



APRIL 2008

Calendar of Events

APRIL 22-24, 2008

THE NASF WASHINGTON FORUM -  
REGISTER TODAY

L'ENFANT PLAZA - WASHINGTON, DC

MAY 1, 2008

**CMFI Board of Directors Meeting.**  
**Rosewood Restaurant, Rosemont**

MAY 29, 2008

**CMFI Member Meeting**  
**The Clubhouse Restaurant**  
**Oak Brook, IL**

JUNE 16-19, 2008

**SUR/FIN. Indiana Convention Center,**  
**Indianapolis, IN**

AUGUST 1, 2008

**Joint CMFI/AESF Golf Outing.**  
**White Pines Golf Club, Bensenville**

AUGUST 22, 2008

**CMFI "Day at the Races". Arlington Park**  
**Racecourse. Arlington Heights**

NO CMFI APRIL MEMBER MEETING  
SCHEDULED. INSTEAD, MEMBERS  
ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THE  
NASF WASHINGTON FORUM

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION TO  
SPONSOR PRIVACY WORKSHOP

**Most companies keep sensitive personal information in their files — names, Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, or other account data — that identifies customers or employees. However, if sensitive data falls into the wrong hands, it can lead to fraud or identity theft. Given the cost of a security breach — losing your customers' trust and perhaps even defending yourself against a lawsuit — safeguarding personal information is just plain good business.**

**The Federal Trade Commission, the International Association of Privacy Professionals, and Northwestern University School of Law will co-host a public workshop on April 15, 2008 on how businesses can secure the personal information of consumers and employees.**

**The workshop, "Protecting Personal Information: Best Practices for Business," will feature business people, attorneys, government officials, privacy officers, and other experts who will provide practical guidance for businesses of all sizes on data security, best practices for developing an appropriate data security program, and how to respond to security problems, including data breaches. There is no cost to attend.**

**The workshop will be held in the Thorne Auditorium of the Arthur Rubloff Building on the Chicago campus of the Northwestern University School of Law, starting at 9 am. Onsite registration begins at 8 am; information about**

advance registration is on the workshop web page [www.ftc.gov/bcp/workshops/infosecurity](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/workshops/infosecurity).

As part of its business education program, the FTC has information to help businesses forge their own data security plans, including an online tutorial, a booklet, and a series of articles suitable for reprinting in print or electronic newsletters. All are available at [www.ftc.gov/infosecurity](http://www.ftc.gov/infosecurity). If you have any questions, please email [infosecurity@ftc.gov](mailto:infosecurity@ftc.gov).

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## EPA, INDUSTRY DEBATE OVER AIR CLEANUP

By H. Josef Hebert, Associated Press Writer  
Manufacturing.Net - March 05, 2008

Big industries are waging an intense lobbying effort to block new, tougher limits on air pollution that is blamed for hundreds of heart attacks, deaths and cases of asthma, bronchitis and other breathing problems. The EPA is to decide within weeks whether to reduce the allowable amount of ozone (smog) in the air. A tougher standard would require hundreds of counties across the country to find new ways to reduce smog-causing emissions of nitrogen oxides and chemical compounds from tailpipes and smokestacks.

Groups representing manufacturers, automakers, electric utilities, grocers and cement makers met with White House officials recently in a last-ditch effort to keep the health standard unchanged. They argued that tightening it would be costly and harm the economy in areas that will have to find additional air pollution controls.

Oil and chemical companies also have pressed their case for leaving the current requirements alone in meetings on Capitol Hill and with the Bush administration. A dozen senators and the Agriculture Department urged EPA not to tamper with the existing standard.

On the other side are health experts who conclude that tens of millions of people, particularly the elderly and small children, are still being harmed by poor air quality.

EPA said last summer that the current health standard — no more than 80 parts of ozone for every billion parts of air — does not provide

needed protection against asthma, heart attacks and respiratory problems. EPA has estimated a reduction to 70 parts per billion could result annually in 2,300 fewer nonfatal heart attacks; 48,000 fewer respiratory problems, acute bronchitis and asthma attacks; 7,600 fewer respiratory related hospital visits, and 890,000 fewer days when people miss work or school.

Under court order to review the standard, the EPA had to decide by mid-March on what to do.

"The less pollution in the air, the fewer people are going to get sick, fewer children will have asthma attacks, fewer people are going to die," says Janice Nolen of the American Lung Association, which has argued along with almost every other health and medical group to tighten the smog standard issued in 1997.

The federal health standards set air quality benchmarks that states and local officials must strive to meet through various pollution reduction measures, or risk federal sanctions such as the loss of federal highway money. The law says the standard must be based on protecting public health and not cost, a position the Supreme Court has reinforced.

EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson has acknowledged the standard should be tightened, but he has been unwilling to go as far as health scientists say is needed to protect older Americans, children and the 20 million people that suffer from asthma. The EPA's independent science advisory panel recommended a standard of between 60 and 70 parts per billion, as did a second EPA advisory board on children's health.

Both industry lobbyists and environmentalists say they believe Johnson has taken the view that the standard should be tightened to 75 parts per billion — an approach that doesn't satisfy either industry or health experts.

