

Press Release

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Dräger to Host Webinar for Firefighters on Health Hazards of Hydrogen Cyanide

Presentation to Preview at FDIC Conference in April

Pittsburgh, PA – Dräger, a leading international company in the fields of safety and medical technology, will sponsor a webinar for firefighters and first responders on the dangers and long-term effects of hydrogen cyanide (HCN) and carbon monoxide (CO). Scheduled for June 8, 2010 at 8:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time, the webinar will be presented by Captain Rick Rochford, a 26-year veteran of the Jacksonville, Florida Fire Rescue Department.

The presentation on '*Unmasking the Threat of HCN and CO Poisoning - A Firefighter's Perspective*' is designed to improve awareness of the hazards posed by these gases, known as the 'twin toxins.' Rochford has been conducting documented research for the past three years on the toxic properties of both HCN and CO at structural fires. He is currently a speaker for the Cyanide Poisoning Treatment Coalition and has developed training presentations for fire departments nationwide.

Participants can sign up for the webinar at www.draeger.com/HCNCO. The hour-long program will include a question and answer session following the presentation.

"There is a lot of complacency about the effect of cyanide poisoning," Rochford said. "Everyone knew the gases were present, but they didn't know how bad it was. When we monitored fires for HCN, the alarm sounded at almost every fire."

Rochford points out that over the past forty years, the increased use of plastics and synthetics makes structural fires burn two to three times hotter. "These fires are much more toxic, creating acute and chronic health related issues for our firefighters," he said. "Our training needs to focus more on protecting both firefighters and victims in these structural fires."

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In the webinar, Rochford will review the medical evidence on the short and long-term effects of the toxic twins. “Although carbon monoxide is likely a major toxicant in fires, cyanide can sometimes be the principal cause of death.”

Rochford will be joined in the webinar by Anthony Toro, a firefighter from Providence, RI who was a victim of exposure to HCN. Rochford and Toro will also be on hand at the Dräger booth # 1414 at the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) on April 19 – 24 in Indianapolis where they will provide a preview of the webinar.

Rochford notes that his goal is to educate firefighters and to encourage the use of respiratory equipment and monitoring devices. “Wear your air and monitor your people,” Rochford advises.

Monitoring for Health and Safety

Dräger provides a full range of respiratory and monitoring devices. The Dräger X-am 5000 is an innovative new monitor for the simultaneous and continuous measurement of up to five gases, including hydrogen cyanide and carbon monoxide.

The Dräger X-am 5000 was developed especially for personal monitoring applications. Its mobile phone design and light weight make it easy to carry, warning responders about dangerous concentrations of gases.

Dräger’s Bump Test Station integrates with its gas monitors to ensure that the monitor is calibrated properly and that alarms are set and working properly. Testing daily or before each use is indispensable for safe, reliable operation of gas monitors.

(3,302 characters)

Dräger Safety AG & Co. KGaA is the manufacturer of the Dräger X-am 5000 and the Dräger Bump Test Station.

Dräger. Technology for Life®

The Drägerwerk AG & Co. KGaA is an international leader in the fields of medical and safety technology. Dräger products protect, support and save lives. Founded in 1889, in 2009 Dräger

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generated revenues of around EUR 1.9 billion. The Dräger Group is currently present in more than 190 countries and has about 11,000 employees worldwide. Please visit www.draeger.com for more information.

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