

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

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## **1. Distracted Driving Awareness Month**

Technology allows us to make phone calls, dictate texts or emails and update social media while driving – all actions that are proven to increase crash risk. Just because we have these technologies available does not mean we should use them. People who use a device while driving, even “hands-free,” are four times more likely to crash! There is NO safe way to use a device while driving. The National Safety Council (NSC) observes April as Distracted Driving Awareness Month to draw attention to the epidemic. NSC wants to empower you to put safety first and “Just Drive.”

A few of the many resources available free through the National Safety Council “*Distracted Driving Awareness Month*” web site are:

- Opportunity to sign up for free resources, including posters, factsheets, infographics and more, to share the distracted driving message.
- Links to:
  - One Call Can Change Everything (video “Calls Kill”)
  - Fatality Estimates for 2016 (video addressing vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle)
  - Distracted Driving Awareness Month video
  - The Problem – multitasking is a myth (video “Why Cell Phones are a distraction – Distracted Driving FAQ)
  - What you Can Do (video addressing how parents can set an example)
- Distracted Driving Research
- Technology Solutions
- A Pledge to Not Use Devices
- Area to sign up for a free “Focus on the Drive” newsletter

The American Automobile Association (AAA) has a number of resources available to the public. A video titled “Distractions and Teen Driver Crashes”

shows teenagers in a variety of distracted driving situations resulting in crashes. The examples shown apply to drivers of all ages.

UNL Transportation Services provides resources relating to a number of driving situations. If you have not yet taken the free ***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](mailto:mysupport@unl.edu).

## Resources

- National Safety Council “*Distracted Driving Awareness Month*”  
[http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-awareness-month.aspx?utm\\_medium=%28none%29&utm\\_source=%28direct%29&utm\\_campaign=ddmonth](http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-awareness-month.aspx?utm_medium=%28none%29&utm_source=%28direct%29&utm_campaign=ddmonth)
- Video: Distracted Driving: Calls Kill (National Safety Council, 1.00 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UFB7CbYtKA>
- Video: Distractions and Teen Driver Crashes (AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2.:21 minutes)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDWmwxQ\\_NnY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDWmwxQ_NnY)

## 2. Situational Preparedness – Promote Safe Navigation

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. The Chancellor’s University Safety Committee (CUSC) has undertaken a “*Heads Up!*” campaign to address concerns with distracted walking/driving/bicycling at UNL.

For the campaign, the CUSC has developed resources to assist campus community members as they encourage safe navigation by pedestrians/bicyclists/drivers. Here is a reminder you can share with your friends and associates to avoid distractions that may limit what they hear or see:

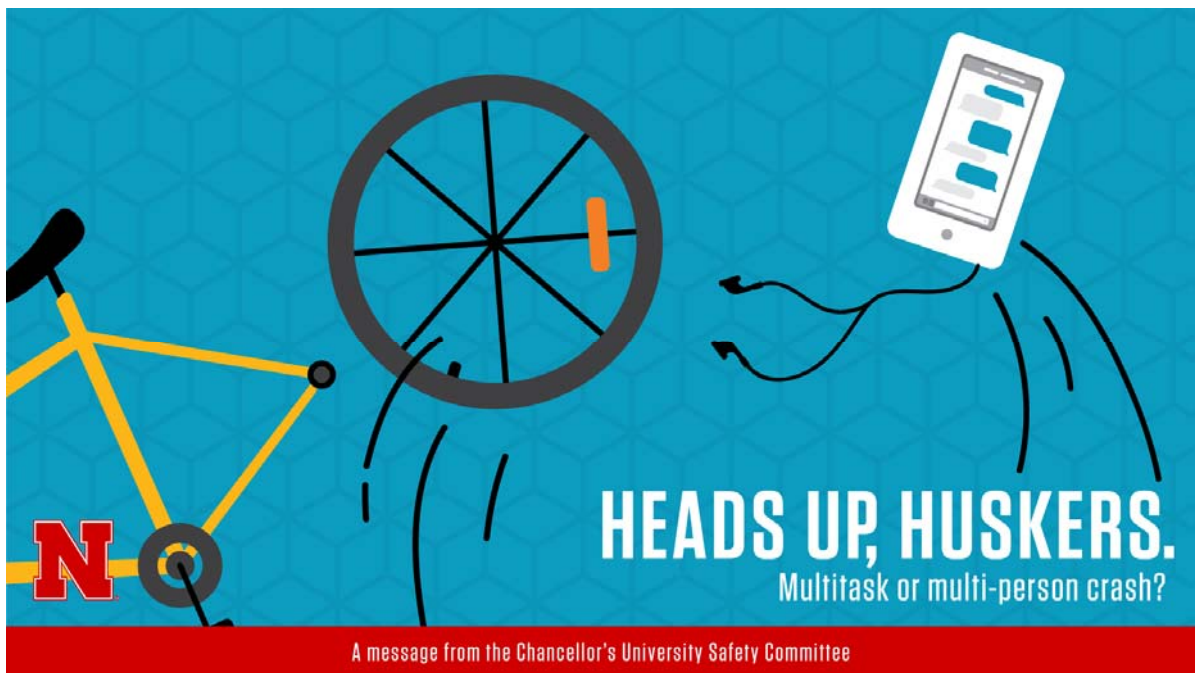
*When we are walking, running, cycling, or driving we can all do a better job of reducing our distractions (phones, tablets, radios, etc.) en route to our destinations.*

A possible question that may open discussion in a meeting or group setting to raise awareness around the topic of campus mobility:

*What are things you can do that make you predictable when driving, walking, cycling?*

The CUSC focus this quarter is multitasking hazards. The National Safety Council has created an infographic reviewing “Myth versus Reality” when using cell phones:

- **Myth #1:** Drivers can multitask. **Reality:** The human brain cannot do two things at the same time. The brain switches between tasks, which lowers reaction time.
- **Myth #2:** Talking on a cell phone is just like speaking to a passenger. **Reality:** Adult passengers can help the driver by alerting them to traffic problems.
- **Myth #3:** Speaking hands-free is safe to use while driving. **Reality:** Drivers on cell phones can miss seeing up to 50% of their driving environments, including pedestrians and red lights.
- **Myth #4:** Voice-to-text is safe to do while driving. **Reality:** It is still very distracting mentally as well as visually due to common autocorrect errors.



