

**In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv,
January 26, 2017**

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1. Spring Safety Colloquium

Dan Olsen, CHMM, will speak on ***Chemical Hazard Assessment and Risk Minimization*** for the spring Safety Colloquium. How do you ensure that your work with chemicals will not result in harm to yourself, others, or result in a fire or other property damage? Learning how to anticipate chemical hazards, and hazards associated with the operation (e.g., unexpected reactions, heat or gas generation, pressurization, etc.) and planning actions to reduce the risk are the topics of this colloquium.

Anyone who works with hazardous chemicals should attend. This colloquium will demystify the chemical hazard assessment and risk minimization process. Faculty, staff, and students who work with hazardous chemicals, particularly those that conduct chemical reactions or work with varied and numerous different chemicals will find this colloquium informative and are invited to attend.

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. East Campus Union

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Hamilton Hall, Room 112

RSVPs are not necessary for this colloquium. Select the time/location that best fits your schedule.

Resources

- EHS Laboratory Safety Colloquium Series
<http://ehs.unl.edu/training/Colloquium>

2. Safe Snow Shoveling & Snow Blowing

Snow shoveling and use of a snow blower present a number of hazards. Here are some tips to help keep you safe while shoveling snow.

Preparation:

- **Dress appropriately.** Wear water-repellent clothing, layered for best insulation and to allow removal of a layer to prevent overheating. Cover your head, hands, and feet with weather-appropriate gear. Wear shoes/boots with slip-resistant soles.
- **Timing matters.** Start snow removal when there is a light covering and repeat. Do not wait for the snow to stop/accumulate. Do not plan to shovel immediately after eating and avoid caffeine before beginning.
- **Clear vision is important.** Be sure your cold weather clothing does not obstruct your vision so you can watch for icy spots/uneven surfaces. Maintain awareness of your surroundings so you do not inadvertently find yourself in a traffic path as vehicles may not have good traction on the snow/ice.
- **Prepare yourself.** Shoveling snow can raise your heart rate and blood pressure. Be sure your muscles are warmed up by stretching as you would for any workout. Walking a few minutes or marching in place is one suggestion for a 'warm-up.' Cold, tight muscles are more likely to result in a sprain or strain. If you have a history of heart or other medical problems or do not exercise regularly, check with your doctor before shoveling.

While shoveling:

- **Pace yourself.** Snow shoveling is an aerobic activity. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. STOP shoveling immediately if you experience pain or difficulty breathing or become fatigued.
- **Use proper equipment.** Use a shovel comfortable for your height and strength. Sometimes a smaller blade is better as it avoids the risk of trying to pick up too much snow at once.
- **Use proper technique.** When gripping the shovel position your hands 12 inches apart. This increases leverage and reduces the strain on your body. If possible, push the snow rather than lift to avoid back strain.
- **Push the snow, if possible. Lift only when necessary. If you must lift, lift properly.**
 - Lift with your legs and tighten your stomach muscles.
 - Keep your back straight and do not bend at the waist.
 - Scoop small amounts and walk to where you want to dump the snow.
 - Never remove deep snow all at once, rather shovel an inch or two and repeat.
 - Do not twist your body to shovel or empty the load. Never throw snow over your shoulder.

These are just a few tips to help prevent injury related to shoveling snow. If possible, use a snow blower instead of shoveling by hand. However, recognize that a snow blower presents unique hazards.

- **Never wear loose pants, jackets, or scarves.** Loose clothing can become entangled in moving parts and pull you in with them.
- **Operate snow blowers only when there is good visibility.**
- **NEVER stick your hands in the snow blower!** To resolve jams, shut-off the engine and wait more than five seconds. Use a solid object to clear the chute.
- **Do not leave the snow blower unattended.** Shut off the engine if you must walk away.
- **Add fuel before starting the machine, never while engine is running or hot.** Be sure to fuel the snow blower outside not in a garage, shed or other enclosed area. Do not operate in an enclosed area to avoid being overcome by engine fumes (carbon monoxide).
- **Avoid the engine.** The engine becomes hot during use and can burn unprotected flesh.
- **Use the pull-cord safely.** Hold cord firmly, stand with feet wide apart. Do not force cord if it does not move freely. Sharply pulling can cause upper body/back injury.
- **Watch the power cord.** For electric snow blowers, remain aware of power cord location. Entangled/severed power cords can lead to shock or electrocution.
- **Do not remove safety devices and keep hands and feet away from moving parts.** Safety devices, shields, guards, and interlocks are there for operator protection.
- **Watch out for motor recoil.** After the machine is turned off there is a brief recoil of motor and blades.
- **Keep others away, including children.** Snow blowers can pick up and shoot objects such as rocks and other debris with significant force. Take care to properly position the discharge chute.
- **Wear earplugs.** Gas-powered models typically run about 85 decibels so protect your hearing.
- **Understand the machine.** Read the instruction manual prior to use and be familiar with all features. Do not attempt to repair or maintain the snow blower without reading the instruction manual.

Resources

- **National Safety Council** “*Snow Shoveling*”
http://www.nsc.org/NSCDocuments_Corporate/SafetyObservancesDocuments/Snow-Shoveling.pdf
- **Snow and Ice Management Association** “*Safe Snow Shoveling*”
<http://www.sima.org/discover-sima/public-safety/safety-tips/safe-snow-shoveling>

- **American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons** “*Orthoinfo: Prevent Snow Shoveling and Snowblowing Injuries*”
<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00060>
- **Consumer Reports** “Commensense tips for safer snow blowing”
<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2013/12/common-sense-tips-for-safer-snow-blowing/index.htm>
- **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety** “Landscaping – Snow Blower”
https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/landscaping/snow_thrower_s.html

3. Safety Shorts – Snow Blower & Snow Shoveling Safety

This series features links to short safety resource(s) each month. Provided this month are resources related to snow shoveling safety.

