



**American Society of Safety Engineers**  
The Oldest National Safety Organization in the United States

# EASTERN CAROLINA CHAPTER

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Today, the role that the Eastern Carolina chapter of ASSE plays in our community is significantly different than when it began 25 years ago. Our mission has extended far beyond that of chapters of members, to become much more of a catalyst in creating strong, healthy and safe communities by building partnerships, each working towards a common goal.

The Eastern Carolina Chapter has completed an extensive series of community consultations and done a great deal of research to get where we are today. Changing demographics and social trends combined with policy and changes made by governments mean that we constantly need to find new ways to address emerging issues and the resulting service needs in our community. We are deeply committed to listening to community stakeholders - to members, to supporters in business and Labor, to service providers and to making responsive and informed decisions. Our strategic plan is based on the priority issues that we have been able to identify as being important to the long-term health and well-being of our chapter.

We have adopted some very simple guidelines to help us focus on what matters. As we look to the future:

- we must be vigilant about addressing root causes of problems and conditions, bringing together all of the different sectors to address what matters to all of us.
- we must support preventive approaches and activities that promote the building and strengthening of existing membership and services.
- we need to support and promote stability in times of social and communication changes.
- we need to promote opportunities for learning and sharing best practices.
- we need to work together differently, engaging all sectors in our work.

I am very pleased to be a part of this ASSE chapter, and I want to assure you that we will continue to do what matters - and that is improve the well-being of people who live and work in our community.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I want to say thank you for your commitment and your loyalty over the years. So with a heavy heart I must ask you to find a new President to take my place. It is time for me to step down and move forward with other commitments I have made within my community and personnel life. I will still stay active in our Chapter and attend ASSE functions, but I can no longer be the facilitator and leader of our Chapter.

I hope to hear from as many of you as possible on prospective candidates to replace me at the end of June. We will also need to fill other Officer positions on the Executive Committee so all those interested in helping the Chapter should come forward Now.

Best regards,

**Joseph Wesley Thigpen, President**

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## CHAPTER OFFICERS

2007-2008

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## NEXT MEETING

**APRIL 7, 2009**

**12:30**

**There will be discussions regarding the future of the Chapter so it is imperative that you attend or join us online.**

See page 4 for details.

# Treasurer's Report Current Chapter Balance

(As of 2/28/2009)

## \$4,222.69

## Check Out the EC Chapter Website



The Eastern Carolina Chapter Website has been updated. **Please note the new web address and be sure to update any links to our site.** Take an opportunity to visit the site at [www.asseec.org](http://www.asseec.org) and provide comments regarding both content and appearance to Phil Lewis at [lewisp@ecu.edu](mailto:lewisp@ecu.edu). We want the site to meet the needs and expectations of our members so your honest feedback is very important to us. Please monitor the site for information regarding upcoming meetings and important events. Please let us know how we can continue to improve the services we provide the membership. We look forward to continued success.

## East Carolina University MS, Occupational Safety Program

The Master of Science in Occupational Safety (MSOS) prepares graduates for leadership positions in occupational safety and related fields. An academic experience in the design and management of enterprise-wide safety systems is provided. The focus of this Program is in the core discipline of occupational safety (OS). Foundational principles and overarching academic goals of the MSOS program include ensuring effective communications skills, the ability to think critically and problem solving, and to develop applied research skills. The coursework includes analysis of occupational safety and health problems, accompanying problem-solving and decision making techniques, and the application of established principles of accident prevention, control, and reduction in occupational settings.

The overall program goal is to provide the highest quality of academically well trained competent safety practitioners for business and industries as well as government and municipalities in Eastern North Carolina and globally. Since its foundation in 1994, the program has had about 150 graduates with high placement rate within the professional fields identified. The overall program purpose is to continue to satisfy the ongoing demand for academically trained and competent occupational health and safety practitioners by training highly qualified and skilled graduates capable of assuming the day-to-day responsibilities of safety professionals.

The MSOS is offered dually as an on-campus degree and via distance education. Please go to our Program website to learn more: <http://www.tecs.ecu.edu/tsys/grad/msos/>

Our students are always looking for project sites, internships, and mentorship. We invite you to consider enrolling in our Distance Education program and working with our students and faculty.

