How to Protect Against Counterfeit Electrical Products
By: ESFI

Every day, counterfeit electrical products are finding their way into our homes, businesses, and public institutions. These fraudulent products pose a serious financial and legal liability to the electrical industry, and they have become a grave safety crisis for our communities - a crisis that requires immediate action.

More than one million counterfeit electrical products, including extension cords, power strips, batteries, and hair dryers, have been recalled in recent years. Perhaps even more shocking, recent statistics from the Gallup Consulting and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimate that 64 percent of counterfeit electrical products in the United States are purchased from legitimate shops and retailers.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and the Electrical Safety Foundation International wants you to know about what you can do to protect yourself and your family against these dangerous and defective counterfeit electrical products.

The North Section has been resurrected and will have its first meeting March 19, 2015. See page 5 for details.
How to Protect Against Counterfeit Electrical Products

The following safety tips provided by ESFI can be used to help people everywhere to identify and avoid these fraudulent products:

- **Use established vendors and authorized retailers.** Purchase electrical products from reputable retailers who obtain their goods from legitimate distributors and authorized manufacturers. Avoid purchasing electrical products at deep discount stores, flea markets, or bargain warehouses.

- **Exercise caution in online transactions.** Do your homework when conducting business online. Be especially wary of purchasing electrical products directly from unknown companies or unauthorized sellers, particularly in countries like China, where counterfeiting is a serious issue.

- **Check for certification marks.** Quality electrical products sold in the United States should be certified by nationally-recognized testing laboratories for safety. Look for certification marks from laboratories such as UL, CSA, or ETL-SEMKO.

- **Scrutinize labels and packaging.** Product packaging and warning labels offer a valuable source of information. Make sure that labels and packaging are free of grammatical errors, and that any information provided is consistent with information elsewhere on the package.

- **Avoid products that lack any identifying brand label or affiliation.** Make sure that the name and contact information of the product manufacturer is clearly displayed on the packaging and/or the product. If this information is missing, then consider an alternative product or retailer.

- **Trust your instincts.** Beware of bargains that seem too good to be true. Counterfeiters often use skimp on materials and key manufacturing steps to cut costs, allowing them to be sold at prices no genuine brand manufacturer can match.

- **Be proactive.** Organizations such as the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) provide up-to-date information about product recalls on their websites.

By working together to promote education and awareness, we can help to prevent the devastating electrical injuries, fatalities, and fires that are being caused by counterfeit electrical products. To learn more about the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) and counterfeit electrical products, visit [www.electrical-safety.org](http://www.electrical-safety.org).

Volunteer Opportunities for Safety 2015

Join ASSE and the thousands of Safety 2015 attendees June 7-10, 2015 in Dallas, Texas. Be a part of the excitement and volunteer some of your time to help make Safety 2015 a success.

Volunteer opportunities will include hotel Greeters and convention center Greeters. In addition, we are always looking for some smiling faces to assist with directing attendees to the lunches and general sessions.

ASSE’s Greet Team Coordinator will contact you to let you know how you can help at the Safety 2015 PDC & Expo!


**YOU MUST BE AN ASSE MEMBER AND A CONFERENCE REGISTRANT TO PARTICIPATE.**
Certification Workshops

In just 3 Days, you can gain the knowledge and the confidence you need to pass your certification exams. Led by the most experienced certification leaders, Langlois, Weigand & Associates, Inc., these intensive three-day programs feature overviews of each of examination domain covered by each BCSP exam. Our leaders will help you assess your current understanding of the content, identify where you need to focus your efforts, help you find the right answer and give you the confidence to pass your exam. BCSP approved scientific calculators will be provided.

