



Pittsburgh
LOCAL SECTION

Pittsburgh AIHA News –Winter 2025



Message from the President – Barry Momyer, CIH

Greetings everyone, I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season of Christmas and Hanukkah and a Happy New Year!

As I sit in my house waiting for the furnace repairman on one of the coldest days (subzero) in the last 5 -10 years, please remember to dress for the conditions, be prepared for the conditions or the unexpected (such as a furnace issue, LOL). Statistically cold weather claims more lives and causes more injuries than hot weather, so be prepared and ready.

Although OSHA has provided some guidance on heat stress, especially in the construction industry, cold stress has not been pursued as rigorously. Just like the summer months work does not stop, the winter months work does not stop, although construction usually curtails. Environmental cold can affect any worker exposed to cold air temperatures and puts workers at risk of cold stress. As wind speed increases, it causes the cold air temperature to feel even colder, increasing the risk of cold stress to exposed workers, especially those working outdoors, such as recreational workers, snow cleanup crews, construction workers, police officers and firefighters. Other workers who may be affected by exposure to environmental cold conditions include those in transit, baggage handlers, water transportation, landscaping services, and support activities for oil and gas operations.

Know the symptoms of cold stress (immersion, trench foot, frostbite, hypothermia, chilblains) and the way to prevent cold stress (training, buddy system, try to schedule work during warmer temperatures, avoid touch cold metal with bare skin, avoid alcoholic drinks, breaks in warm areas, provide engineering controls such as radiant heaters, etc). Refer to <https://www.osha.gov/emergency-preparedness/guides/cold-stress>

Let's have a safe and successful year. As a reminder, as a member please take advantage of the AIHA University eLearning that the Pittsburgh Local Section has made available.

Also, if you have not done yet, pay your annual dues and corporate sponsorships. These annual fees are our primary funding for the year, along with our monthly meetings/learning sessions. I invite all and others to attend and mingle and meet new friends and professionals and reacquainted with old friends and colleagues at the monthly meetings.

Thank You for your continued participation and enthusiasm in our professional community, the support of the corporate sponsors and those that provided the meeting/event educational information, facility tours and logistics of the meetings/events. And hope to see you at the **national AIHCe conference (sorry I'm old school) or now AIHA Connect in Kansas City, May 18-22, 2025!!**

Wishing ALL a safe, successful and enjoyable year,

Barry J. Momyer, CIH

President AM Health and Safety Inc.

Pittsburgh 2025 AIHA Election - Nominations Due Now



Our local section depends on its members to volunteer for positions on the executive committee. Serving on the committee is a great way to become more involved in the local section, and you can claim certification maintenance (CM) credit toward your CIH. We are currently asking for nominations for the upcoming committee (serving July 2025 - June 2027):

- President-elect, 2-year term followed by President (must also be a member of National AIHA)
- Secretary, 2-year term (must also be a member of National AIHA)
- Director, 2-year term (need not be a member of National AIHA)

NOTE: The American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) allows you to claim certification maintenance (CM) credit annually for local section office: local section President – 1 point; local section Officer or Director – 0.5 points.

If you would like to volunteer for elections or nominate someone, please email the Executive Committee at info@pittsburghaiha.org. A short biography and statement of intent along with a photo are needed for any election candidates and due by February 28, 2025.



Save the Date - 2025 President's Luncheon at the LeMont

The Pittsburgh AIHA will hold the annual President's Luncheon on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at the [LeMont Restaurant on Mt. Washington in Pittsburgh](#). Please plan to join us as we welcome [National AIHA President, Nicole M.H Greeson, MS](#), CIH to Pittsburgh.

Registration will open online once details are finalized!

Congratulations to IUP!

IUP Safety Sciences and Environmental Engineering Department ranked No. 1 in the state, No. 2 in the nation!! Click the link below to the article posted by IUP News Service, January 16, 2025.



https://www.indianagazette.com/news/iup-safety-sciences-and-environmental-engineering-department-ranked-no-1-in-state-no-2-in/article_d645e70a-d378-11ef-8229-a3145adaa4b2.html

AIHA 2025 eLearning Subscription & Full Group Package



New this year for PAID members --- The Pittsburgh Local Section has signed up for the Full E-learning package this year. The Package delivers up to 24 contact hours of education to members throughout the year. Registration includes live participation and recording access to 2025 National AIHA University webinar series and brings the best of AIHA Connect OnDemand. Don't miss out on the latest occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS) information, trends, technology, and best practices!