If you would like to have a PDF or JPG of this *Heads Up!* graphic commissioned by the Chancellor's University Safety Committee so you can encourage safe practices and awareness in your department/area/facility, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, [ehowe2@unl.edu](mailto:ehowe2@unl.edu) or 402-472-5488.

## Resources

- Chancellor's University Safety Committee  
<http://ehs.unl.edu/chancellors-university-safety-committee-cusc#cusc>
- The Problem – multitasking is a myth video: Why Cell Phones are a distraction – Distracted Driving FAQ (National Safety Council, 1:31 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8UPLKhN-oA>
- National Safety Council: The Great Multitasking Lie infographic  
<http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-the-great-multitasking-lie-infographic.aspx>

## 3. NEW Autoclave Operation Training

Autoclaves are used in many areas to sterilize materials. Due to high heat and pressure created in autoclaves during operation, proper loading, use, and unloading procedure must be followed to prevent burns and other injuries. Burns can result from physical contact with the structure of the autoclave and steam burns can occur from steam leaving the apparatus. Burns can also result from careless handling of vessels containing hot liquids. Explosive breakage of glass vessels during opening and unloading due to temperature stresses can lead to mechanical injury, cuts, and burns. Autoclave performance for sterilization is dependent on proper use.

EHS recently developed a web-based training, ***Autoclave Operation***, to supplement the Safe Operating Procedure (SOP), ***Autoclave Operation and Performance Testing***. A safety poster, ***Autoclaving Biohazardous Waste Bags***, is available as a visual reminder of proper preparation of biohazardous waste bags to ensure effective decontamination.

## Resources

- EHS **Autoclave Operation** Web-Based Training <http://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#Autoclave>
- EHS **Autoclave Operation and Performance Testing** Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) <http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-autoclavesafety.pdf>
- EHS Safety Poster ***Autoclaving Biohazardous Waste Bags***  
<http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-posters>

## 4. Are You 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 Planning and 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 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](mailto:preparedness@unl.edu). Mark Robertson, Emergency Management Coordinator, can help facilitate development of an Emergency Action Plan.

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.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Weather Service, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration have a number of useful resources covering a variety of weather hazards.

### 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/>
- OSHA Factsheet "*Lightning Safety When Working Outdoors*"  
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3863.pdf>
- NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)  
**Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, Lightning....A Preparedness Guide**  
<http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/resources/ttl6-10.pdf>
- NOAA "*The Online Tornado FAQ*" <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado/>
- 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. Corridors Are For Egress Not Storage

Storage in exit pathways, including corridors, stair enclosures and hallways, is a persistent problem on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Campus. While corridors, stair enclosures and hallways are a seemingly a convenient space to store items during office moves or renovations, storing material in egress paths can create a serious hazard.

Corridors, stair enclosures and hallways must remain free of hazardous materials, equipment, storage, and other materials and debris to assure safety. Allowed use must not obstruct access or visibility of safety equipment, lighting, exit and other signs.

The primary hazard involved is access to exits. In general:

- NO storage is allowed in corridors of buildings not equipped with automatic sprinklers.
- NO storage is allowed within a stairway or stair enclosure.
- Nothing may obstruct the required minimum width of a corridor. That would include items that could be easily moved or tipped over.

Keep in mind:

- Corridors may never be used as routine work spaces or for general storage.
- Maintain a clear area around corridor eyewashes, emergency showers, and fire extinguishers. Anything that interferes with the use of corridor safety equipment is prohibited.
- Never store or use hazardous materials in a corridor.

For further information, reference the “*Storage in Corridors, Stair Towers and Hallways*” document available online.

### Resources

- Facilities Planning and Construction, Building and Fire Safety “*Storage in Corridors, Stair Towers and Hallways*”  
<http://facilities.unl.edu/FireAndSafetyDoug/PDFs/Corridor%20Storage.pdf>
- Facilities Planning and Construction **Building and Fire Safety** web site  
<http://facilities.unl.edu/building-code-fire-safety>

## 6. Safety Shorts – New Lightning Resources and More

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

- **Lightning Safety for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community** (US National Weather Service, 1:15 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU1IO1S15e4>
- **Lightning Safety with LeeAnn Allegretto** (NWSMissoula, 5:22)  
<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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5TiTfuvotc)

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

## 7. A Short Survey?

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](mailto:bosthus1@unl.edu) if you would rather communicate outside the parameters of this survey.

## 8. Safety Poster: No PPE Outside of the lab!

EHS provides a number of safety posters of relevance to the campus community. This poster is a visual reminder to remove Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) before leaving the laboratory.



Request your FREE poster(s). Contact [ehs@unl.edu](mailto: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, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, [ehowe2@unl.edu](mailto:ehowe2@unl.edu), 402-472-5488.

**Resources:**

- Safety Posters <http://ehs.unl.edu/safety-posters>

**Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!**

**Environmental Health and Safety**

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