

In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv, April 21, 2016:

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1. "Electrical Safety for Everyone" Follow-up

The recent spring colloquium presented by Kevin Booker, Chief State Electrical Inspector of Nebraska, is now available online. Electrical safety information for all UNL workers may be found in the Safe Operating Procedure (SOP), **General Electrical Safety**, which is expanded upon by the web-based training module, **General Electrical Safety Awareness**.

Resources

- EHS Safety Colloquium Series <http://ehs.unl.edu/training/Colloquium>
- EHS web-based training **General Electrical Safety Awareness** <http://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#ElectricalSafety>
- EHS SOP **General Electrical Safety** <http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-electricalsafety.pdf>

2. New Technology in Lab Coat Safety

Laboratory research can involve a wide variety of chemical hazards, including flammable materials and caustics. Conventional lab coats are typically made of cotton or cotton/polyester blends, both of which are flammable and will ignite when exposed to flames. Over the past few years flame-resistant (FR) lab coats have come into wider use due to increasing awareness of laboratory safety driven by reports of fires, injury and death at various academic institutions. A drawback of typical FR coats is that they are not chemical resistant and many chemicals will immediately permeate the fabric, sometimes even burning holes into it.

Workrite Uniforms recently unveiled a new line of lab coats that they refer to as FR/CP® (Flame Resistant and Chemical Splash Protection). These lab coats are constructed of a FR fiber that is particularly well suited to the lab environment due to the ability to resist degradation from chemical contact. Chemical splash protection garments work by preventing the penetration and wicking of many liquid chemicals,

which minimizes the potential for injury from chemical burns. These latest FR/CP® lab coats are lightweight, have a breathable feel and allow ease of movement for lab workers. They are identified with a specific tag and a black collar and are available through a variety of lab coat suppliers.

Resources:

- Mark Saner. “Protective Apparel: The Science of Laboratory Safety.” Occupational Safety & Health digital edition. March 2016.
<https://ohsonline.com/articles/2016/03/01/the-science-of-laboratory-safety.aspx>
- Occupational Safety & Health Webinar Series On Demand. “New Technology in Lab Safety: Flame-Resistant, Chemical-Splash Protection.” (register/login to access this “on demand” presentation from April 7, 2016).
<https://ohsonline.com/webcasts/2016/02/new-technology-in-lab-safety.aspx?admgarea=Webinar&tc=page0>
- Workrite web site <http://www.workritefr.com/frcp-lab-coats/>

3. EPA Inspection Recap

An inspector from Region 7 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently conducted a hazardous waste compliance inspection of UNL’s East Campus facility. While the inspection went very well, it is an opportunity to reinforce those steps that the campus community must take to ensure compliance.

- Be sure that all containers used to collect waste chemicals are properly labeled. Labels must include the word “used” or “spent” and the proper chemical name of all constituents in the container (e.g., acetone, methanol). If the labeling becomes damaged or illegible, relabel the container.
- Be sure that the material of construction of all containers used to collect waste chemicals is compatible with the contents to be added. Also be sure that all constituents to be added to the container are compatible with each other.
- Be sure that collection containers are securely closed at all times except when immediately adding material to the container.
- Stage the container in the same room where the waste materials are generated until it is picked up by EHS. Do not transport the container to another location while awaiting pickup by EHS.
- Do not overfill the container. Leave adequate headspace (e.g., 1 – 3”).
- Promptly tag filled collection containers for EHS pickup. If conducting an inventory reduction, consult EHS for specific guidance.

Resources

- EHS **Waste Management** Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs)
<http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/waste-management>

4. Be Prepared for Severe Weather

Whether you work on campus or in the field, do you know what to do in the event of severe weather? It may have been some time since you took the EHS web-based **Emergency Preparedness** training so now is a good time to review that online module and related resources. It might also be a good time to review UNL's Emergency Preparedness website.

A number of areas have established Emergency Action Plans. Does your building have one? If not, now might be a good time to help set one up. You can download a template from UNL's Emergency Preparedness website. Assistance/consultation regarding completion is only an email away, by contacting preparedness@unl.edu. Mark Robertson, Emergency Management Coordinator, can help facilitate development of an Emergency Action Plan if there are many departments in a particular building.

The EHS Safe Operating Procedure **Communication of Work Area Safety Information** contains a checklist with various items including a section on "Emergency Preparedness." The checklist assists both workers and supervisors by identifying relevant action items for new/current workers.