An eLearning Subscription guarantees automatic registration to all of the eLearning offerings throughout 2025. The subscription allows our membership to attend each of the live sessions along with session recordings. Last year there were 25 e-learning sessions. Recordings of the best sessions from AIHA University's live event offerings covering a wide range of topics and interest areas are provided in the online classroom to view at your convenience (for group registrations, everyone on our roster will also have access).

THE OEHS TOOLS

You
Need...



the source you have trusted for over 60 years

SKC is a global manufacturer, but our roots are here in Pittsburgh! SKC started with the vision and passion of Dr. Lloyd V. Guild to aid workers that he witnessed being exposed to airborne hazards. For over 60 years, we have worked with industrial hygienists and other occupational and environmental health and safety professionals to design, engineer, and manufacture the extensive line of sampling equipment and media that you trust and use today. We are proud to help you keep workers healthy and safe with our reliable, accurate sampling solutions and expertise.



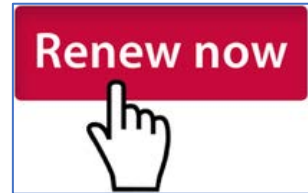
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2025 Pittsburgh AIHA Member Renewal – past due!

NOW COLLECTING - Membership dues for 2025 **were** due December 31, 2025. If you are a National AIHA member, remember to pay dues for Pittsburgh Local Section during your checkout. All NON-National AIHA members should pay dues directly to the Pittsburgh AIHA. [See the highlighted sidebar link on homepage to process payment through PayPal](#) -- Note you do not need a PayPal account to pay this way. Any questions, please email ckirsch@pittsburghaiha.org.

Winter Business Meeting - Minutes Dec. 12, 2024

The Executive Committee of the Pittsburgh AIHA held the winter local section business meeting at Smokey Bones in Robinson PA.

Meeting minutes are found HERE:

https://www.pittsburghaiha.org/uploads/2/6/7/0/26700671/business_meeting_minutes_2024-12-12.pdf



AIHA CONNECT 2025 Student Posters and Presentations

Students: Share Your Expertise & Get Recognized

[AIHA Connect 2025](#) is accepting proposals for student posters and student presentations through March 12! A speaking role is a fantastic way to bolster your presentation skills, deepen your knowledge, and build your network as you prepare to enter the workforce. Via discussion with your peers, you'll gain new insights to expand your research.

There's Still Time to Apply for Sponsorship: Each year, AIHA sponsors a group of students and early career professionals to attend AIHA Connect. Included in the sponsorship is registration, round-trip coach airfare, and three nights of hotel accommodations. Don't miss this opportunity to further your career! **Submit your application by 11:59 p.m. ET on February 21, 2025.**

Meeting Review -NIOSH Pittsburgh Presentation and Tour

The Pittsburgh AIHA Section's November meeting was Respirable Crystalline Silica in Mining Tour at the NIOSH Pittsburgh Research Center on November 20, 2024 from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. Tim Beck welcomed the group and turned it over to Barry Momyer who gave a few introductions and updates, to include dues payments, sponsorships and upcoming meetings.

Tim Beck introduced Emanuele Cauda, PhD, who welcomed the group and gave a quick review of the purpose of the facility and current research goals. The group was separated into two groups. One proceeded to the laboratory tour and the other group went to the research mine tour. After an hour the groups switched. The laboratory groups were given a demonstration of the Direct-on-filter Analysis for Respirable Crystalline Silica Using a Portable FTIR Instrument by Rachel Walker, Milan Yekich, Jordan Stancil and Teresa Barone, PhD along with other laboratories used in the NIOSH research. The mine tour was headed up by Charlie Warren and others.

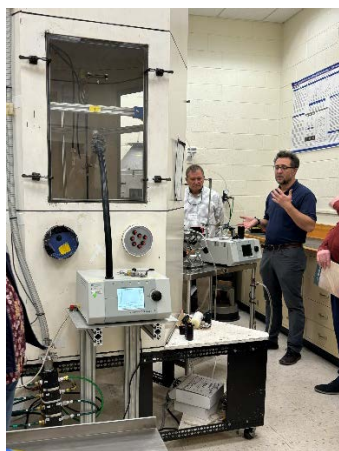
After the tours, the group was given a great presentation of the 2024 MSHA Crystalline Silica rule and timeline, presented by Tim Beck. He was followed by a discussion on Best Practices for Dust Control in Coal Mining by Justin Patts. Cody Wolfe, PhD, Jacob Carr then gave a demonstration of Dust Sensing Networks.

