

Happy Holidays



Turnstile gate at the new employee/ visitor entrance.

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**Plant Safety Record Improves Again in 2003**

The facility's safety record improved again this year, with only 2 OSHA recordable injuries in 2003, down from 3 injuries in 2002 and 5 injuries in 2001. The first accident, which occurred in the lab in February, was a minor second-degree burn from a flash fire. The most recent injury, which occurred in the plant in July, happened when a production operator strained a finger ligament while clearing a blocked line. The plant injury, which resulted in a few days of lost work for the employee, ended a 240-day injury free streak.

**Rohm and Haas Makes Major Site Security Changes**

By the end of 2003, the Rohm and Haas facility will have completed a major project to improve site security and reduce the vulnerability of the plant to potential terrorist attacks. The project consisted of five corrective actions that were identified during a site vulnerability assessment conducted in October 2002. The assessment was required under the Responsible Care® program of the American Chemistry Council. Rohm and Haas is a long-time member of the American Chemistry Council, an industry trade organization, and its corporate CEO Raj Gupta is the council's current president. The security improvements are as follows:

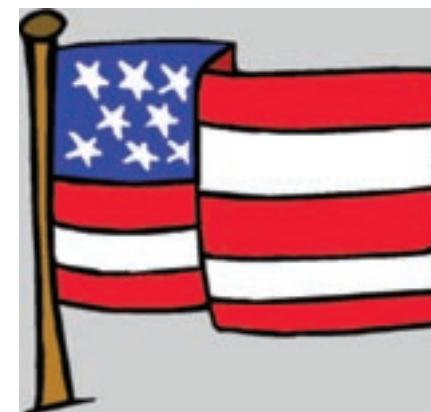
- Install a surveillance system to monitor the perimeter of the site. The cameras will not photograph private residences or yards.
- Separate the truck and employee/visitor entrances. The new entrance will reduce the size of the adjacent ball field.
- Improve perimeter lighting. The lights near homes and the walking path will be programmed to turn on with fence detection only.
- Improve access control by adding a turnstile gate so only one employee/visitor can enter the plant at a time.
- Modify the security fence around the facility to put more distance between the fence line and the plant's methyl chloride railcar; also increase height of fence in certain locations.

A third-party audit of the corrective actions made by Rohm and Haas will take place by March 2004. The facility expects to involve the Reading police and fire chiefs in this audit process.



**Top photo:** Reading Fire Chief Kevin Kaiser (left) and Rohm and Haas Plant Manager Bruce Beiser (right) pose with Environmental Club members (l to r) Ryan Brinkman, Evan Daniel, Sarah Gehring, Heather Harris and Amanda Dixon after putting together Shelter In Place buckets for Central Elementary in Reading.

**Bottom photo:** Environmental Club members help prepare the buckets.



# ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

**Community Involvement at Rohm and Haas**

**Rohm and Haas CAC Still Going Strong After 3 Years**

For nearly 3 years now, the Rohm and Haas Community Advisory Council (CAC) has been going strong. Since its first meeting in February 2001, the group has been tackling tough issues such as odors, methyl chloride emissions, truck parking and how to alert the community to hazardous material emergencies. The CAC has reached out to the community by sponsoring a relay team at the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life event in Reading in June. The CAC is also working with the Reading Fire Department and the Reading Junior/Senior High School Environmental Club to prepare Shelter In Place buckets for public and parochial schools in Reading. The buckets contain flashlights, first aid kits, plastic sheeting, duct tape, and personal hygiene items. The fire department also is sending out Shelter In Place fact sheets and magnets to parents of local elementary school children.

The CAC has 21 members and meets at the plant 10 times a year, on the second Thursday of the month. The meetings are publicly advertised in the Valley Courier newspaper and on local ICRC cable. Meeting minutes are available on the Rohm and Haas web site ([www.rohmhaas.com/cincy](http://www.rohmhaas.com/cincy)). The CAC welcomes new members and visitors. Please call Facilitator Bethany Dale at (513) 772-7903, Ext. 28, to RSVP as a visitor or talk about joining.

