Katrina draws attention to preparedness

The designation of September as Emergency Preparedness Month has been highlighted in an unfortunate way. Disaster planning, according to the American Red Cross, should include a kit of essential items an adult would need at home, work, or in an evacuation location in the aftermath of an emergency.

American Red Cross - personal workplace disaster supplies kit - www.redcross.org/static/file_cont118_lang0_964.pdf

Protection for the Lone Worker

Farming is most often done alone, and as companies streamline their workforces and procedures, more employees may be working alone. If a lone worker is injured, how would someone identify a problem and how long would it take to send help?—especially if the worker were knocked unconscious or suffered a heart attack and standard radio or cell phone communications were useless. A number of lone worker monitoring systems are now on the market. Most incorporate both manual means of summoning help and automatic functions that transmit a help signal after detecting no movement on the part of the wearer.

National Ag Safety Database (“The Lone Worker”) - www.cdc.gov/nasd/docs/d001601-d001700/d001655/d001655.html
Some companies* with lone worker safety systems - proTELEC Alarms - www.protelec.ca/
Agile Safety ™ - www.agilesafety.com/prod02.htm
*WORKSAFE IOWA does not endorse any product or supplier.

DOL offers Employment Laws Assistance for Workers & Small businesses (elaws)

This Department of Labor “elaws” website is an electronic advisor, helping employers stay on top of DOL-administered laws related to their organization. The interactive format of the information simulates interacting with an employment law expert. The “FirstStep Employment Law Advisor” webpage identifies which laws are most likely to apply to a business, based on a series of questions. The system applies to DOL laws only, not those administered by other federal agencies.

DOL (elaws) - www.dol.gov/elaws/

“Fire Prevention During Welding, Cutting, and Other Hot Work”

This National Fire Protection Association publication (NFPA 51B, $25.50, $22.95 to NFPA members) may be useful to anyone who manages, supervises, or performs hot work. It covers precautions and best practices for heat treating, grinding, hot riveting, and other tasks that produce a spark, flame, or heat. The 2003 edition (next revision: 2008) added information on signage, personal protective equipment, and other topics.

NFPA - enter 51B03 under “search”

Given supply uncertainties and CDC distribution priorities (high-risk groups only until 10/24/05), flu vaccine availability is up in the air. As soon as they know more, occupational health clinics will contact employers to begin work-site vaccination programs. (CDC - www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5434a4.htm)