Health and Safety Practices Within the Nanomaterial Industry A 2009 Bren Master's Group Project

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The Center for Nanotechnology in Society (CNS) and the UC Center for the Environmental Implications of Nanotechnology (UC CEIN) at the University of California-Santa Barbara (UCSB) are conducting an international survey of environmental safety and health practices in the nanotechnology industry. This project builds on a 2006 study that was sponsored by the International Council on Nanotechnology (ICON) at Rice University, where results contributed to industry knowledge of best practices and were published in the journal Environmental Science & Technology. The current survey will identify changes in industry practices over the past three years and will again provide an opportunity for industry to share its views and opinions.

Who We Are

We are a research team at the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at UCSB. Our team is comprised of five graduate students and is led by UC CEIN Co-Investigators, Dr. Barbara Herr Harthorn, Director of the CNS at UCSB, and Dr. Patricia Holden, Professor at the Bren School. This project is co-funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is endorsed by ICON.

Interview Topics

- How are companies responding to new challenges posed by nanomaterials?
- What types of training do nanomaterials handlers receive?
- What engineering controls and personal protective equipment are being used in the workplace?
- Where are companies finding information regarding safe handling of nanomaterials?
- What are management's views about risks for different nanomaterials?

Value in Participating

Participants can benefit by influencing the debate in current health and safety practices in nanotechnology industries. As in the 2006 study, participants will learn from the final report regarding how their approaches to health and safety compare within the industry. Also, as with the prior study, responses to the survey will be reported in aggregate, meaning no individual responses will be tied to specific companies, and no companies will be identified by name. Confidentiality of the participants, products and company is of the upmost importance.



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