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[Webmaster@KeAlakai.byuh.edu](mailto:Webmaster@KeAlakai.byuh.edu)

Last updated: Jan 15, 2002

## Health division fines BYUH \$8,000

### University cited for serious safety violations

By Micah Nilsson ~ Staff writer



At the end of Fall semester, the Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health Division (HIOSH) visited the BYU-Hawaii campus and inspected it according to the guidelines established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor.

"This was the first OSHA inspection since 14 years ago," said James Freeman, BYUH's Assistant Director of Risk Management for Health, Safety and Environment. Freeman added that the inspection came as a result of BYUH's high number of workers compensation reports. The HIOSH inspector visited the campus for five days, citing ten serious violations. "Some of the violations were well-deserved," said

Freeman, "while with others, it was readily apparent that there should have been no citation made."

One of the citations was for not having a sign on a refrigerator door in the cafeteria that stated how to open the door from the inside. "How to open the door was obvious," said Freeman.

Other citations included two citations for improper machine guarding (a saw and a grinder in the Physical Plant were without the required plastic protection shield), three citations for emergency/respiratory issues, two citations for electrical problems (frayed electrical cords and broken ground plugs), one citation for lack of exposure monitoring (monitoring the levels of formaldehyde in the Chemistry lab) and one citation for oxygen cylinder storage.

Each of these citations carries a maximum fine of \$2,500. The total fine for BYUH added up to \$25,000, but due to a \$16,250 reduction for size, former record and risk potential and other factors, the final penalty amounted to \$8,000. The penalty was settled on Nov. 26, 2001.

Freeman said that all of the safety hazards that HIOSH cited have already been corrected. Beyond these ten



citations, Freeman identified about 250 other safety hazards on campus and said that about 90 percent of these have already been corrected.

"Those that haven't been corrected are just waiting for a part or something," Freeman said. He said that within 30 or 40 days all of his findings should be taken care of.

Freeman has worked as Assistant Director of Risk Management for Health, Safety and Environment at BYUH since Dec. 2000. Before coming to BYUH, Freeman worked as an industrial hygienist in the industrial safety field for 40 years.

Of BYUH's work safety, Freeman said, "We've come a long way this past year, but there are plenty of challenges ahead of us to get the program where it ought to be."

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