- **Snow Shoveling Safety** (Cleveland Clinic, 2:06 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IMXSElabMM>
- **Easy Snow Shoveling Techniques – LSTraining.com** (LS Training System, 2:26 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hX6uaTivlcQ>

Snow blower safety videos are online in the “Safety Shorts” section of the January 22, 2016, issue: http://ehs.unl.edu/ls_2016-01-22.pdf

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.

4. NEW Posters – Battery & Glass Disposal

EHS provides a number of safety posters of relevance to the campus community. Featured this month are two new posters to provide information at-a-glance regarding “Battery Disposal” and “Glass Disposal.” Refer to the applicable Safe Operating Procedures for complete information.

Battery Disposal

Insulate terminals before placing in collection container



- Lithium ion
- Button
- Rechargeable



Disposal Options:

- Trade in with purchase of new
- Tag for collection by EHS

ONLY alkaline batteries may go into regular trash.



Safe Operating Procedure (ehs.unl.edu):
Battery Disposal

University of
Nebraska
Lincoln | Environmental
Health & Safety
(402) 472-4925

and

Glass Disposal



Safe Operating Procedure (ehs.unl.edu):
Glass Disposal – Intact or Broken

University of
Nebraska
Lincoln | Environmental
Health & Safety
(402) 472-4925

Request your FREE poster(s). Contact ehs@unl.edu or 402-472-4925 with your name, campus mailing address, and quantity desired. 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.

Resources:

- Safety Posters <http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-posters>
- **Battery Disposal** Safe Operating Procedure <http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-batterydisposal.pdf>
- **Glass Disposal – Intact or Broken** Safe Operating Procedure http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-glass_disposal.pdf

5. Situational Preparedness – Winter Driving/Cycling

Situational preparedness is so important that we will be looking at various aspects over time, as well as providing resources to assist you to “be prepared” for whatever situations you may encounter at UNL. When conditions are icy and/or snowy special techniques for driving or riding bicycles are necessary. While some of the following are from the perspective of an automobile driver, a number of the following tips apply equally to those using bicycles:

- Avoid operating any vehicle while you are fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces risks.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated and your vehicle is otherwise properly maintained.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full and never run a gas-powered vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Avoid braking as much as possible in cold, rainy and snowy weather. Think ahead, plan ahead, drive defensively.
- Always look and steer where you want to go.
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly to maintain/regain traction and avoid skids. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning – nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- The normal dry pavement following distance of three to four seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- Know your brakes. If your automobile has anti-lock brakes (ABS) and you need to slow down quickly, press hard on the pedal. It is normal for the pedal to vibrate a bit when the ABS is activated.
- Do not stop if you can avoid it. There’s a big difference in the amount of time due to inertia to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.

- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle. Wear a bicycle safety helmet when cycling even if you need to put on cold weather headwear over the helmet.
- Do not power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill as slowly as possible.
- Do not stop going up a hill. There is nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.
- Stay home if you really do not have to go out. Even if you can drive/cycle well in the snow, not everyone else can.

Resources

- Chancellor's University Safety Committee
<http://ehs.unl.edu/chancellors-university-safety-committee-cusc#cusc>
- AAA (American Automobile Association) "How to GO on ICE and SNOW"
<http://files.constantcontact.com/0056d453001/f8087215-7bc2-47bc-b79d-69bdfa71017b.pdf>
- AAA Winter Driving Tips <http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/roadway-safety/winter-driving-tips/#.WlfUdnprvsZ>

6. Safe Driving Help!

To assist UNL drivers reduce the likelihood of crashing, Patrick Barrett, Director of Transportation Services, has provided UNL employees access to a defensive driving course to take online at their own pace and as the seasons and associated hazards change. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's "Driver Safety & Improvement Training" course is designed to teach enrollees the importance of continuous driving education, advise them of safety features of standard vehicles, and educate UNL drivers on how to improve common driving tasks.

There are several modules within this training course that address driving in inclement weather including the following: Driving Tips for Wet Weather; Safely Remove Snow from Your Car; How to Drive in the Snow. Take advantage of the availability of this course and these modules to refresh your knowledge of safe driving habits.

To access the ***Driver Safety and Improvement Training***, use one of the following browsers: Internet Explorer, Firefox or Safari and login to My.UNL Academic Portal (<https://my.unl.edu>) using your UNL credentials. Select the following options: "Blackboard" and "N." Your USERNAME is the first part of your email address before the "@" symbol. Your PASSWORD is the same one you use for your email.

Once logged into the My.UNL Academic Portal, select “Courses & Organizations” from the tab along the top row of selections. This will bring up a screen with “My Organizations” on the right. Enter the word “driver” in the Organization Search box and click “Go.”

If you have trouble accessing the portal you can receive assistance through the UNL Help Desk (23970), Option #3 (help with Blackboard) or email mysupport@unl.edu.

Resources

- My.UNL Academic Portal <https://my.unl.edu/>

7. Customer Satisfaction

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.

Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!

Environmental Health and Safety

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