent described these occurrences as infrequent.

In addition:

- 66 percent of safety professionals said PPE compliance was an issue within their organizations.
- 40 percent described it as a “major concern” that they were attempting to correct.
- 57 percent of respondents who observed PPE noncompliance in the workplace said the workers attributed this to poor fit or discomfort.

What was the main reason for noncompliance? A feeling of invulnerability, as in: “An accident won’t happen to me.” This was selected by nearly one third of respondents from a list of choices. It was followed by:

- Lack of awareness of workplace hazards.
- Lack of training on how to don, doff and use PPE.
- Ill-fitting uncomfortable garments.
- Lack of “breathability” and inadequate supplies.

Comfort Most Important Criterion

Survey respondents were also asked about the most important criteria for selecting PPE for workers. The number one response was comfort. This was followed by quality, availability and fit. Price and size selection came in last.

Providing solutions to their problems and meeting their needs were the chief reasons for choosing a company to supply PPE products, according to more than three quarters of respondents. Offering a product bundle for a one-stop shopping experience and delivering head-to-toe protection took second and third place. They were followed by carrying well-known brand name products, just-in-time delivery, and selling specific niche items.

The most important feature in glove selection was “the ability to conduct tasks involving dexterity and/or fine motor skills,” according to nearly one third of respondents. However, 43 percent said all the choices in a list provided to them were equally important. These included “dexterity and/or fine motor skills” as well as fit, cut-resistance, chemical-resistance, working as well in wet conditions as dry, and resistance to pathogens.

“These survey results demonstrate that comfort really does drive compliance,” said Randy Kates, general manager of the Kimberly-Clark Professional Safety Business. “If PPE is uncomfortable or doesn’t fit right, workers may modify or not wear it properly to minimize discomfort, which may then compromise protection.”

Top Workplace Safety Issues

The survey also polled safety professionals about safety issues. The top three workplace issues, selected from a list of choices, were:

- Insufficient management support and/or resources for health and safety functions.
- Under-reporting of workplace injuries and illnesses.
- Worker compliance with safety protocols.

In another question, 43 percent of respondents answered “yes” when asked whether they were concerned about any potential health and safety issues posed by re-usable rental shop towels that may contain chemical residues even after they are “freshly laundered.” Of this group, 21 percent described themselves as “very concerned” and 22 percent said they were “somewhat concerned.” Forty-five percent said they were not concerned about this issue.

Survey Methodology

The survey was undertaken at the NSC Congress in San Diego on November 7, 2006. The survey questionnaires were filled out by 158 safety professionals who reported being responsible for purchasing, selecting or influencing the purchase or selection of, or compliance with, PPE. Respondents were from the following fields: industrial manufacturing, construction, hazmat, emergency response, clean manufacturing, laboratories, medical, health care, military and law enforcement. For full survey results, visit www.kcprofessional.com

About Kimberly-Clark Professional

Kimberly-Clark Professional offers a range of well-known brands and product solutions for workplace settings, Do-It-Yourselfers (DIY) and away-from-home washrooms. Kimberly-Clark Professional workplace products include safety apparel, gloves and related accessories as well as task-engineered wipers for both "clean" and "dirty" manufacturing environments. DIY and professional contractor products include solutions for home improvement and automotive projects that make fixing up and cleaning up fast, easy and efficient. Known for innovative, quality solutions, Kimberly-Clark Professional's pioneering products include Coreless Bath Tissue, JRT* Bath Tissue, the KIMCARE* ALL-N-1 Skin Care System and KIMTECH* Wipers. Kimberly-Clark Professional well-known brands include KLEENEX[®], SCOTT[®], WYPALL*, KIMTECH*, KLEENGUARD* and KIMCARE*. Kimberly-Clark Professional, located in Roswell, Ga., is one of Kimberly-Clark Corporation's (NYSE: KMB) four business segments and can be visited on the web at www.kcprofessional.com.

About Kimberly-Clark

Kimberly-Clark and its well-known global brands are an indispensable part of life for people in more than 150 countries. Every day, 1.3 billion people - almost a quarter of the world's population - trust K-C brands and the solutions they provide to enhance their health, hygiene and well being. With brands such as KLEENEX[®], SCOTT[®], HUGGIES[®], PULL-UPS[®], KOTEX[®] and DEPEND[®], Kimberly-Clark holds the No. 1 or No. 2 share position in more than 80 countries. To keep up with the latest K-C news and to learn more about the company's 135-year history of innovation, visit www.kimberly-clark.com.

