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ENERSOL staff changes

ENERSOL staff members Gergaynia Shelley and Hung Truong have moved to contractual work for ENERSOL after many years of full-time service.

After traveling around the world for Enersol on maintenance trips and to ISO Glove meetings, building ENERSOL's quality system and managing over 20 staff, Gergaynia Shelley, Enersol's General Manager, has just retired after eighteen years of service. ENERSOL would not be the company it is without Gergaynia's involvement.

Gergaynia will remain ENERSOL's Quality Manager on a part-time basis and continue her work with the ISO Glove committee.

Her main objective for the future is being a full-time grandmother to her 3 year-old granddaughter Jessica and rejuvenating her garden after the Australian summer all but destroyed it.

After 10 years of service, Hung Truong has recently resigned from his full-time position as laboratory supervisor for family reasons. Hung and his young family have moved to Victoria. Hung will continue with ENERSOL on a contractual basis, he will continue to perform maintenance and installations overseas.

Both Gergaynia and Hung were very dedicated and will be greatly missed.

A new general manager will begin in May. Gergaynia can still be contacted by e-mail gshelley@enersol.com.au and those who were previously in contact with Hung are advised to contact Grace Iskander giskander@enersol.com.au

HPV and Condom Use

A recent article confirms the effectiveness of condoms in reducing the duration of HPV infection in adolescent women. It studied a number of factors, in particular condom use. Clearance of HPV was significantly faster during infection periods associated with more frequent condom use (median duration 58 days), compared with less frequent condom use (median duration 257 days).

It is clear that contrary to claims by very influential detractors, the condom is an important and effective tool in preventing STIs and pregnancy, if only people use them.

For more information, see Shew, M. L. et al, *Association of Condom Use, Sexual Behaviours and Sexually Transmitted Infections with the Duration of Genital HPV Infection among Adolescent Women*, Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med 160, Feb 2006, 151-155.

ENERSOL Annual Maintenance and Calibration

Each year we run a Maintenance and Calibration program for clients with ENERSOL Inflation Systems.

The program assists laboratories that have, or are seeking, lab accreditation or lab certification, and those who wish to ensure their system operates at maximum efficiency.

Visits are coordinated by ENERSOL so that clients in the same geographical area can be visited during one trip, thereby keeping the cost of entering such a program to a minimum. You can contact us about the schedule by e-mail, fax or phone.

If you have not replied to your invitation for the 2006 program please reply by e-mail or fax as soon as possible. If you have misplaced or lost your invitation, please contact Lisa Henretty or John Gerofi to have it re-sent.

For more information on this and other services available with ENERSOL, please contact us directly by e-mail, fax or phone, or visit the services section of our website

<http://www.enersol.com.au>

Ansell makes moves in China

Ansell Ltd has purchased a 75% interest in Wuhan Jissbon Sanitary Products Co., Ltd, a condom supplier in the province of Wuhan. Ansell is using this purchase to gain a bigger presence in China. The 75% interest cost Ansell \$18m with an option to acquire the remaining 25%.

The sale is subject to Chinese government approval and is due to close in the coming months. Jissbon is run by a progressive management team that Ansell say will remain after the deal has closed.

Jissbon has more than 200 cities on its marketing and distribution network and holds approximately 10% of the condom market in China. Production will remain in existing plants but Ansell will make further investments into distribution and the establishment of its brand in China.

Ansell also plans to establish a new trading company, Ansell (Shanghai) Commercial and Trading Co., Ltd. As China is looking to improve worker safety, the company will serve as a springboard to provide a wide range of occupational products, including industrial and consumer gloves.

Ansell have been selling into the Chinese glove market for years but growth has been limited in the past due to the local sales force underperforming and a lack of local warehousing and distribution facilities. This move will see Ansell focus on opportunities along the coastal corridor and support the Chinese government's initiative to improve health and safety.

How effective are condoms?

Much of Enersol's reason for being is to improve the quality of medical devices. People often ask how effective condoms really are, particularly in the light of adverse publicity from groups claiming that abstinence and fidelity are the only safe ways of avoiding STIs. In 2004, a group of researchers in California pooled data from two of their studies to produce slippage, breakage and pregnancy rates for latex condoms, covering 3715 uses. The rate of clinical breakages (ie those that could have resulted in pregnancy or infection) was 0.4%.

The percentage of clinical slippages was 1.0%. The rate of pregnancy, among consistent users was 1.0% on the life table basis (4 pregnancies over 2248 cycles). The results show that among willing, adequately educated and trained users, the effectiveness of condoms can be very high. If users who admitted not using the condom each time are included, then the pregnancy rate jumps to 6.6%, showing the importance of actually using the device to make it effective.

The slippage, breakage and pregnancy rates are comfortingly low compared with studies done a decade or more ago, and generally in line with other smaller studies done recently. While this may in part be due to the study participants, the general improvement of quality of condoms must also be a major contributor.

For more information, see T. L Walsh et al, *Effectiveness of the male condom: combined results for three popular condom brands used as controls in randomised clinical trials*, *Contraception* 70 (2004) 407-413.

Catholic Bishop backs condom use in AIDS prevention

Working to combat AIDS in Papua New Guinea, a catholic bishop has questioned the Vatican's ban on condoms.

The Bishop said he was in favour of providing condoms to communities where extramarital sex and multiple partners is common.