**Rohm and Haas Employees Participate In Cincinnati WALKS**

This past fall, about 36 Rohm and Haas employees participated in Cincinnati WALKS, a fitness program designed by the Nutrition Council of Greater Cincinnati to help people get more active and healthy. The goal is to encourage participants to walk 10,000 steps a day (about 30 minutes) using a clip-on pedometer to measure the distance. "Everyone walked 10,000 to 12,000 steps each day," said Occupational Health Nurse Josephine Ansems. "But the biggest surprise was that some of our chemical operators walked as much as 24,000 steps a day." The official company program lasted eight weeks, but Ansems says she still sees plant employees walking on lunch hours with their pedometers. For more information about Cincinnati WALKS, call (513) 621-3262 or visit their web site at [www.nutritioncouncil.org/about/walks.htm](http://www.nutritioncouncil.org/about/walks.htm).

**Plant Helps Send Care Packages to U.S. Soldiers In Iraq**

Thousands of U.S. soldiers are stationed in Iraq, away from their families and friends with no idea when they're coming home. To help boost their morale, Rohm and Haas employees are writing letters and donating items for care packages. The goal of the project, dubbed Operation Patriot Challenge, is to send 1,000 packages by the holidays. The project was initiated by Kelli Byrd, a chemical operator at the plant. She has also enlisted the support of the Landmark Christian Academy in Evendale. The care packages, containing snacks, magazines, CDs, videos, soap and toothbrushes, among other items, will be mailed to the troops by the Star Support Military Group out of Loveland.



Melody Hucce, now a freshman at the University of North Florida, was awarded a \$1,000 academic scholarship from Rohm and Haas in 2003.



U.S. Representative Steve Chabot (First District) visited the Rohm and Haas plant in August.

### *Safety is a Journey — Take the Ride*



Larry Krantz, supply chain manager, won the plant's 2004 safety slogan contest. Krantz has worked at the plant for more than 30 years, so he knows a little about safety. His idea for the slogan was based on the corporate safety program, called the "safety journey." Krantz will receive a \$50 online merchandise certificate.

### **Plant Awards \$1,000 Scholarship to Reading Senior**

Melody Hucce is enjoying a \$1,000 academic scholarship from Rohm and Haas. Melody, who graduated from Reading High School last May, is currently majoring in chemistry at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. This is the third consecutive year that Rohm and Haas has awarded a scholarship to a graduating Reading senior who plans to major in chemistry or chemical engineering. The scholarship is renewable for four years if the student maintains a 2.5 GPA.

### **Congressman Steve Chabot Visits Plant**

U.S. Representative Steve Chabot (First District) visited his new constituents at Rohm and Haas on August 22. The First District was redrawn to include Reading. Chabot met with Plant Manager Bruce Beiser, talked to plant employees and toured the facility.

### **EHS Activities at Rohm and Haas**

#### **Methyl Chloride Emissions Significantly Reduced**

Rohm and Haas reduced its methyl chloride emissions by more than 20 tons in 2003 over previous years and plans to make further cuts during 2004. The company currently recovers 91 to 95% of methyl chloride emissions from the plant and wants to improve this to 98 to 99%. A plant team has worked for several years to achieve this significant reduction.

#### **Plants Works With MSD On SSO 700 Project**

Rohm and Haas is working with the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD) to help address the overflow problem associated with Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) 700 in Reading. During heavy rain events, storm water from homes and businesses in the Reading area infiltrate MSD sanitary sewers, causing MSD's main line to back up and release raw sewage into Mill Creek through SSO 700. MSD uses SSOs throughout Hamilton County to relieve pressure on the sewer system, thereby preventing sewage backups in homes and businesses, but polluting Mill Creek. Although Rohm and Haas only contributes a small amount of storm water to the problem, the plant is looking at several potential options for 2004, including rerouting storm water from roof drains on office and lab buildings to the ground or to the south sewer (which does not impact SSO 700) and waiting until well after rain events to discharge the storm water that fills concrete secondary containment areas around storage tanks. The plant recently installed a level device in the plant sewer system to alert plant operators when SSO 700 is close to overflowing.

