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MAINTENANCEFIRST™

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Time To Plan Ahead

I am fascinated by great thinkers and drawn to books about them, including a book about Einstein's life as it relates to his famous equation. It is appropriately titled $E=mc^2$.

There are plenty of books that try to explain the equation but I find them difficult reads. Apparently even direct instruction from Einstein himself isn't always helpful as Mr. Weizmann learned while traveling with Einstein in 1921: "Einstein explained his theory to me every day," Weizmann said, "and soon I was fully convinced that he understood it."

When I realize that energy is equal to the mass of an object times the speed of light squared I wonder why, if simple objects have such potential to produce vast amounts of energy, we haven't discovered something other than oil to keep us going. Sure, we're trying corn but I wonder how efficient the process is, and using corn for fuel is causing food prices to skyrocket. Whatever we might save on fuel is now going for food.

Why can't we find a way to tap more of the sun's energy? I read that the sun explodes the equivalent of

many millions of atomic bombs every second. Of course, it doesn't all come our way but there should be enough to solve our energy problems for a long time if we could only find a way to harness the solar energy. The sun's mass is now 2,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons but it's disappearing at the rate of 700 billion tons a day. In another 5 billion years the most easily available portions of that fuel will be gone. I suppose we ought to plan ahead.

-Eli J. George, Jr.

Customizable Compliance Management

MaintenanceFirst is excited to announce the release of our fully-customizable Compliance Management tools. As opposed to previous releases, multiple Third-Party Compliance Standards can now be managed simultaneously. Whether Federal, State, or Internal Compliance Management is needed, one easy-to-use, fully interactive module is available to organize, track, and keep you informed of compliance issues. Look for this feature in our July web release!

www.maintenance1st.com

MaintenanceFirst Software News

Software Education

We want to help you maximize your benefits from our software. We know that the more you learn about what our software can do for you, and for your customer, the more satisfied you will be. To that end we are offering Workstation and Web application Training Seminars during each quarter of the year. The seminars are free to our Platinum customers while others pay only \$500 for the one day event.

We limit the size of the seminars to 6 individuals for each application training to give each customer the individual attention she or he needs during the seminar.

“Their training is well suited for both beginners and advanced users

alike. They are great at providing realistic examples of how the product can benefit you, and listen to your needs and concerns of how you can use the product. They definitely try to understand your operations and how the software can benefit that. I believe the entire operation of MaintenanceFirst has only improved over the years, and technical support as well. As always, I have felt that they give extremely professional and courteous service.”

-CSH Kentucky

Our next seminar will be held

in Louisville, Kentucky on July 18, 2008. To register please call 866-459-9040 or email us at skidwell@maintenance1st.com. Since space is limited we urge you to register soon. You may cancel your reservation without penalty at any time at least two weeks before the seminar. Anyone who schedules and fails to cancel within the allotted time must pay a cancellation fee.

We've also added help documentation and 78 watch and learn videos which are available through our website. Contact us for more information. Response to our videos has been exceptional.

As always if there is anything else we can do to enhance your experience with our software please let us know.

MaintenanceFirst Web2008

Web2008, our next generation of web CMMS solutions, was released in January of this year, with great response. We took the core features of our Web2007 product line, and worked to enhance the user experience. There are now several user-specific customization features, everything from application color palette combinations to customizable navigation menus. Dozens of quick links, information buttons, and management tools were added to promptly retrieve valuable information effortlessly.

Web2008 is built with the latest technology, is a breeze to install, and requires minimal hardware overhead compared to other products.

Web2008 Updates:

- Third Party Compliance Standards and BMP management.
- Individual Key Detail Filter for Search and Report capability added.
- Hazardous Material Filter for Search and Report capability added.
- 20 powerful web reports added and enhanced.
- Auto-Notification capability expanded.

MaintenanceFirst Workstation 2008

Workstation2008 Updates:

- Workstation2008 is Microsoft Vista ready.
- New, updated user interface.
- Improved speed on auto complete typing feature.

Workstation2008 Fixes:

- Workstation2008 displays correct inventory part number on the requisition form.
- Workstation2008 displays equipment rating of first group if the piece of equipment is a member of multiple groups.

Software Thought

Many health care organizations utilize third parties to perform maintenance, testing, and inspection activities for medical equipment and/or utilities systems. This approach is totally acceptable, but remember it is the healthcare organization itself that is ultimately responsible for the outcome. Be sure that your organization has appropriate access to the third party documentation, either on site or rapidly available electronically. Also review all vendor documentation to ensure its accuracy and completeness. Failure in either of these areas could be scored in the Leadership chapter, LD.2.20, EP 2.