Resources

- EHS web-based **Emergency Preparedness** training
<http://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#EP>
- UNL Emergency Planning and Preparedness web site
<http://emergency.unl.edu/>
- National Weather Service Lightning Safety Tips
<http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/>
- UNL Emergency Preparedness "Really Obvious" Preparedness Facts
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh0k4GzppsQEyNcNx-fxPRldpC-hERTQH>
- EHS Safe Operating Procedure **Communication of Work Area Safety Information** <http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-workareasafety.pdf>

5. Safety Shorts – Lightning & Tornado

This series features links to short safety resources each month. These videos talk about a variety of hazards widely applicable across the university, including field research, agricultural operations, landscape duties, maintenance operations, and more. The focus this month is severe weather.

- **Lightning Safety with LeeAnn Allegretto** (NWS Missoula MT, 5:22 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMOFxrAWquk>

- **Get Weather Ready: During a Tornado** (US National Weather Service, 1:41 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5TiTfuvotc

NOTE: Resources are provided for informational purposes only. Publication does not in any way endorse a particular company or product or affect current UNL policies and procedures.

6. Safety Committees, Snippets & Other Resources

Does your department/area/facility have a safety program or is thinking about developing one? Safety committees are a valuable tool toward development of a culture of safety in all areas. If you are interested in forming a Safety Committee EHS is here to help. A few of the ways we can assist are:

- Safety Committee set-up
- Planning and operational suggestions
- Facilitation of vendor-provided training

If you currently have a Safety Committee and are not already in communication with EHS, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, ehowe2@unl.edu or 402-472-5488, to join the group of identified safety committees/safety contacts and interact regularly with a safety professional. Are you doing something unique or successful that you would like to share with other safety committees? Are there issues you are struggling with? We can put you in touch with other UNL safety committees in areas with a similar focus.

EHS has recently added an online resource called "Safety Snippets" for safety committees or others working with safety throughout their sphere of influence. Each "snippet" is a synopsis of a longer article on a specific topic (source provided). Safety Snippets, past Listserv articles and Safety Posters may now be readily accessed through the "Safety Resources" tab in the top red navigation bar on the EHS web site.

Resources

- Safety Committees <http://ehs.unl.edu/committees>
- Safety Snippets <http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-snippets>

7. Safety Poster – Excellence Happens Safely

EHS provides a number of safety posters of relevance to the campus community. The poster highlighted this month serves to remind those working in laboratories of a few basic safety precautions.



Request your FREE poster(s) today. Contact ehs@unl.edu or 402-472-4925 with your name, campus mailing address, and quantity desired. Review other FREE posters at: <http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-posters>. If you have an idea for a safety poster you would like to become available, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, ehowe2@unl.edu, 402-472-5488.

8. EHS Requests Your Feedback

Environmental Health and Safety is committed to excellent customer service and offers a *Customer Satisfaction Survey* as an easy method for the campus community to provide feedback on our services and staff. By taking a few moments to complete the survey (<http://ehs.unl.edu/survey>), you will be helping us to identify areas where we might need to focus our attention. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Please feel free to contact Brenda Osthus, EHS Director, at 402-472-4927 or bosthus1@unl.edu if you would rather communicate outside the parameters of this survey.

9. Revised Safe Operating Procedures

- ***Import and Transfer of Etiologic and Other CDC Regulated Agents*** SOP
http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-ship_etiologic_agents.pdf

This SOP has been updated to reflect current CDC information about obtaining a permit. A link has been added to the CDC e-Tool for determining if a permit is required. The document now references EHS SOPs on packaging and shipping hazardous materials/dangerous goods.

- ***Importing Animals and Animal Products*** SOP
http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-import_animals.pdf
Web links were updated to the correct addresses.

➤ **Laboratory Decommissioning SOP**

http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-lab_decom.pdf

Added additional instruction on proper labeling of waste materials and advised against removal of radiation labeling until decontamination is verified by EHS.

➤ **Non-Genetically Engineered Plant-Related Articles Requiring APHIS Permits SOP**

http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-ship_aphis_permits.pdf

Title changed to remove the word “transfer” after “APHIS”. Added section on importation of Plant Growth Enhancers (Soil amendments/plant health or growth enhancers are materials that typically are added to soil, plants, or the plant-growth environment to enhance plant growth.)

➤ **Shipping Infectious Substances With or Without Dry Ice SOP**

http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-ship_infectious_substances.pdf

Added additional instruction on proper labeling of waste materials and advised against removal of radiation labeling until decontamination is verified by EHS.

Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!

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