

## Popcorn Lung and Other News on Occupational Health and Safety

### Popcorn lung, candy lung....

#### Popcorn lung, a sometimes lethal disease caused by inhaling chemical butter flavoring, has been found among candy makers.

A recently identified outbreak of severe cases of popcorn lung among former candy factory workers may prove what government and civilian occupational health experts have long feared - the sometimes-fatal disease can afflict those exposed to diacetyl butter flavoring regardless of where they work.

<http://andrewschneiderinvestigates.com/2009/04/06/popcorn-lung-a-sometimes-lethal-disease-caused-by-inhaling-chemical-butter-flavoring-has-been-found-among-candy-makers/>

#### Did artificial flavoring hurt woman's lungs? Popcorn factory worker in Cincinnati court today

After spending nearly a decade working at an Ohio popcorn factory, Kathryn Rayburn developed an incurable lung disease. Doctors say her lung capacity is just a third of what it's supposed to be because of her workplace exposure to a butter flavoring called diacetyl.

[http://www.cleveland.com/healthfit/index.ssf/2009/04/did\\_artificial\\_flavoring\\_hurt.html](http://www.cleveland.com/healthfit/index.ssf/2009/04/did_artificial_flavoring_hurt.html)

More on the sweet stuff:

### OSHA's Teeth

IT'S ENCOURAGING to see that the federal government is pressing its bid to crack down on management at the Imperial Sugar Co. following last year's explosion and fire last year at its Port Wentworth refinery.

<http://savannahnow.com/node/700805>

Meanwhile, someone may be in trouble...

### **Audit Faults Payment of \$681,379 to OSHA Consultant**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration paid more than half a million dollars to a consultant from the home state of the agency's director without keeping any "work products" produced by the consultant, an act that violated the terms of a government contract, federal laws and regulations, and Department of Labor policies, according to an audit by the department's Office of Inspector General.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/02/AR2009040203229\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/02/AR2009040203229_pf.html)

Good idea, but execution left something to be desired:

## **Initiative On Worker Safety Gets Poor Marks**

### **IG's Report Links Weak Enforcement To Job Fatalities**

A special government program to improve worker safety in hazardous industries rarely fulfilled its promise, a Labor Department audit concluded yesterday, and over the past six years, dozens of deaths occurred at firms that should have been subjected to much tighter federal safety enforcement.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/01/AR2009040103939\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/01/AR2009040103939_pf.html)

And if you're not thoroughly depressed by now, read this three part New York Times series on the New York state workers compensation program.

## ***A World of Hurt***

### **For Injured Workers, a Costly Legal Swamp**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/31/nyregion/31comp.html?\\_r=1&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/31/nyregion/31comp.html?_r=1&hp)

### **Exams of Injured Workers Fuel Mutual Mistrust**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/01/nyregion/01comp.html?scp=1&sq=a%20world%20of%20hurt&st=cse>

### **In Workplace Injury System, Ill Will on All Sides**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/02/nyregion/02comp.html?scp=3&sq=a%20world%20of%20hurt&st=cse>