# TRENCHING AND EXCAVATION FACT SHEET



## Trenching and Excavation Safety

Excavation and trenching are among the most hazardous construction operations. OSHA defines an excavation as any man-made cut, cavity, trench, or depression in the earth's surface formed by earth removal. A trench is defined as a narrow underground excavation that is deeper than it is wide, and is no wider than 15 feet (4.5 meters).

### Dangers of Trenching and Excavation

Cave-ins pose the greatest risk and are much more likely than other excavation-related accidents to result in worker fatalities. Other potential hazards include falls, falling loads, hazardous atmospheres, and incidents involving mobile equipment. Trench collapses cause dozens of fatalities and hundreds of injuries each year.

### Protect Yourself

Do not enter an unprotected trench! Trenches 5 feet (1.5 meters) deep or greater require a protective system unless the excavation is made entirely in stable rock. Trenches 20 feet (6.1 meters) deep or greater require that the protective system be de-signed by a registered professional engineer or be based on tabulated data prepared and/ or approved by a registered professional engineer.

### Protective Systems

There are different types of protective systems. Sloping involves cutting back the trench wall at an angle inclined away from the excavation. Shoring requires installing aluminum hydraulic or other types of supports to prevent soil movement and cave-ins. Shielding protects workers by using trench boxes or other types of supports to prevent soil cave-ins. Designing a protective system can be complex because you must consider many factors: soil classification, depth of cut, water content of soil, changes due to weather or climate, surcharge loads (eg., spoil, other materials to be used in the trench) and other operations in the vicinity.

### Competent Person

OSHA standards require that trenches be inspected daily and as conditions change by a competent person prior to worker entry to ensure elimination of excavation hazards. A competent person is an individual who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards or working conditions that are hazardous, unsanitary, or dangerous to employees and who is authorized to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate or control these hazards and conditions.

### Access and Egress

OSHA requires safe access and egress to all excavations, including ladders, steps, ramps, or other safe means of exit for employees working in trench excavations 4 feet (1.22 meters) or deeper. These devices must be located within 25 feet (7.6 meters) of all workers.

### General Trenching and Excavation Rules

- Keep heavy equipment away from trench edges.
- Keep surcharge loads at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) from trench edges.
- Know where underground utilities are located.
- Test for low oxygen, hazardous fumes and toxic gases.
- Inspect trenches at the start of each shift.
- Inspect trenches following a rainstorm.
- Do not work under raised loads.

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

Attribution: U.S. Department of Labor OSHA Fact Sheet – For additional information go to [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

# 2009 MEETING SCHEDULE

## NEXT MEETING

**Thursday, April 7 at 12:30 in the ECU Global Classroom**

**There will be discussions regarding the future of the Chapter so it is imperative that you attend or join us online!** To view the presentation on online, go to <http://mediasite.ecu.edu/gc/catalog/> and click the Global Classroom Seminars Spring 2009 link on the left hand side. This will take you to a page where the ASSE Meeting link will be found, but it will not be there until a few hours before the event starts. Additionally, the event will start promptly at 12:30, therefore at 12:29, you may get a message such as 'event not started yet'...During the live event, members should post a comment or question through the ask a question function or email Mike Behm @ [behmm@ecu.edu](mailto:behmm@ecu.edu). To ensure you can view presentations, please try to view some of the archived presentations available to the public in the Global Classroom Seminars Spring 2009 folder before April 7. For Technical Help, please visit <http://www.globalclassroom.ecu.edu/requirements.htm>. If you need technical help during the presentation, please call 252.328.9617, but please know they will likely have more than one call especially if folks have not tried to access the publicly available seminars and have checked their system prior to the live meeting. We will archive the meeting for 14 days.

Call Mike Behm at 328-9674 for questions and to help facilitate the meeting and parking directions for those who will physically attend.



San Antonio, TX - June 28-July 1!

<http://www.asse.org/education/pdc09/>



American Society of Safety Engineers  
The Oldest National Safety Organization in the United States  
Eastern Carolina Chapter - Chartered in 1984

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