**Associate Safety Professional (ASP)**

- **When:** March 31 – April 2
- **Where:** Houston Area Safety Council
  5213 Center Street
  Pasadena, TX 77505
- **Cost:** $575

Register by visiting the events page on our website @ [http://gulfcoast.asse.org](http://gulfcoast.asse.org)

**Day 1**
- AM Introduction, Review of Fundamentals Calculator, Algebra, and Trigonometry
- PM Review of Fundamentals—Physics, Probability, and Statistics

**Day 2**
- AM Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Engineering
- PM Evaluating, and Controlling SHE Hazards

**Day 3**
- AM SHE Training and Management
- PM Business Principles, Practices, and Metrics

**Certified Safety Professional (CSP)**

- **When:** April 28 – April 30
- **Where:** Houston Area Safety Council
  5213 Center Street
  Pasadena, TX 77505
- **Cost:** $625

Register by visiting the events page on our website @ [http://gulfcoast.asse.org](http://gulfcoast.asse.org)

**Day 1**
- AM Probability, Statistics, Engineering Economy
- PM Collecting SHE and Security Risk Information

**Day 2**
- AM/PM Assessing Safety, Health, and Environmental (SHE) and Security Risk

**Day 3**
- AM/PM Managing Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) and Security Risk
The ASSE Gulf Coast Chapter Executive Committee is pleased to announce the start of our election process. At our May 7th, 2015 General Chapter meeting, we will be electing the 2015-2016 Gulf Coast Chapter Executive Committee. If you want to be part of Chapter Leadership, please consider running for a position below.

All elected positions are open and they include:

1. President / Delegate #1 (President)
2. Sr. Vice President of Communications / Delegate #2 (Sr. VP of Communications)
3. Vice President of Member Services / Delegate #3 (VP of Member Services)
4. Secretary / Delegate #4 (Secretary)
5. Treasurer / Delegate #5 (Treasurer)
6. Program Chair / Delegate #6 (Program Chair)
7. Newsletter Chair / Delegate #7 (Newsletter Chair)

To run under the current Bylaws Qualifications you must be a chapter member in good standing and you must be an ASSE member for a year. If you would like to run for a position, please review the elected positions responsibilities in the Bylaws, complete the candidate profile and write a brief Bio summarizing your experience in safety.

Submit your completed form and Bio to: Carrie Atkins – Immediate Past President and Nominations & Elections Committee Chair carrie@hasc.com. Your name and Bio will be used for publication in the Newsletter and Website.

The Candidate Profile (a.k.a. Nomination Form) and Bio must be submitted to Carrie for review no later than March 15th, 2015.

If you are unsure about running for an elected position, please consider volunteering your time on one of the many committees that bring additional value to our chapter membership. As the largest chapter in ASSE, there are plenty of opportunities to strengthen our Chapter by committing to volunteer to serve on a committee.
North Section (NEW!)

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2015
Time: 11:30 AM Market Café Opens (Menu)
12:00-1:00 PM Presentation
Location: 10000 Energy Drive | Spring, TX 77389-4954 (Directions)
Speakers: James “Jim” Shelton – Houston North OSHA Area Office
Topic: OSHA Update and the New Reporting Requirements
Speaker Bio: Jim Shelton has been with the OSHA Houston North Area Office since 1996. In 2004, Jim became the Compliance Assistance Specialist (CAS) for OSHA Houston North Area Office, which is a non-enforcement position within OSHA that is responsible for outreach, training, and assistance. The CAS also provides support to maintain and develop OSHA partnerships and assists on Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) audit teams. Prior to becoming the CAS, Jim was an OSHA inspector and conducted enforcement inspections on hundreds of worksites and investigated numerous workplace fatalities. Mr. Shelton has a Masters’ Degree in Safety Management and a Bachelors’ Degree in Industrial Safety and Industrial Security from Central Missouri State University.
Cost: Free

Gulf Coast General Chapter Meeting

Date: Thursday, April 2, 2015
Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Location: Brady’s Landing, 8505 Cypress Street, Houston, TX
Speakers: Check website for speaker and topic
Topic: Check website for speaker and topic
Cost: $22 (for buffet lunch)

Energy Corridor Section

Date: Thursday, March 12, 2015
Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Location: Wood Group Mustang, Inc. – Stallion Building
17420 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX
Speaker: Bobby Lietz - Snap-on Tools
Topic: Hand Tools Safety & Injury Prevention Strategies
Cost: $15.00 (Includes Lunch)
Section Website: http://gulfcoast.asse.org/energy-corridor-events/

Downtown Section

Date: January through October: on the 4th Thursday of the month
Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Location: Birra Poretti’s
Questions: Sean Roark at skr@promopros.net

Section Meetings, like the General Chapter Meeting, are open to anyone. Members are encouraged to bring co-workers, management, vendors, and other guests.