Risk Assessment

The Joint Commission has long required a risk assessment process in the Environment of Care. In fact, each of the seven EC areas has its own twist on risk assessment:

- Safety: Proactive Risk Assessment
- Security: Proactive Risk Assessment
- Hazardous Materials & Waste: Chemical Inventory
- Emergency Management: Hazard Vulnerability Analysis
- Fire Safety: Statement of Conditions™
- Medical Equipment: Risk-Based Inventory
- Utilities: Risk-Based Inventory

The most general of the risk assessments is that found in EC.1.10, EP 4, the proactive safety risk assessment. For many years this has been regarded as The Joint Commission's "General Duty Clause," similar to that of OSHA, where a surveyor may cite an issue that doesn't fit under any of the other standards. But this interpretation has changed.

Now, the question being asked by surveyors to evaluate EC.1.10, EP 4 is, "Was a risk assessment conducted?" The answer initially is either yes or no. But this element of performance is category B, which means that there is a subsequent subjective evaluation of how well that risk assessment was conducted. The surveyors will determine whether the risk assessment was comprehensive, and in that determination, note whether multiple additional risks were identified. Essentially at this EP, the surveyors are looking for a risk assessment process.

The next place to look is at EC.1.10, EP 5, which calls for using identified risks to develop policies and procedures. The surveyor assessment of this EP is based only on the risks that were identified under EP 4.

That returns us to the issue of where risks that are identified by the surveyor, and not the healthcare organization, are scored. The current interpretation has risks related to patients scored at EC.8.10, EP4, which states that areas used by patients are safe, clean, functional, and comfortable. Problems related to the storage, handling, and transport of oxygen cylinders are now scored at EC.5.10, EP 2, the proactive process

to protect people from fire, smoke, and the products of combustion.

So the long and short of it is that healthcare organizations must develop a process for risk assessment. Evaluate the information from a variety of sources to determine the risks, including environmental tours, performance monitoring, staff reports, recalls, critiques, and others. While not strictly required, a written process is a good idea. Determine a course of action and make policy and procedure adjustments accordingly. Be able to demonstrate to The Joint Commission surveyor that you are actively identifying potential risks, evaluating them, and translating that evaluation into action.

Susan McLaughlin, who contributed to this newsletter, is President of SBM Consulting, Ltd., a firm that specializes in providing consulting services and education centering around the material covered by Joint Commission's Environment of Care® standards. She is a speaker in the field of healthcare safety and regulatory compliance, and has authored numerous articles on related topics. She serves as a Codes and Standards Consultant to the American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHE), represents ASHE on the National Fire Protection Association's Healthcare Section Executive Board, holding the position of Immediate Past Chair. She has participated in national forums on healthcare emergency preparedness for terrorism incidents.

Interim Life Safety Measures and Electronic Statement of Conditions™

Now that all SOC information is entered electronically, several questions have been raised in terms of the process and making changes once the document has been submitted.

If you have "pushed the button" to submit your electronic SOC, it is still acceptable to make changes to the information as long as that SOC has not been previously accepted by a Joint Commission surveyor.

For example, you entered a plan for improvement for a project to provide one hour fire resistance rating to a room that is now being used for storage in an unsprinklered smoke compartment.

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INTERIM LIFE SAFETY MEASURES AND THE ELECTRONIC STATEMENT OF CONDITIONS™

You thought that you'd be done by July, 2008, and that's the date you entered. Now you find yourself in a budget crunch and you will not be done until March, 2009. As long as the surveyors have not come in the meantime and signed off on these dates, it is OK to go into the electronic SOC and change the date without any further documentation or justification to The Joint Commission.

Furthermore, these projects, not yet approved by surveyors, are not subject to the conditional accreditation rule, CON 04, for failure to make sufficient progress on an approved plan for improvement, because your plan has not, in fact, been approved.

At the time of survey, if it is determined that the organization has not made sufficient progress in the plan that has not yet been approved, a recommendation

would be issued at EC.5.20, EP 5, without the conditional accreditation jeopardy. Failure to assess or implement applicable interim life safety measures would be scored at EC.5.50, EP 3 in this case.

However, if the surveyor identifies a circumstance that he/she feels is an immediate threat to life, The Joint Commission central office staff will become involved in the decision.

It is important to remember that if a plan for improvement HAS been previously approved by a Joint Commission surveyor, conditional accreditation under CON 04 is in play for failure to make sufficient progress on the plan or failure to implement interim life safety measures.