"It's a political compromise," says Frank O'Donnell, president of Clean Air Watch, an advocacy group. Even so, he adds, "every major industry is ... putting the squeeze on" to get the White House to leave the current standard in place.

"The results vary but most studies show a steady reduction in the public health burden as the standard is tightened," said Jonathan Levy of the

Harvard Center of Risk Analysis. Levy co-authored a 2006 study that examined the health benefits of tougher smog restrictions in California. It found that tightening the ozone standard to 70 parts per billion would annually result in 270 fewer premature deaths, 280 fewer emergency room visits for asthma and 1,800 fewer hospital admissions for respiratory disease in the state — a reduction of 75 percent in all three categories. Another study estimated 3,800 premature deaths would be avoided nationwide.

Johnson met shortly before Christmas with an array of representatives from environmental and health groups, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. At that meeting, they echoed the views of 111 health scientists who last year told the EPA the ozone health standards needed to be lowered to between 60 and 70 parts per billion.

Industry groups argue that the science is inconclusive and that the need for a tighter standard has not been shown, especially since 104 counties have yet to meet the current requirements. If the standard is lowered to 75 parts per billion, the number of counties in violation grows to nearly 400, and at 70 parts per billion to 533, according to EPA. That means states would be forced to clamp new emission controls on businesses, and motor vehicles to clean up the air.

"It could trigger layoffs nationwide, further eroding U.S. economic competitiveness," Sen. George Voinovich of economically stressed Ohio, and six other Republican senators recently wrote the EPA. EPA has put the annual cost of meeting a 75 parts per billion standard at \$9.8 billion. A 70 parts per billion ozone standard would cost \$22 billion annually. But EPA notes that the costs of either could easily be offset or exceeded by reduced health care costs.

Manufacturing groups from Virginia and Wisconsin have asked their senators to intervene. National lobbying powerhouses such as the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Petroleum Institute, the American Chemistry Council and Alliance for Automobile Manufacturers have met with administration officials and lobbied Congress to keep the smog standard unchanged.

Edison Electric Institute officials made their case directly to the White House Office of Management and Budget, which has to sign off on whatever EPA and Johnson decide. "Our position is that the existing standard adopted in 1997 should remain in place," said Daniel Riedinger, a spokesman for the group, which represents investor-owned power companies.

"Urge them to retain the current standard," Harry Berry, the county executive/judge in Hardin County, Ky., wrote to his senator. Berry warned tougher smog health requirements would be "another blow to the bottom line" for businesses in his area.

William Becker, executive director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies representing the state and county officials who would have to enforce new air quality requirements, said his group isn't opposed to a tougher standard. "It's going to make our job that much more daunting," Becker said, "but what trumps that ... is public health."

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#### FIXING FAMILY LEAVE

*FROM: WALL STREET JOURNAL, 2/05/08*

Few laws are so universally acclaimed as the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act, which is based on the assumption that allowing employees unpaid leave is cost free. It isn't, and we're glad to see the Labor Department is finally taking steps to end some abusive practices.

The law allows employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave a year to take care of themselves or relatives with a "serious medical condition." They can also take off for maternity, adoption or newborn care. That seems simple enough, but the courts continue to strike down regulations that the Clinton Administration issued to implement the act, and the result has been legal and economic confusion.

A 2005 study by the Employment Policy Foundation found the law's cost to businesses in 2004 was a not-so – cheap \$21 billion. This included \$5 billion in lost productivity, \$6 billion to continue health benefits for employees on leave, and \$10 billion in replacement labor costs – including wages to employees who had to work additional shifts or overtime to fill in for the missing.

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With these costs in mind, Labor Secretary, Elaine Chao, issued rules to clear up ambiguities in the law that were being exploited. Take something called "unscheduled intermittent leave." Under current rules, an employee with a medical condition can simply fail to show up for two days before claiming leave. And since leave can be taken a few minutes at a time, employees can show up late, leave early, or disappear for an hour without notice. This is an invitation for misuse, especially at time-sensitive businesses (say, emergency first response or assembly lines) and many employers have lost control of their workforce. Under the proposed changes, employees would generally have to call in to request leave before taking it, which seems fair.

Labor's proposals would also clear up loose requirements for certifying what qualifies as a "serious" medical condition. Under current rules, workers can get an open-ended doctor's certificate for a condition -- asthma, migraines, whatever -- that allows them leave at any point. Under the new rules, companies can require employees to renew that certificate every year.

Separately, and appropriately, President Bush last week signed an expansion of the law that would allow family members to take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for wounded military personnel. The Labor Department's new rules address this expansion in such a way that it will allow families to care for the wounded but without opening up opportunities for abuse.

Many Democrats on Capitol Hill want to expand the law even further, imposing it on businesses with fewer than 50 employees, and making companies provide paid days off. But that would only expand the costs, and make employers even more reluctant to hire in the first place -- as in Europe. Meantime, the new rules will help ensure that family leave is taken by employees who really need it, not by slackers gaming the system.

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