The Bishop says he is not conflicting with the church's papal teaching 'one shall not kill'. The Church repeatedly declines to endorse condoms to fight AIDS. The UN estimates 1.7% or 47,000 have AIDS in Papua New Guinea.

Tianjin Latex moves

One of China's oldest condom factories, Tianjin Latex, is moving to a new factory. The old factory was in the centre of the city, on a relatively confined site, over several floors with 4 production lines.

Tianjin latex was recently privatised, and the new owners, Tianjin Human Care, have constructed a modern facility in an industrial zone near the airport.

It has provision for ten production lines, indicating the faith of the company in future growth of the condom market.

The new factory is expected to be operating by mid-year.

Showering to avoid HIV: South Africa

Close to 6 million South Africans have HIV - the highest number in the world. Mr. Zuma, former deputy president of South Africa, said in court last week that after having sex with a woman he had taken a shower because this "would minimise the risk of contracting the disease [HIV]". Before being sacked as deputy president last year, he was the head of the government's National Aids Council and the Moral Regeneration Campaign.

Mr. Zuma made the statement as he was cross-examined during his trial for rape, an allegation which he denies. Local AIDS activists are angered that he did not use a condom during the encounter, despite knowing the woman was HIV-positive. "There is no evidence which supports that showering reduces the risk of contracting HIV. It is disappointing that political leaders are ill-informed about the epidemic," says Nathan Geffen of AIDS lobbyists, Treatment Action Campaign.

Mr. Zuma explained, according to his understanding, it was difficult for a man to contract HIV through sex with a woman. "I had knowledge that... chances were very slim you could get the disease." Aids educators fear that while female-to-male HIV transmission is indeed less common than male-to-female transmission, Mr. Zuma's explanation could be interpreted as meaning men are not at risk.

"Statements like that can throw years of hard work down the drain," says Vicci Tallis of the Gender Aids Forum - echoing the dismay expressed by other Aids activists. Mr. Zuma, 63, said he normally uses condoms, but did not have one available for the night in question. He also says he was ready to marry the woman, 31. He insists she had initiated the encounter and that it was consensual. Mr. Zuma - previously seen as a possible future president - retains considerable popularity. His supporters see the charge as a political conspiracy. Mr. Zuma will be also defending himself against corruption allegations in a trial later this year.

People are boiling condoms: Uganda

A lecturer from Makerere University in Uganda has said some people cannot afford to purchase condoms and they have resorted to sterilizing used condoms with the steam produced during cooking.

Professor Sam Luboga made the statement at the opening of the AIDS action week at the University. "We are promoting condom use but do people have the money?" asked Luboga.

"The people are poor, they reesterilize condoms on luwombo to use them again because they don't have money," he said, adding it is disheartening that those who boil the condoms do not understand their properties.

Uganda has been praised for its approach in the fight against HIV/AIDS. "We should aim at high standard care for everyone. The technical quality on treatment depending on who you are is unfair". He also said the country should address equitable health care among women and men because women have a higher risk of contracting HIV.

Condom trees in outback Australia

A controversial safe sex initiative in Broome, far north Western Australia, has been given the go-ahead after months of deliberation.

The Kimberly Public Health Unit and Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Services have been urging the local council to introduce condom trees to supply free condoms. The introduction of such a scheme comes as the Kimberly region was found to have the highest per capita rate of sexually transmitted infections in the country. The same scheme has been in operation for three years in the nearby town of Derby.

The initiative has been met with some criticism from the Broome catholic bishop who described the scheme as political gimmickry. This criticism has been met by councilors who are arguing that 48% of Western Australia's sexually transmitted infection occurs in the Kimberly, which only has 2% of the states population.

The council agreed to install six condom trees which involve the hanging of PVC pipes filled with free condoms in the trees in five different locations where young people meet.

Mouse problems with Windows XP

A few users with ENERSOL Inflation systems have reported erratic mouse behaviour when they attempt to start a Windows XP computer connected to their Inflation system. ENERSOL has a remedy for this problem, if it occurs.

Please contact Lisa Henretty via email LHenretty@enersol.com.au for assistance if your computer exhibits this behaviour. This modification is available free of charge to ENERSOL's maintenance clients.

ISO Condom Committee

Two of ISO TC 157s working groups, on female condoms and on clinical trials, met in April. A first committee draft the female condom standard is under preparation.

The clinical trials group is drafting a document that can be used for new designs of both male and female condoms, and the results of its work will be incorporated into the synthetic male condom draft and the female condom draft. The Chairman's advisory group also met.

The next full meeting of TC 157 will be on October 9 to 13, in New Delhi. Intending delegates must be nominated by their national standards body.

A brief history of Condom Standards

- o Sweden first started testing condoms in 1951, with mandatory requirements for condoms sold in pharmacies
- o Sweden's regulations were extended to cover all condoms in 1959
- o The first British standard on condoms was published in 1964
- o The USFDA started testing condoms (for holes only) in 1968
- o The first ASTM standard on condoms was published in 1976
- o ISO TC 157 started work on international standards for condoms and diaphragms in 1975
- o WHO first published its specifications for condoms in 1989
- o The first (complete) ISO standard on condoms was published in 1990
- o The first European condom standard (EN 600) was published in 1996
- o The harmonised ISO/EN condom standard was published in 2002.

Your contributions are welcome...

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