

WINFORMA

KEEPING YOU INFORMED



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Special points of interest:

- Learn how lean manufacturing and ergonomics create a lean and mean company.
- Employers' workers' comp rates continue to decrease.
- Ergonomics software boosts ergo programs
- Workrite Ergonomics new SwingArm™ offers maximum flexibility

About WINFORMA: Our newsletter is aptly named WINForma, which means Worksite International Network (WIN) Information. The WIN consists of our trained and mentored consultants, employer and insurance clients, physicians and ergonomic product vendors all working together for the same purpose to prevent and manage work injuries more effectively. You will find a variety of articles to interest all of our members.

LEAN AND MEAN ERGONOMICS

One of the most important factors for businesses today is the ability to maintain a competitive advantage. It is essential that businesses run as effectively and efficiently as possible and eliminate wasteful operations that do not add value to their products and services. By doing so, productivity improvements are likely resulting in strategic advantages over the competition. With this in mind, many companies have turned to a combination of *lean manufacturing principles and ergonomics* to assist in reducing wasteful activities and improving productivity, employee health and profits.

The origins of lean are global and stem from Japan, Germany and the United States. The goal of lean is to use the various tools, techniques and concepts to improve quality, cost and delivery in a waste-free manufacturing environment. The purpose is to eliminate all waste or non-valued-added activities from a process over time. Lean is not meant to eliminate people, but to use them more wisely. With this in mind, lean becomes part of a continuous improvement process that drives changes in production and an organization's culture supporting employee ideas and involvement.

In comparing the lean process to an ergonomics process, the goals are not only to improve productivity, but to reduce the risk of

MSDs by eliminating risk factors associated with these disorders. Many risk factors such as force, repetition and awkward postures are the result of inefficient and poorly designed work environments and employee work practices.

When both lean manufacturing and the ergonomics process are combined, the results yield powerful and positive improvements in productivity and reduced injuries and illnesses to a far greater extent than if either process was implemented on its own. A key component of the ergonomics process also includes a participatory approach involving the employees in the process. Employees participate by generating ideas and solutions to eliminate risk factors that make work safer, improve productivity and overall employee comfort.

To explore the *lean and mean ergonomics* philosophy further requires understanding a number of elements used to eliminate waste, inefficiency and unacceptable product quality. Womack & Jones, authors of "Lean Thinking" in 2003 report, "Lean thinking involves the elimination of any human activity which absorbs resources, but creates no value". By the same token, the ergonomics process includes the analysis of work routines to identify movement patterns that are awkward, repetitive and exertional. These patterns often expend far too much human activity resulting in over-use and wasted time in the work process.

Continued on page 2.

CALIFORNIA WORKERS' COMPENSATION UPDATE

This past fall the Insurance Commissioner announced more savings for California employers on their workers' compensation premiums. The savings indicate nearly 27% average cumulative rate cut over the last 2 years. The reforms have also generated savings for insurers, approximately 46% in claims costs from 2002-2005. Prior to the reforms, insurers were paying 87 cents in claim costs/dollar. Now they pay 41 cents/dollar. The overall savings amounts to a \$5 billion/year reduction in workers' compensation costs. Other changes include the addition of more carriers to the market allowing more competitive rates. With all these savings to insurers, employers can expect additional savings in the months to come if the Insurance Commission gets his way. Additional reductions to premiums of 10% to 15% more are anticipated. Some insurers however are more reluctant to reduce rates too quickly as they want to make sure they are reserving enough to pay future claims. For more information visit www.insurance.ca.gov.

Excerpted from Workers' Compensation Report, Sept. 13, 2005, LRP Publications.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **February 20-23, 2006**
Occupational Ergonomics: Work Evaluation and Prevention of Upper Limb and Back Disorders. U of Michigan and Center for Occ Health and Safety., LA. CA. www.umcohse-programs.org
- **February 24-25, 2006**
Ergonomic Job Analysis, same as above.
- **March 1-2 and March 6-7, 2006**
13th Annual California Division of Workers' Compensation Conference to be held in LA and Oakland. For more information, call 866-975-2667 or support@workcompcentral.com
- **March 6-9, 2006**
9th Annual Applied Ergonomics Conference to be held in Orlando, FL. Call IIE at 800-494-0460.
- **March 8, 2006**
Alison Heller-Ono will speak at the ORC Quarterly conference in Sonoma, CA regarding the Kaiser Labor Management Partnership and Ergonomics.