Please contact Cristal Shie to add your ASSE meeting here.
Boy Scout Fair Volunteers Needed – April 17th & 18th

For over a decade, the ASSE Gulf Coast Chapter has assembled a Health & Safety Team to support the Sam Houston Area Council’s (SHAC) Scout Fair. Over 20,000 Boy Scouts and leaders from sixteen surrounding counties will converge on NRG Arena to display their Scout skills. This year’s theme is “Scouting Around the World” and we are partnering with the Houston Zoo.

The Health & Safety team walks around the event and inspects booths, games and cooking displays. No prior experience is necessary and safety rules will be communicated so you know what to look for at the event. Volunteers are needed for the following dates and times:

- Friday, April 17th @ 7 pm – 10 pm
- Saturday, April 18th @ 9 am - noon
- Saturday, April 18th @ noon- 3 pm

If you are interested in helping please contact Mike Narvaez at 281-509-3443 or e-mail him at mike.narvaez@bp.com. Volunteers always have a great time and will receive a t-shirt and lunch on Saturday.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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Who Should Attend?

The program is designed for industrial, government, and military personnel who are involved in, or responsible for hearing conservation and the dispensing of hearing protection devices. Attendees normally include: industrial hygienists, health and safety personnel, nurses, audiologists, consultants, engineers, medical staff.

Applicants should possess a basic understanding of noise measurement terminology and existing noise legislation, although attendance is open to all who are interested.

Course Description

Administration of a comprehensive and effective hearing conservation/hearing loss prevention program consists of more than merely purchasing and dispensing hearing protectors. Audiometric testing, education and motivation, and program evaluation are but a few of the additional important aspects of an overall program. This seminar will review these issues and others in a practical and realistic manner, providing state-of-the-art recommendations to ensure protection of the worker and compliance with the law.

Emphasis will be placed upon an understanding of how hearing protectors function, how they are tested and rated, how they perform in the real world, and how they affect employees’ ability to function on their jobs. Commercially available products will be discussed with respect to their performance and selection, fit, use, and care. The emerging technique of fit testing will also be explored.

Successful implementation of a program via education, motivation, supervision, and team work, will be stressed. Effective use of annual audiometric testing, identification of standard threshold shifts (STTs), determination of work relatedness, and take-home training skills, will also be examined.

Materials Provided

A folder containing the agenda, copies of the lecturers’ PowerPoint slides and CEU information will be provided.

Continuing Education

Requirements

Full-day attendance and completion of a course evaluation form. A full description of requirements for satisfactory completion of the course is available upon request.

Industrial Hygienists

This course contains 6.5 hours of technical content which can be claimed for CI credit.

Audiologists

AAA

Occupational Health Nurses

The American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN) has approved 6.25 Contact Hours for successful completion of the activity. The American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN) is an accredited approver of continuing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation. AAOHN accreditation does not imply endorsement of the commercial products displayed.

Registration

Register online at: www.3m.com/hearingseminars. Enrollment is limited and must be confirmed in advance. We recommend you submit your registration promptly. For more information contact:

Lisa Kuschel
3M Center 235-2W-70
St. Paul, MN 55144
651-736-1751 (phone)
email: lmkuschel@mmm.com

Please let us know in advance if you have special needs or require an assistive listening device. Acknowledgement of your registration will be made.

This Hearing Seminar is offered at no cost to attendees. Expenses, including breaks and lunch, are paid by 3M (a $300 value!). To adequately plan for food and material costs of our attendees, we ask that you only register for seminars that you are able to attend. Should a need for cancellation arise, we ask that you notify us as soon as possible, so that others may attend in your absence.
Program

7:30 AM  Registration

8:00 AM  Hearing Loss Prevention - The Big Picture
Detection and noise monitoring, health effects related to noise exposure, and human factors that influence program success.

