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1. Did you know?

Safety audits represent one of the most important elements in the implementation of an effective occupational health and safety program. EHS staff conduct periodic safety audits based on known or expected hazards throughout UNL. Areas likely to contain a greater severity or variety of hazards are audited more frequently.

The importance of auditing is underscored in UNL’s Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP). The IIPP requires supervisors to conduct regular work area safety inspections. The benefits and purposes of conducting work area surveys are listed below:

- Identify uncontrolled hazardous conditions, processes, and work practices that may lead to injury, illness, or prohibited releases to the environment.
- Serve as a communication tool by which responsible individuals are made aware of the potentially hazardous processes, conditions, or work practices and appropriate control measures.
- Identify regulatory risk by assessing compliance with various regulatory standards.

Supervisors are an invaluable resource at the forefront of promoting safe conditions and work practices. The supervisor sees processes at all stages on a daily basis. The supervisor has the ear of their staff and graduate students working with potentially hazardous processes or materials.

EHS safety auditors often get questions about exactly WHAT we are looking for during a safety audit. You don't have to wonder, you can use the same checklists EHS does! There are Safety Audit Guidelines Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Biosafety Level 1 Laboratories, Biosafety Level 2 Laboratories, Chemical Laboratories, Shops, Kitchens, Offices/Conference Rooms/Similar Locations available online at: http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/index.shtml#audit. EHS provides these audit forms as a tool for supervisors, safety committees, building/area safety chairs, or anyone interested in safety.

Not sure where your work area fits within the listed safety audit categories? EHS would be happy to assist you with that determination. Contact EHS by phone (472-4925) or email (ehs@unl.edu).

2. Extensively revised EHS Virtual Manual

The Environmental Health and Safety revamped Virtual Manual (VM) you have been waiting for is now available online at: https://scsapps.unl.edu/VirtualManual/. Due to the extensive nature of the changes, anyone who had previously developed a Virtual Manual will need to access this site and create a new profile (the combination of subjects you indicate apply to your work/work area). Completing a new VM should only take approximately 15 minutes.

Haven't assembled a Virtual Manual yet? Now is the time. The Virtual Manual was created to help supervisors and employees consolidate safety and compliance information that is specific to their work at UNL. The Virtual Manual uses assessment questions for several subject areas, some of which are applicable to many areas on campus, and some of which are only applicable to a few. Your answers determine what information is applicable to your work area--a customized Virtual (safety) Manual!
The Virtual Manual provides explanatory narrative and links to relevant EHS Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs), as well as additional information sources. If the hazards of your workplace change, revising your Virtual Manual is as easy as 1-2-3:
1. Access your customized Virtual Manual using the email address you used to set it up.
2. Answer the Assessment Questions again based on current workplace hazards/processes.
3. Click "Submit" and your new Virtual Manual is prepared.

Ideally you will maintain the online VM as your primary reference. As SOPs are updated, your VM will reflect the absolute latest information. Some prefer a hard copy VM for their particular area/workers. To create a hard copy of your Virtual Manual, print your assessment, each subject page in your profile, and all relevant, linked information. Most forms and SOPs are formatted in Adobe to make printing easier. Take your printed materials and arrange them in a binder. If you print your material, you will want to check your profile online occasionally to see if any information has been updated. You will be able to tell by comparing the revision dates of the materials.

The information in your Virtual Manual should be supplemented with specific work practices and procedures as appropriate and which are generally established by the supervisor.

3. Mark your calendars!

Environmental Health & Safety (EHS), in partnership with the Office of Research & Economic Development, is sponsoring a campus-wide Laboratory Safety Colloquium on **Cryogen Safety**. The presenter is Pam Hendershot with Praxair Specialty Gas & Distribution. Five sessions will be offered at various locations and times on both City and East Campus over two days, **Tuesday, February 16 and Wednesday, February 17, 2010**.

A publicity poster with specific session times and locations is available on the EHS website at [http://ehs.unl.edu/training/#colloquium](http://ehs.unl.edu/training/#colloquium) and the Office of Research & Economic Development web site at [http://research.unl.edu/lsi_9-06.shtml](http://research.unl.edu/lsi_9-06.shtml). Previous colloquia presentations and videos may be accessed through these web sites.

Pre-registration is NOT required. Just pick your session, mark your calendar, and attend. There will be time for questions afterward and a display of relevant safety items. Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, with Environmental Health & Safety, will be happy to answer questions you might have about this important safety event. Betsy can be reached at 472-5488 or ehowe2@unl.edu.

4. Help protect Antelope Creek (City Campus) and Deadman's Run (East Campus).

These two streams run through City and East Campus respectively. Storm sewers (i.e., outdoor drains including curb inlets and storm grates) are directly connected to these streams. Anything disposed or discharged to the storm sewer will be discharged to a stream. Common pollutants include mud, used oil, anti-freeze, and detergents. Please contact EHS if you see any of the following:
   - The tracking of mud from construction sites onto streets;
   - Muddy water flowing into drains;
   - The washing or emptying of containers such as drums, trash cans, vehicles or other equipment on paved surfaces;
   - Spills of oil or fuels; and
   - Any other suspicious release or discharge of materials.

5. Revised Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs)

EHS has revised SOPs on the EHS website, including:
Pyrophoric Chemicals [http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-pyrophoric_chemicals.pdf](http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-pyrophoric_chemicals.pdf)
A number of SOPs on a variety of safety topics are available on the EHS website at http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/

Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!

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