

Safety Snapshot: EHS Essentials

JULY 2025



Fast, focused safety insights to help your team prevent incidents before they happen

What Top Teams Know: Five IH Insights That Drive Stronger Safety

How Small Exposure Assessments Can Make a Big Difference in Health, Safety, and Retention

You're meeting compliance standards, but your team still reports fatigue, discomfort, and frustration you can't explain.

That's where Industrial Hygiene (IH) assessments come in. Done right, IH reveals subtle, behind-the-scenes stressors that quietly impact your people and performance.

In this issue, we spotlight **five overlooked exposure risks** that can erode health, morale, and retention, and show how small, targeted IH actions led to measurable improvements in real facilities like yours.

1. Exposure levels that are compliant but still causing discomfort

Employee exposures are below occupational exposure limits, but workers still report discomfort or concerns.

What to do:

- Follow the ALARA principle (As Low As Reasonably Achievable)
- Use the hierarchy of controls to reduce exposures as much as reasonably possible
- Use ACGIH TLVs as your primary exposure limits
- Share changes and results to build trust

Bottom line: *Comfort and peace of mind matter. "Compliant" isn't always safe enough.*

2. Heat Stress in Unexpected Places

Indoor roles like warehousing or PPE-heavy work can quietly create dangerous heat loads, even in mild weather.

What to do:

- Use WBGT monitoring, not just air temp
- Train leaders to spot signs like confusion or irritability
- Factor heat risk into work planning

Bottom line: *Heat stress is year-round and situational — not just a summer issue.*

3. Noise Exposure...It Adds Up!

Noise-induced hearing loss occurs after prolonged exposure to high levels of noise. Even short bursts of intense noise can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss.

What to do:

- Identify areas or tasks where employees may be exposed to noise levels above 80 dBA
- Use personal dosimetry to track shift exposure
- Take action if TWA levels exceed 85 dBA
- Implement controls to reduce noise sources

Bottom line: *Noise impacts more than hearing — it affects focus, reaction time, and safety.*

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4. Ergonomics in “Low-Risk” Jobs

Desk jobs and lab work often cause static strain, discomfort, and long-term injuries that go unnoticed.

What to do:

- Review posture, setup, and repetitive motions
- Offer low-cost tools like monitor risers and footrests
- Encourage microbreaks and rotations

Bottom line: *Small ergonomic changes boost comfort, focus, and retention.*

5. Outdated Chemical Use Assumptions

Processes change, but exposure reviews often don't. That's how safe materials become risky.

What to do:

- Recheck chemical risks quarterly
- Don't rely on SDS alone — consider application and duration
- Look for safer alternatives and train staff to flag changes

Bottom line: *Assumptions create blind spots. Update your hygiene plan before risks escalate.*

One Big Mistake Most IH Programs Make

Industrial hygiene is often seen as a checkbox, not a strategy. PPE tends to be treated as the first, rather than last, line of defense.

The most effective teams do one key thing differently:

They connect exposure data to real outcomes. Instead of just asking, “Are we within limits?” they ask:

- Are health exposures controlled as well as possible?
- Do we have a calculated approach to reducing exposures?
- Are our employees healthy and comfortable doing their jobs?

This shift in mindset turns IH into a performance driver, not just a safety measure. If you want a healthier, more focused, more loyal workforce, **stop chasing thresholds and start tracking impact.**

Where DEKRA Can Help

We help companies like yours go beyond the basics and uncover the subtle risks that slow your people down, drive up complaints, and quietly chip away at performance.

Our IH services include:

- Exposure monitoring for air, noise, heat, and chemicals
- Ergonomic assessments tailored to roles and tasks
- Actionable guidance you can implement immediately

Whether you need spot checks, strategic insight, or full program support, DEKRA can help you protect your people *and* your business.

Let's start the conversation.

Email: osr.info.us@dekra.com

Visit dekra.us/ehs-consulting

This guide shares general safety insights and best practices. Every facility is different, so please consult a qualified professional for guidance specific to your operations.