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SURVEY RESULTS

Kimberly-Clark Professional Safety Survey
Conducted at NSC Congress
November 7, 2006
Questions 1– 2 and 4-12: 158 Respondents
Question 3: 134 Respondents

1. *Are you responsible for purchasing, selecting, influencing the purchase or selection of, or compliance with, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?*

| | <u>Total</u> |
|-----|--------------|
| Yes | 100% |

2. *Have you ever observed anyone in your organization failing to wear protective apparel or equipment in a situation when they should have been wearing it?*

| | |
|--|------------|
| Yes (Subnet) | 85% |
| Yes, this has happened on numerous occasions | 47% |
| Yes, this has happened infrequently | 38% |
| No, this has not happened | 10% |
| Don't know/None of these | 04% |

3. *If you answered "yes" to the previous question, did the worker or workers mention discomfort or poor fit as the reason for not wearing protective apparel or equipment? If you answered "no," please skip this question.*

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Yes | 57% |
| No | 31% |
| Don't know | 17% |

4. *Which of the following do you consider the MOST important criterion for selecting PPE for workers?*

| | |
|---|-----|
| Comfort | 28% |
| Quality | 17% |
| Availability – getting what you want when you need it | 12% |
| Fit | 10% |
| Price | 08% |
| Selection of sizes | 03% |
| Don't know/None of these | 22% |

5. *When looking for a company to supply you with PPE, which of the following are MOST important to you? Would you say a company that...(Select as many as apply.)*

| | |
|--|-----|
| Provides solutions to your problems and meets your needs | 77% |
| Provides a bundle of products for a one-stop shopping experience | 31% |
| Offers head-to-toe protection | 30% |
| Offers well-known brand name products | 23% |
| Offers just-in-time delivery | 22% |
| Sells specific niche products | 13% |
| Don't know | 02% |

6. *Which of the following do you believe to be the MAIN reason for noncompliance by workers with PPE, such as apparel, gloves, masks, eyewear and accessories?*

| | |
|--|-----|
| A feeling of invulnerability as in: "An accident won't happen to me. | 30% |
| Lack of awareness of workplace hazards | 15% |
| Lack of training on how to don, doff and use properly | 14% |
| Ill-fitting, uncomfortable | 11% |
| Inadequate supplies | 02% |
| Lack of "breathability" | 02% |
| Don't know/None of these | 26% |

7. *When selecting gloves to protect workers, which of the following features is MOST important to you?*

| | |
|--|-----|
| Ability to conduct tasks involving dexterity and/or fine motors skills | 32% |
| Fit | 09% |
| Cut-resistance | 03% |
| Resistance to chemicals | 02% |
| Work as well in wet conditions as dry | 01% |
| Resistance to pathogens | * |
| All of these | 43% |
| Don't know/None of these | 09% |

8. *Which of the following BEST describes your experience with getting workers to comply with recommended personal protective apparel protocols?*

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <u>Is a problem (Subnet)</u> | <u>66%</u> |
| It is a major concern and you are looking for ways to improve compliance | 39% |
| It is a minor problem | 27% |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <u>Not a problem (Subnet)</u> | <u>30%</u> |
| Not really a problem; compliance is generally good | 27% |
| Not a problem at all | 04% |
| Don't know/ None of these | 04% |

9. *Are you concerned about any potential health and safety issues posed by re-usable rental shop towels that may contain chemical residues even after they are “freshly laundered”?*

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Yes (Subnet)</u> | <u>43%</u> |
| Yes, very concerned | 21% |
| Yes, somewhat concerned | 22% |
| <u>No (Subnet)</u> | <u>45%</u> |
| No, not very concerned | 22% |
| No, not concerned at all | 23% |
| Don't know | 12% |

10. *Which of the following do you consider to be the TOP THREE workplace safety issues?*

| | |
|---|-----|
| Insufficient management support and/or resources for health and safety function | 71% |
| Under-reporting of workplace injuries and illnesses | 58% |
| Worker compliance with safety protocols | 56% |
| Escalating worker compensation costs | 32% |
| Training a multi-lingual, multi-cultural workforce | 27% |
| Substance abuse among workers | 08% |
| Don't know | 12% |

11. *Which of the following do you consider to be the TOP THREE workplace injuries in your organization?*

| | |
|---|-----|
| Muscle strains or sprains | 76% |
| Falls | 57% |
| Accidents involving objects or equipment (as in being struck by or caught in machinery) | 48% |
| Motor Vehicle Accidents | 27% |
| Burns | 16% |
| Dermatitis or other skin disorders | 13% |
| Confined space-related injuries | 06% |
| Don't know | 09% |

12. *Does your organization have a disaster preparedness plan that covers any of the following: natural disasters, bioterrorism, industrial accidents, workplace violence or terrorist acts?*

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Yes, you have a plan in place | 78% |
| <u>No (Subnet)</u> | <u>16%</u> |
| No, but you plan to develop one soon | 09% |
| No, you do not think it's necessary | 01% |
| No, you think it's important, but it's not a high priority | 05% |
| Don't know | 06% |