The Pittsburgh AIHA would like to extend a big thanks for a great visit and tour. We would like to thank all the presenters, laboratory and mine tour facilitators, and the escorts (Hua Jiang, PhD, Jason Driscoll and Dylan Ritter) who helped the group register and move around the lab property.

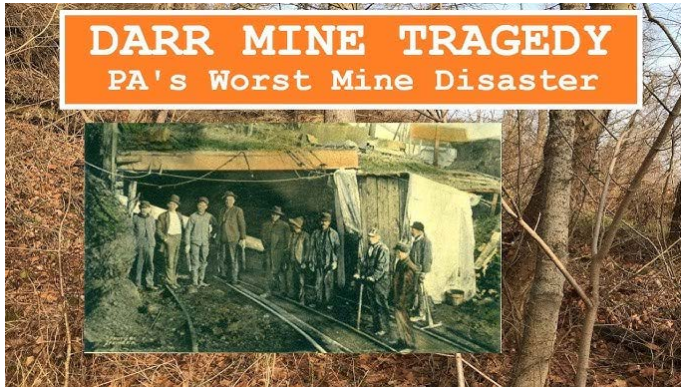
Thanks to the following members/guests that attended the event:

- Tim Beck, CDC/NIOSH
- Darrick Bertig
- Renee Cowell, HETI Services
- Barb Cummings, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Zane Frund, MSA Safety
- Natalie Gaydos, PPG Industries, Inc.
- Emmalee Henthorn, Slippery Rock University
- Jennifer Kapp, PPG Industries, Inc.
- Dennis Kelly, Field Focused LLC
- Victoria Mackalica, Slippery Rock University
- Robin Wehman, Slippery Rock University
- Dane Mitcheson, FedEx Ground
- Barry Momyer, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Julie Panko, ToxStrategies, Inc.
- Frank Pokrywka, KTA-Tator, Inc.
- Andrew Radomski, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Bailey Reggetz, NIOSH/CDC
- Rona Smeak, Slippery Rock University
- Michael Swintek, Eastern Alliance Insurance Group
- Leah Tipton, Mine Safety and Health Administration
- Paige Wells, Stantec
- Rachel Young, Stantec

Thanks to Rona Smeak and Frank Pokrywka for meeting summary/photos.



The Darr Mine Disaster Is the Deadliest Coal Mining Accident In Pennsylvania History



As a follow-up to the recent mine visit, read this account of the deadly December of 1907 when more than 700 miners were killed in 4 separate mine disasters that happened within days and miles of each other. These methane explosions prompted the creation of the US Bureau of Mines

<https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/state-pride/pennsylvania/darr-mine-disaster-pa>

From YouTube: This is the story of the 1907 Darr Mine Disaster.

A seemingly unimpressive hillside along the Youghiogheny River holds a secret. It was within the hills of two small Southwestern Pennsylvania patch towns that one of the worst disasters in American History occurred. Over 200 people were killed in this hillside, shattering the lives of everyone in the valley.

Delve Deeper Into The History: <https://www.academia.edu/43891965/DAR...>

<http://www.americanhungarianfederatio...>



Pittsburgh AIHA Corporate Sponsorship Drive is Ongoing!

Support the Pittsburgh AIHA as a Corporate Sponsor! The benefits of a Corporate Sponsorship contribution of \$250 include:

- 2 free individual Pittsburgh AIHA annual memberships,
- Pittsburgh AIHA Homepage sidebar logo link.
- 1-year listing on the [Pittsburgh AIHA Corporate Sponsors](#) page,
- 1-year listing on the [Pittsburgh AIHA Consultants List](#) page,
- Recognition in Pittsburgh AIHA local section [newsletter](#).

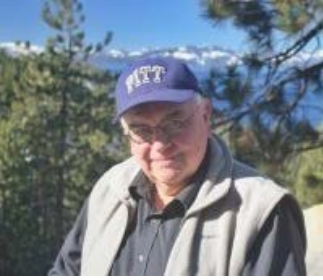
Corporate Sponsorship is renewable on an annual basis. Visit the [Corporate Sponsors Page](#) for current sponsors and application information - You can sign up online, or print the form to complete and mail.

THANK YOU to the following companies who have already pledged their support in 2025:

- Amazon
- AM Health & Safety, Inc.
- Atlas Technical Consultants
- CIH Services, Inc.
- CNX Resources
- Colden Corporation
- CSC, Inc.
- Delfino Health & Safety, LLC

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- Urgent Analytical



Tell Us a Story: The Day I Almost Died (and IH Challenge!!)

