

## 8. NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation

If workers are getting sick even though there appear to be no violations of OSHA/NJPEOSH standards, it may be useful to request a *Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE)* from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH is the federal agency that performs health and safety research. An HHE is an on-site evaluation by health professionals who may include industrial hygienists, physicians, and epidemiologists. If NIOSH staff does conduct an HHE, they will issue a report with their findings and recommendations.

Keep in mind that HHEs are difficult to obtain, take a long time to be completed, and that NIOSH cannot force the employer to make changes. It may take many months for NIOSH to schedule an HHE and issue a report because they receive many requests.

Despite these drawbacks, HHEs can be useful especially for long-standing problems that have not been solved by other approaches. In such cases the long waits may not matter as much. At a minimum, the NIOSH evaluation will put needed attention on workers' concerns. And the NIOSH report is likely to contain recommendations for improving the workplace. Requesting or publicizing an HHE can also be used to generate media attention and build alliances.

A union or management representative or at least three workers must sign the HHE request.

### NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluations

**Phone:** 513-841-4382

[www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe)