#### **Plant's TRI Emissions On the Decline**

In July, the plant submitted its Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) report to the U.S. EPA for calendar year 2002. Seven chemicals were reported, including aqueous ammonia, chlorine, chloroethane, glycol ethers, lead, methanol and methyl chloride. Emissions for four of the seven chemicals (chloroethane, methanol, lead and glycol ethers) were lower than in 2001 in spite of plant production increases. Emissions were higher for aqueous ammonia (most of which is discharged to MSD sewers) and methyl chloride (due to inefficiencies in the methyl chloride recovery system). This problem has been resolved (see methyl chloride emissions article). Emissions of chlorine stayed the same.

### **Plant Focuses on Ergonomics**

Did you know the #1 injury in the workplace is related to ergonomics (i.e., lifting items that are too heavy, making repetitive motions or sitting in a chair that's too low or too high)? The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) is currently working on an ergonomic rule to ensure employee safety in performing essential job functions. At Rohm and Haas, the plant's occupational health nurse recently asked employees to complete a survey about how comfortable they are at their work stations and to complete computer-based training on the potential for ergonomic-related injuries. The company is also evaluating a software program that alerts computer users when they need to take a break. On the production side, the company is encouraging project engineers, operators, mechanics and electricians to work together to identify ergonomic hazards and make the plant safer for employees.

### **RCRA Site Investigation Moves Forward**

Rohm and Haas is busy with several projects related to its RCRA site investigation. Due to the presence of low levels of contaminants in seeps and sediments along Mill Creek, the plant is looking at ways to improve the effectiveness of its groundwater control system. The plant is also investigating a small area of soils on the plant site with elevated metals concentrations. Rohm and Haas is voluntarily conducting both of these projects. In addition, the U.S. EPA, Ohio EPA and U.S. Geological Survey visited the facility in October to review investigation work performed to date and discuss a Supplemental Facility Investigation Work Plan submitted by the plant last May. If the U.S. EPA approves this plan by early next year, the plant will conduct additional soil and groundwater sampling, as well as creek testing, in the spring.

### **ERT Purchases New Equipment and Practices Response Skills**

The plant's Emergency Response Team (ERT) has been busy...buying new equipment, training and conducting drills. In August, the plant purchased a new cargo trailer to house all its supplies, (i.e., oxygen tanks, gloves, fire extinguishers, protective clothing, and first aid kits). The trailer is stored near the guard shack, but a fork lift driver is on call at all times to haul the trailer anywhere it's needed in the plant. In October, the plant purchased two portable decontamination showers, one for the plant and one for the Reading Fire Department. The shower allows ERT members to avoid contact with hazardous chemicals when removing protective clothing. In October and November, the ERT refreshed their response skills in the classroom and demonstrated how to stop a methyl chloride leak from a railcar during a "mock" accident drill.

### **Plant Disputes MSD Wastewater Violations**

The plant recently met with MSD to discuss two Notices of Noncompliance and a proposed penalty of \$14,700 for six alleged wastewater permit violations in 2003. Four of the violations, which occurred between February and March, were for toluene. The other two violations, from March, were for chloroform. Rohm and Haas has asked MSD to reconsider the penalty, based on MSD's delay in reporting the violations, MSD lab and data integrity issues and MSD flow measurement discrepancies. In addition, the facility has been unable to identify a source for any of the violations. Neither chemical is discharged to the sewers.



The plant's new ERT trailer is parked near the guard shack.



ERT members practice using their new decontamination shower. The plant also purchased one for the Reading Fire Department.