MATERIAL HANDLING TABLES NOW AVAILABLE

The October 2005 issue of the HFES bulletin reported that a revised version of the Manual Material Handling Tables by Stover Snook and Vincent Ciriello is now available at the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety website. The latest update was 1991. The tables provide percentages of male/female populations capable of performing manual material handling tasks without overexertion, rather than maximum acceptable weights and forces. Visit www.libertymutual.com/researchinstitute for more information.

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LEAN AND MEAN ERGONOMICS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

To target areas for improvement, the following lean concepts can be used:

- **Value Stream Mapping** is used to identify all steps involved in the manufacturing of a product or the completion of a service and separates the process into value-essential tasks and non-value added tasks. The map allows you to see how work flows in the process helping to identify non-productive and inefficient activities.
- **Five S** represents sort, straighten, shine, standardize and sustain. This methodology ensures that work areas are systematically kept clean and organized, ensuring employee safety and providing for the foundation on which to build the lean system. **1S**—sorting the necessary from the unnecessary. **2S**—for planning the best place to set items in order. **3S**—for shining, cleaning and identifying items. **4S**—for creating and setting the standard for cleanliness. **5S**—for establishing the discipline to sustain the first 4S's over time.
- **Metrics** are used to gauge and then study the impact of

improvement activities, check results and make changes. Examples include tracking employee productivity and customer delivery defects.

- **Accountability** is essential in holding each department or team accountable for all its own costs.
- **“Kaizen”** - is a Japanese management concept that means incremental change. Key elements include quality, employee involvement, willingness to change and communication.
- **Cross-Training** involves the process of developing employees into multi-skilled workers that are better prepared to meet the changing demands of the customer. Cross-training enables employees to be used in other areas of the business. The use of these elements in the lean process also influence the ergonomics process. As a comparison, the table below shows the similarities in each process.

Lean manufacturing and an ergonomics process with a participatory approach share common goals and are often complimentary to each other. This article discusses how

both lean principles and ergonomics contributes to the elimination of wasteful human activities. Together these processes when combined, result in improved efficiency, enhanced product quality and a reduced risk of injuries, converting a company to lean and mean production machine! Overall, lean concepts combined with ergonomics are powerful strategies for any company competing in today's marketplace.

Our next issue will feature two cases of how *lean and mean ergonomics* has benefited companies.

References:

1. *The Lean Pocket Guide*, Running Lean, 2003.
2. Rosecrance, John, Douphrate, David and Cross, Steve “Integration of Participating Ergonomics and Lean Manufacturing: A Model and Case Study”, Human Factors in Organizational Design, VIII, 2005.
3. Womack, J.P. and Jones, D.T.(2003). *Lean Thinking*. New York: Free Press.

Lean Manufacturing Process	Ergonomics Process
Value Stream Mapping	Ergonomic Worksite Analysis including job site analysis
Five S	Clutter reduction , work organization and work flow
Metrics in productivity and product quality	Metrics in injuries, near misses and workers' compensation costs
Management and employee accountability	Management commitment and employee involvement
Kaizen	Participatory ergonomics with employee involvement
Cross Training	Task Rotation or job rotation

BE MY GUEST: This section is available for WIN members to submit articles.

ERGONOMIC INTERVENTION SOFTWARE: AN EMPLOYER’S SEATBELT

By Erik Andersen of Remedy Interactive

Ergonomics intervention software can provide employers with the tools to help reinforce and sustain the improvements that ergonomic changes have made to an organization’s office environment. While there are many simple “egg timers” and stretch cartoons out there, only one product offers a comprehensive set of tools that helps reduce risk and improves productivity and comfort. RSIGuard version 4, from Remedy Interactive, has been perfected over many years with input from Ergonomists, physical therapists, employers, and employees. While RSIGuard version 3 was great, version 4 is even better.

How Does Software Fit In To A Company’s Ergonomics Program?

One analogy that I have heard is that ergonomic intervention software is like a seatbelt for your car. It provides a reliable mechanism to create risk-reducing behaviors, and we all know that it’s just not practical to be by someone’s side all the time.

Software helps Ergonomists and physical therapists gain insight into how people use their computers, so that they can understand, analyze, and modify the work patterns that contribute to strain. Employers benefit through reduced risk, lower workers’ compensation costs, and improved productivity. Employees appreciate the rich set of tools to help them work more comfortably and reduce exposure to strain.

RSIGuard offers a 45-day free trial at www.rsiguard.com. The price for a single copy is only \$65, and prices are even lower when it is deployed to many desktops. RSIGuard also offers a Call Center Edition which is designed to work within the constraints of high-pressure call center environments. RSIGuard is an obvious answer in an individual post-injury situation, but it is most popular as a prevention tool at the department or company level.

