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Contact:
Mary Watters: mwatters@cpwr.com
301-495-8523/o, 301-919-4627/c

**NATIONAL ACADEMIES' REPORT ON THE NIOSH/CPWR CONSTRUCTION
SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM EXTREMELY POSITIVE**

REPORT CITES "SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS," SUGGESTS AREAS FOR GROWTH

An independent scientific panel, convened by the National Academies of Science at the request of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), released an extensive report Nov. 6 assessing NIOSH's strategic research program for preventing occupational injuries, illnesses, and deaths in the construction industry. The NIOSH Construction Program consists of three components: an intramural research component; an extramural grants component; and an external "National Construction Center" currently operated by CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training.

The report of the National Academies' panel determined that the construction safety and health program merited a "5" out of a possible 5 in relevance of research addressing priority safety and health needs, and a "4" in impact, or getting the research incorporated on worksites. The research program is "clearly engaged in high-priority activities ... on the leading causes of fatalities, health hazards that affect large numbers of construction workers, and significant special populations," such as Hispanic workers, the report said. The report is available at the National Academies' Press site, www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12530#toc.

"Those of us in the building trades are elated to see that construction workers' safety and health needs have been the focus of such a massive review," said Mark H. Ayers, president of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, and CPWR. "We know all too well that worksites can be extremely dangerous. Certainly the 11 million construction workers in our nation are safer and healthier because of the important work done by NIOSH and CPWR during the last 15 years." CPWR is the research arm of the Building Trades.

Pete Stafford, executive director of CPWR, praised the year-long effort of the committee in examining the details of the complex research projects and products that come from the research.

"We thank the committee for their exhaustive review of our specialized research on topics such as worker exposure to silica, chromium and lead, as well as our research to prevent the multiple traumatic injuries construction workers face daily," said Stafford. "While we have seen a decline in construction deaths and fatalities during our 18-year association with NIOSH, we know there is more work to be done."

(continued)

NIOSH asked the National Academies to conduct an independent scientific review of its eight program areas, one of which is construction, to get an unbiased analysis of the relevance, impact, and quality of NIOSH's scientific research, and to demonstrate NIOSH's commitment to transparency and accountability in its research programs.

The committee's report contains six major recommendations, and a number of suggestions for ongoing activities and future research areas. Two of the recommendations address continuing and expanding the role of the external "National Construction Center," the work performed by CPWR. These recommendations will "help to ensure that the program continues to work in high-priority areas," and to improve the program's impact in the future, the report said.

Mark Ayers expressed delight in the "confirmation of CPWR's fine work, and we of the BCTD heartily support expansion of the role CPWR fills through the National Construction Center." Ayers noted CPWR's unique access to trade unions and employer associations enables their researchers to stay close to the immediate problems on U.S. jobsites.

NIOSH Acting Director Christine M. Branche, Ph.D., pointed out the broad scope and understanding of the industry that the independent panel's review demonstrated.

"[Their review] highlighted the complexity of the construction industry, its fundamental importance to American growth, the physical challenges of the work environment, and the dramatic changes in the industry that will continue through the coming decades," Dr. Branche said. "The National Academies' review will help us significantly as we work with our partners to design and carry out 21st century research for this 21st century industry."

Research performed by CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training is conducted through a cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training is a 501-c-3 organization affiliated with the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, and serves as the research arm of the BCTD. CPWR provides safety and health research and information for the construction trades and industry. For more information, visit www.cpwr.com.