9:00 AM  Break

9:15 AM  Studying for Hearing Tests - Benefits of Reliable Audiometric Test Data
Hearing Loss Prevention Program (HLPP) best practices and practical ideas for program enhancement. Review of common misconceptions and oversights, such as required test frequencies, technician certification, and baseline revision.

10:15 AM  Break

10:30 AM  Recordable Hearing Loss and Determining Work-Relatedness
Definitions and calculation of standard threshold shift (STS), factors in determining work relatedness including contribution of non-occupational exposures, and discussion of case studies.

11:30 AM  Hearing Forward - Future Ears
Training tips and resources with emphasis on the importance of motivation in achieving true HLPP effectiveness.

12:15 PM  Complimentary buffet luncheon

1:15 PM  Hearing Protector Testing, Rating, and Performance
How hearing protection devices (HPDs) work, laboratory test procedures, rating systems, factors that influence how well they work and workplace fit testing as a best practice.

2:15 PM  Break

2:30 PM  Selection, Fitting and Care Of HPDs
Review of popular products sold today, proper fitting techniques, guidance on HPD selection and use, and answers to frequently asked questions.

3:15 PM  Communicating In Noise
Effects of hearing protectors on the audibility of speech and other sounds, tips for communicating, specialized HPDs to enhance face-to-face, wireless, and 2-way radio communication.

4:00 PM  Administrative issues and Education Applications
Evaluations and Education applications

4:15 PM  Adjourn

Faculty

Ted Madison, M.A., CCC-A
Ted Madison is a Technical Service Specialist for the 3M Personal Safety Division providing technical support, education and training in hearing loss prevention and hearing protection. He received a Master’s degree in Audiology from The University of Iowa in 1984. Currently, Ted is the Chair of the Publications Committee of the Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation (CAOHC) and is a CAOHC-certified course director at the Midwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety at the University of Minnesota. The National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA) awarded Ted with Michael Beall Threadgill Award for outstanding leadership and distinguished service in 2008 and its Outstanding Lecture Award in 2002. He is a Past President of NHCA, a certified member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), a fellow of the American Academy of Audiology (AAA), and a representative of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) to the ANSI S3 Bioacoustics committee. When time allows, Ted brings his passion for hearing loss prevention into the classroom as a Dangerous Decibels™ educator, teaching young people about the joys of hearing and encouraging them to make healthy hearing choices.

Laurie Wells, Au.D.
Laurie Wells is a board-certified audiologist and Senior Acoustics Regulatory Affairs Specialist for 3M Personal Safety Division. She received her Master’s degree from University of Arizona and her clinical doctorate degree from Salus University School of Audiology. Laurie is a Certified Professional Supervisor of the Audiometric Monitoring Program©. She provided audiology review, audiometric database analysis, assessment of hearing protection devices, employee/employer education, and employee noise exposure assessment for hearing conservation programs both large and small. Laurie is a Vice Chair of Education for the Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation (CAOHC) and has taught numerous CAOHC courses, graduate audiology courses, and made frequent presentations at professional conferences. Laurie is past-president of the National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA), and served on the NHCA board from 1999-2007. She has been awarded both the Michael B. Threadgill Award and the Outstanding Speaker award by the NHCA. She is a member of the Acoustical Society of America, American Academy of Audiology, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and Colorado Academy of Audiology.

Relevant financial and nonfinancial relationships:

Ted Madison, Instructor, employed by 3M
Disclosure: Financial - Technical Service Specialist at 3M, a manufacturer of hearing protection products. Salary and travel expenses are paid by 3M. Nonfinancial - No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.

Laurie Wells, Instructor, employed by 3M.
Disclosure: Financial - Senior Acoustics Regulatory Affairs Specialist at 3M, a manufacturer of hearing protection products. Salary and travel expenses are paid by 3M. Nonfinancial - No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.

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