RSI Guard Features	Benefits
Macro breaks with video stretches	Breaks are based on cumulative strain, not time on the PC
Micro breaks with behavioral reminders	Regularly encourages healthy work patterns
Keyboard remapping	A big help for ‘heads-down’ keyboard users
Custom scripting and macros	For automating repetitive keyboard and mouse work
“Auto Click” software-based clicking	Cut mouse click exposure up to 90%
Automatic drag-and-drop	A life-saver for graphic artists and computer-aided design
Measurement of key work statistics	Provides objective information to Ergonomists
Health Status Reports	For monitoring discomfort across many users
Work Restriction Manager	Very popular in return-to-work situations
IT-friendly tools	Easy to install, customize, and support

ERGONOMIC PRODUCT SHOWROOM

Workrite Ergonomics Swing Arm™

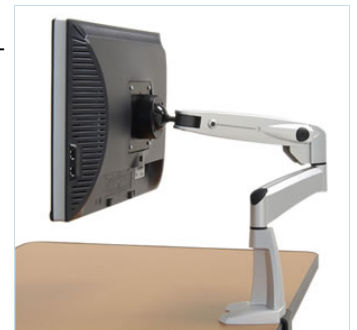
The Workrite Swing Arm flat panel display (FPD) monitor arm offers optimal ergonomic support for users in today’s office. With a full range of adjustability, the Swing Arm allows users to easily adjust monitor height, focal distance, and tilt angle for glare reduction and storage.

Features Include:

- Height range 21.25”
- Pneumatic cylinder supports up to 25 pounds.
- Great reach, 3 pivot design.
- Ball swivel.
- Cord/cable management.
- Silver or graphite.

- VESA 75 mm or 100 mm.
- Clamp mount, grommet mount, wall mounting or slat wall attachment.
- High quality aluminum casting for strength and style.
- Supports multiple displays

To learn more about the Swing Arm, please visit www.workriteergo.com for more information or contact your Workrite representative at 888-959-9675 .



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**WINTER 2006
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Moving Soon? Please email your updated information including email to alisonh@worksiteinternational.com or call 888-288-4463.



The WINning Corner: An Update for WI Network Members

Worksite International held its 8th National Ergonomics Workshop for rehabilitation and safety professionals this past November 2005 in Las Vegas, NV. "Ergonomic Worksite Analysis : Theory and Practice for Growth and Profitability" is now in its 4th year. Participants attended at the "course-only" level or purchased the Worksite International System CD Rom which includes mentorship for one year. Those that purchase the CD Rom become participants in the WI Network (WIN) of ergonomic service providers. WIN now has 33 members and is spread throughout Northern and Southern California and in five other states. Every December is renewal for the WI Network membership and mentorship program. Renewal notices have been

sent to all WIN members and are due by January 27, 2006. When you renew your membership, here are some of the many benefits you get. If you are interested in becoming a WIN member, you must first attend the annual training. Reservations for the 2006 course can be made online at www.worksiteinternational.com

Benefits of Your WIN Membership

- Ongoing use of CD Rom software license and support including updates and changes to the software.
- Ongoing Mentorship Support by Alison Heller-Ono MSPT, CIE, CMC:
With your first 2 evaluations and training programs using the CDROM system
- Support with business development and proposal writing.
- "Letter of Completion" when finished mentorship criteria which can be applied to ORI application if pursued.
- Network Benefits:
 - ⇒ Access to other WIN members
 - ⇒ Referral opportunities
 - ⇒ Subcontracting opportunities
 - ⇒ Access to Ergonomic Vendors
- WINFORMA Newsletter (2-4 per year)
- Special Announcements
- Discounts On Products: Evaluation and Training Software
 - ⇒ 30 Minute Office Evaluation System
 - ⇒ Material Handling /Lab Exposure Analysis Tools
 - ⇒ Custom PowerPoint Presentations: Industrial, Laboratory
- Paid Advertising of WIN : On the web, in Workers' Compensation Directories and other Publications, and state-wide insurance adjusters
- And much, much more

2006 WIN MEMBER LOCATIONS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	OTHER STATES
Clovis	*Carson	*Sanford, FL
Cupertino	Diamond Bar	Clifton, NJ
Fresno	Downey	Las Vegas, NV
Lincoln	El Cajon	Nashville, TN
Merced	El Centro	Port Angeles, WA
*Nevada City	Escondido	
Redding	Pomona	
Sacramento	Rosemead	
San Francisco	San Diego	
South San Francisco	San Dimas	
	San Gabriel	
	Santa Fe Springs	* Completed Mentorship program
	*Torrance	
	West Lake Village	