By: Frank Pokrywka, Pittsburgh AIHA Treasurer

It was a dark and stormy night, not really, but it was cold and snowy; like really cold (-24F). Our company was hired to perform compliance stack tests at a GM grey iron foundry in Fergus Falls, Minnesota in January 1975. Dennis, Ron and I had to set up on a snow covered roof to test six cupola stacks where iron was melted prior to casting truck engine parts. Our stack tests involved traversing the stack with an 8-foot stainless probe measuring gas temperatures and velocity flows. Process gasses were drawn out of the stack through a filter and glass impingers for other tests using an umbilical cord connected to a meter box measuring temperatures, gas velocity and sample pump flow rates.

To shelter from the cold and wind we had erected a Coleman canvas wall tent housing the meter boxes testing two stacks at a time. Every five minutes one of our crew had to exit the tent to adjust the probe traverse while the others recorded the meter box readings. A propane gas heater was set up inside the tent to keep us nice and cozy from the bitter cold outside.

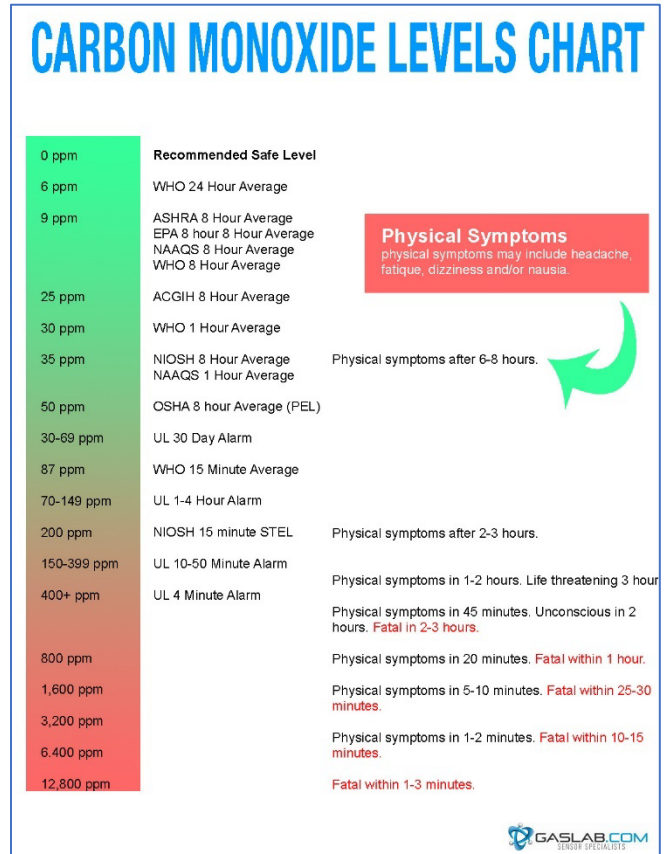
The stack tests lasted about two hours each and we had to collect three tests during the 4pm to 12am shift. Throughout the stack tests, Orsat readings, measuring oxygen, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, were collected to evaluate furnace combustion efficiencies. At about 9 pm, Ron said he didn't feel well and barely made it out the tent flap before vomiting. Within a few minutes Dennis and I suffered the same fate, followed by a tremendous headache. Ron, the first to get sick, went to the plant dispensary where the nurse became alarmed by his bright red face. Recognizing the symptoms, the plant nurse immediately put him on oxygen. Within a few minutes, a plant guard came to the roof and told us to shut down our test and report to the dispensary, which we did and were also placed on oxygen being diagnosed with carbon monoxide poisoning.

Sitting in the dispensary, contemplating what had just happened, Dennis remembered recording 5% carbon monoxide readings on the Orsat. That is equal to 50,000 ppm CO. The meter boxes being used were each pumping 2 cfm of stack gas and exhausting it into the leaky but enclosed tent. The fact that each of us took turns every five minutes leaving the tent might be the only thing that kept us alive. After the oxygen treatment, our facial complexion improved and we were sent home with aspirin. The nurse told us to expect the worse headache of our lives in the morning and to take the next day off. We resumed testing two days later after installing tubing to the meter boxes exhausting the stack gases outside the tent; a lesson learned the hard way.

