

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS WATCHDOG

ARE YOUR POSTERS CURRENT?

Recently a member was cited for not displaying required 2007 federal and state labor law posters. If you don't have them at hand, you can get them from us.

For the past two years, we have made available these notices in a handsome, laminated two poster set for all your compliance requirements: combines all 19 state and federal notices (24" x 39") and industry specific wage orders #1, manufacturing, and #4, administrative (24" x 39"); we also have the unchanged but required Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (8½" x 11"), in case you don't have one.

The posters are attorney-approved and, as we have said, meet all your general state and federal posting requirements. The set is available to PIC members for the well-below market price of \$49.80, which includes shipping material, postage, and tax.

Some companies may be required to post additional notices depending on their operation, such as forklift safety, safe lifting, and lockout/tagout. We have those also.

To order posters, call Genie Medrano at 323-728-9500, Ext. 211.

CHINESE PAPER SANCTIONS

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced its preliminary decision to apply U.S. anti-subsidy law to paper imports from China. The

CLEANUP SOLVENT UPDATE

The clock continues to tick as we approach the deadline (December 31, 2007) that lithographic printers will not be able to use roller and blanket wash over 100 grams per liter.

On Wednesday, April 25, 2007, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) will hold a meeting to discuss solvent cleaning operations for lithographic printing. One purpose of the meeting is to update the Technical Advisory Group of the on-going testing on the lithographic clean-up solvents by PIC and the printing industry.

A second purpose of the meeting is to hear what the SCAQMD expects of the industry come December 31, 2007.

The meeting will be held in Room GB at SCAQMD Headquarters, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765.

If you have any questions, please contact Gerry Bonetto at (323) 728-9500, Ext. 248.

decision alters a 23 year old bipartisan policy of not applying the countervailing duty (CVD) law to non-market economy countries.

The preliminary decision determined that Chinese producers and exporters of coated free sheet paper received countervailing subsidies from 10.90 to 20.35 percent. From 2005 to 2006, imports of coated free sheet paper from China increased by 177 percent in volume, and were valued at an estimated \$224 million in 2006.

In October 2006, NewPage Corporation asked the Department of Commerce to reconsider its longstanding policy of not applying the anti-subsidy law to China. In the petition NewPage alleged that several Chinese companies were recipients of subsidies such as tax breaks, debt forgiveness, and low-cost loans.

The Department of Commerce also announced preliminary determination in the countervailing duty investigations on imports of coated free sheet paper from Korea and Indonesia.

Commerce determined that Korean and Indonesian producers received countervailing subsidies ranging from 0.04 to 1.76 percent and 21.24 percent, respectively.

Commerce commonly applies anti-dumping and countervailing duty law at the same time; 30 out of the 35 current countervailing orders are paired with a dumping order.

The ruling now goes to the International Trade Commission for a final decision on or about June 13, 2007, although the deadline can be postponed through mid-October.



Affiliated
Associations:

Printing Industries of California

Printing Industries of Northern California www.pinc.org

Printing Industries Assn. Inc. of Southern California www.piasc.org

Printing Industries Assn. of San Diego, Inc. www.piasd.org

(323) 728-9500

(415) 495-8242

(323) 728-9500

(858) 571-6555

PIC SUPPORTS FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS

PIC supports AB 510 (Benoit, R-Bermuda Dunes) which will let individual employees achieve greater flexibility in work schedules — something survey after survey shows employees want in a job.

The bill will permit an individual employee, with the consent of his or her employer, to work up to 10 hours per day within a 40-hour workweek without overtime pay. Overtime premium pay still would be required for more than 10 hours of work in a workday or 40 hours in a workweek, as would double-time after 12 work hours in a day.

Current California law requires that overtime compensation be paid for work performed by an employee in excess of eight hours in a single day, regardless of whether the employee works fewer than 40 hours in that week.

California is one of only four states that require overtime compensation for salaried, non-exempt employees on total hours worked per day rather than total hours worked per week.

Under current California Industrial Welfare Commission wage orders, employers may institute alternative work schedules only if the affected employees agree to the arrangement in writing and by secret ballot.

Employers must hold discussion meetings at least 14 days before voting. Two-thirds of the company's employees must agree to the change. Any deviation from the rigidly controlled process voids the election.

WORKERS COMP ACTIVITY

On March 30th the Assembly Insurance Committee held an informational hearing on how workers' compensation reform legislation has impacted temporary and permanent disability. Four years ago, SB 899 (Poochigian, R-Fresno) established historic reforms to the high-cost workers' compensation system, including new

OTHER CLEANUP SOLVENT ACTIVITY

Both the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) plan to amend their cleanup solvent standards for roller and blanket wash before the end of summer 2007. (Regulation 8, Rule 20 and Rule 4607, respectively). Draft rules mirror the standards set in the South Coast air district (Rule 1171). Currently those standards are as follows:

- 500 grams per liter—hand wipe blanket and roller cleanup
- 650 grams per liter—automatic systems for blanket and roller cleanup
- 650 grams per liter—UV/EB hand wipe and automatic for blanket and roller wash
- Exemption for the cleaning of metering rollers, dampening rollers and printing plates.

These are, however, interim limits. The South Coast rule calls for the adoption of 100 grams per liter limits for all lithographic processes on December 31, 2007.

While the SJVAPCD proposes to phase in the 100 gram per liter limits in 2009 or 2010, the BAAQMD plans to adopt the 100 gram per liter standard immediately.

We continue to interact with both districts to craft an equitable approach to achieving lower VOC limits, particularly supporting the SJVAPCD approach over that of the BAAQMD.

medical-fee schedules, uniform guidelines on treatment and a new objective formula to calculate permanent disability benefits (PD). Prior to these reforms, claims were increasing, employers were paying out for higher medical costs and businesses could no longer afford the premiums for workers' comp insurance.

Assembly member Joe Coto (D-San Jose), Chair of the Insurance Committee, requested a report from the California Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation (CHSWC) to inform the discussion on legislation to be heard in his committee this year. Judge Lachlan Taylor from CHSWC reviewed with the committee some of the immediate cost savings industry has been able to obtain with the new reforms. One dramatic statistic was the 50% drop in the dollar value of PD awards.

Later in the hearing, an employer panel recognized the cost savings and felt that the reforms were going in the right direction, while a labor and applicant attorneys' panel disagreed and testified that reforms were illegitimately driving down benefits and providing cost savings

to employers at the expense of injured workers.

Of particular concern to the committee were the new caps on the number of weeks an injured worker can receive temporary disability. After the passage of SB 899, the number of weeks for TD went from 240 to 104. It was pointed out that Assembly member John Benoit (R-Palm Desert) has introduced AB 1341 which attempts to address the concerns surrounding these caps and seeks common ground between the stakeholders.

Currently there are two spot bills (AB 338 by Coto and SB 936 by Senate Speaker Pro Tempore Don Perata) that might adjust the current PD rating system and the fee schedule.

At the same time, an initiative has been submitted to the Attorney General for the 2008 ballot that would reverse practically all the steps taken to reform this complicated and expensive system. The Legislative Analyst Office has already indicated that this initiative would result in billions of dollars in additional cost.