Based upon the story I just wrote, I decided it would be interesting to evaluate why I did not die from CO poisoning on that cold January night in Minnesota. EHS practitioners should try to determine what other pollutant gases might be involved, potential concentrations, symptoms and control solutions. Below are some additional parameters to aid in your IH recognition, evaluation and control along with facts presented in the story along with the CO poisoning chart.

- Coleman tent dimensions 10'x12'x8'
- Orsat reading 5% Carbon Monoxide, 20% Oxygen, 15% Carbon Dioxide
- Outside temperature -27 degrees F
- Inside temperature 50 degrees F
- Meter box flow rate 2.0 CFM each
- Winds 10 mph from the NW
- Probe position changes every 5 minutes
- 3 individuals exposed with rotating probe adjustments.
- Stack test duration 2 hours with 1 hour change over.
- Shift started at 4 pm ended at 9 pm.

Please submit your evaluation and control entries to me at frank.pokrywka@gmail.com where they will be judged and the best IH evaluation report awarded a \$25 gift card to Starbucks (or other vendor).





AIHA STUDENT CHAPTER MEETING HEALTH HAZARDS IN CONSTRUCTION

BY GUEST SPEAKER
DELWYN KUBELDIS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5TH | 11:15-12:15

JOHNSON HALL, ROOM 131
ALL STUDENTS ARE WELCOME!

Come join us and listen to Delwyn Kubeldis, the Operations Manager for OnPoint Industrial Services, discuss health hazards in the construction industry!

PIZZA AND DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED!

OSHA and EPA Sign Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) signifies a formal agreement between the two agencies to collaborate and share information, particularly regarding workplace chemical exposures, to better protect worker health and safety by coordinating their enforcement efforts on environmental and workplace hazards, ensuring more comprehensive protection for workers and the environment.

Key points about the MOU:

Purpose: To improve communication and cooperation between OSHA and EPA when dealing with chemicals that could pose risks to workers both in the workplace and the environment.

Focus areas: Sharing data on chemical assessments, risk evaluations, and enforcement actions related to chemicals regulated under TSCA (Toxic Substances Control Act).

Benefits: Allows for more effective identification and mitigation of workplace hazards by leveraging each agency's expertise.

[OSHA and EPA sign Memorandum of Understanding | Safety+Health](#)

[25-MOU-018 OSHA and Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) - MOU \(004\) \(004\).pdf](#)

National AIHA Podcast: Healthier Workplaces Show

The Healthier Workplaces Show is a bi-monthly video podcast highlighting the efforts of industry professionals who protect our workers and their communities from occupational and environmental hazards.

- Episode 55: 2025 Forecast of the OEHS Profession and Insights from Vietnam with AIHA President Nicole Greeson, MS, CIH
- Episode 56: Intro to 2025-2027 Strategic Plan with Past AIHA President Dina Siegel and AIHA CEO Larry Sloan

Click [HERE](https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/healthierworkplaces/healthier-workplaces-show-video-podcast-industrial-hygiene-advice) to access the video or audio versions: <https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/healthierworkplaces/healthier-workplaces-show-video-podcast-industrial-hygiene-advice>

Welcome to the following NEW Pittsburgh AIHA Members:

- Diego Ambriz
- Brandon Griffin, Slippery Rock University
- Rachel Kenney, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Kari Knable, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Jayden Leckey, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Ethan Manley, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Brandon McCombie, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Hunter McGinnis, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- William Nicklin, AM Health and Safety, Inc.
- Micah Nygren, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

[Microplastics: An overview on separation, identification and characterization of microplastics](#)

Shared by Frank Pokrywka (ScienceDirect.com)

Highlights:

- [Microplastics](#) are plastic residues with a size <5 mm, found as contaminants in different surroundings.
- [Nanoplastics](#) are plastic residues with size <1 µm.
- Isolation of microplastics can be done through different Physical, chemical and biological methods.
- Microplastics characterization can be done using techniques like SEM-EDS, FTIR, [NIR](#), Raman and [NMR spectroscopy](#).
- [NMR spectroscopy](#) can be used to find the concentrations of microplastics.

Abstract: At present plastic residues has become grave threat to the environment. [Microplastics](#) are plastic residues with a size <5 mm, due to their small size it is very difficult to remove them from [water bodies](#), sediments and air with available techniques. [Nanoplastics](#) are different in size range as nanoplastics are smaller than 1 µm in size. This review is an attempt to gather an insight towards microplastic and its associated point of concerns. The review will highlight some of the methods appropriate for microplastics sampling and techniques for its identification in environmental samples. Some of the sampling methods include sieving, filtration, visual sorting, digestion, density separation. While, identification techniques in practice are SEM-EDS, FTIR, [NIR](#), Raman, [NMR spectroscopy](#), etc. Still there is a need and scope for development of more economical and portable techniques in this direction.

You can find the entire article HERE: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0025326X2100638X>

2024-2025 Executive Committee

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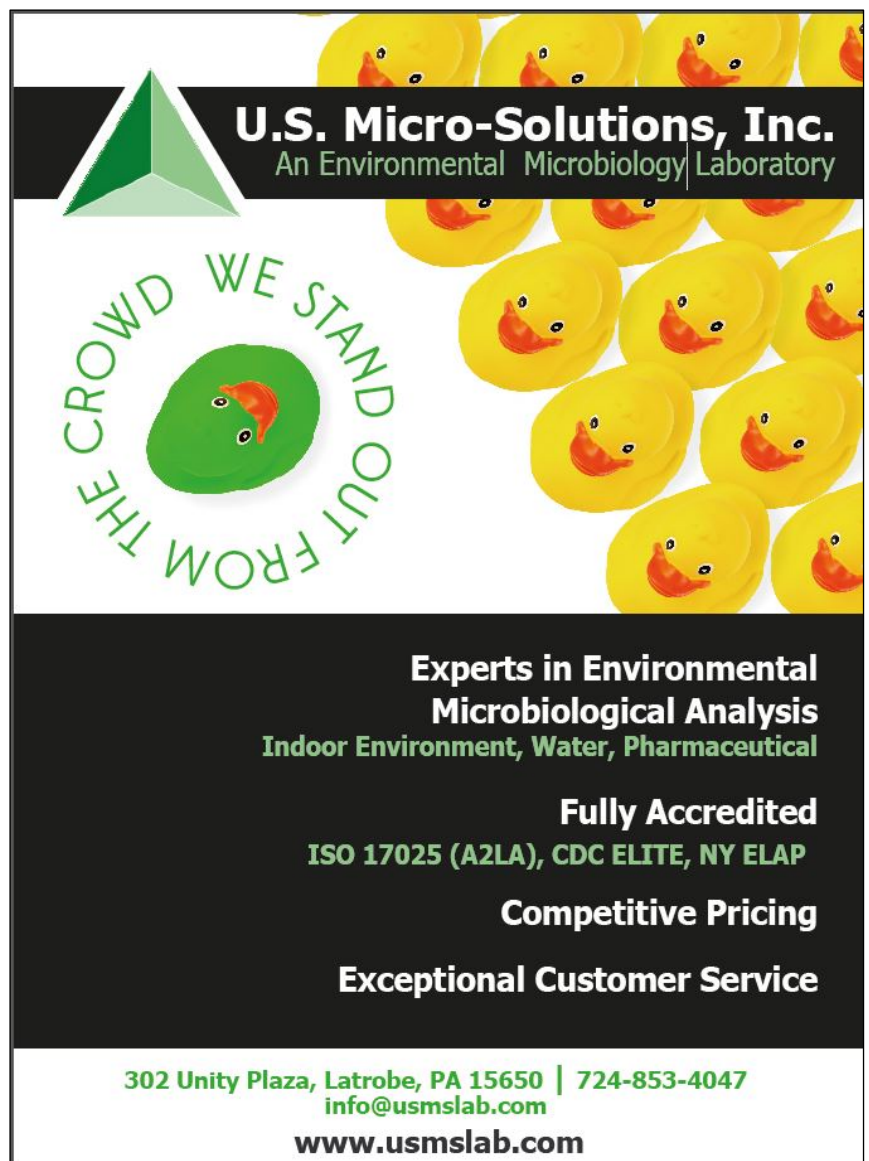
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www.usmslab.com

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- 2 free individual Pittsburgh AIHA memberships,
- Pittsburgh AIHA Homepage sidebar logo link,
- 1-year listing on the [Pittsburgh AIHA Corporate Sponsors](#) page,
- 1-year listing on the [Pittsburgh AIHA Consultants List](#) page,
- Recognition in Pittsburgh AIHA local section [newsletter](#).

Your contribution helps to defray the operating expenses (website and membership management, scholarships, etc.) and meeting expenses of the local section. Local section meetings allow members to remain at the forefront in a constantly changing profession through the interaction and information exchange at our local meetings. Additionally, our meetings provide opportunities for members to earn certification maintenance points toward CIH, CSP and other professional accreditations without extensive travel or cost.