

**In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv,  
February 22, 2018**

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## **1. Important Update: Select Agents and Toxins**

The **Select Agents and Toxins** Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) has been revised due to recent changes to the list of agents and toxins, some additions and some removals from the list. Additionally, the permissible amounts of select toxins a researcher can possess without registering with the Federal Select Agent Program (FSAP) have been revised per the FSAP website.

Please review these new amounts if you possess any select toxins to ensure you are still in compliance with the Select Agent Regulations. Other revisions were related to descriptions of exclusions to the list of Select Agents and Toxins and what documents and approvals are required to possess and use select agents and toxins at UNL.

Any questions about possession and use of Select Agents and Toxins should be referred to Matt Anderson, Biosafety Officer or Brenda Osthus, EHS Director and Responsible Official for UNL. Contact either them at 402-472-4925.

### **Resources**

- **Select Agents and Toxins** SOP [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-select\\_agents.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-select_agents.pdf)
- **Select Agents and Toxins – Clinical and/or Diagnostic Laboratory Activities** [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-select\\_agents\\_clinical\\_diagnostic\\_lab\\_activities.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-select_agents_clinical_diagnostic_lab_activities.pdf)
- Federal Select Agent Program (FSAP) <https://www.selectagents.gov/>

## **2. Review the Revised Autoclave Operation Training**

Autoclaves are used in many areas to sterilize materials and decontaminate biohazardous waste. 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.

To help mitigate these hazards and to ensure successful autoclaving the EHS web-based training, **Autoclave Operation** training is recommended for all who operate an autoclave or prepare materials to be autoclaved. Here is an illustration of what you do NOT want to see when you open your autoclave!



**Autoclave Operation** training has recently been updated to include more specific and revised procedures on material preparation, proper packaging of autoclave loads, and proper packaging/disposal of waste both before and after autoclaving. The changes are significant enough to warrant a review by those who took the training prior to February 16, 2018.

## Resources

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

### 3. Safety Poster – Autoclaving Biohazardous Waste Bags

EHS provides a number of safety posters of relevance to the campus community. This poster serves as a handy reminder of a few of the basics of preparing to autoclave. Improper preparation of materials can lead to ineffective decontamination.



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>

### 4. Create/Review/Update Your Emergency Plan

The purpose of an emergency action plan is to facilitate and organize employer and employee actions during workplace emergencies. Well-developed emergency plans and proper employee training, such that employees understand their roles and responsibilities within the plan, will result in fewer and less severe employee injuries and less collateral damage to the ongoing research or facilities during emergencies.

Putting together an emergency action plan that deals with specifics of your work site/building is not difficult. It involves describing how employees should

respond to different types of emergencies, taking into account your specific work site layout, structural features, and emergency systems.

The UNL Emergency Planning and Preparedness website contains a template (“Faculty, Staff & Depts.” tab, “Have a Plan” section). Assistance and a fillable version is available upon request from Shannon McVaney, UNL Emergency Management Specialist ([preparedness@unl.edu](mailto:preparedness@unl.edu)). While the template is designed for developing a **Building Emergency Action Plan**, it can readily be modified to develop a facility or specific area action plan.

Does your department/area/facility already have an Emergency Action Plan? Emergency action plans should be reviewed at least once a year and more often if necessary to reflect changes in personnel or other specific attributes of the area/facility.

All workers should be familiar with the emergency action plan, including how they will be notified of an emergency, at least two safe routes of escape from the building, and where they can shelter-in-place if needed. In an emergency, people tend to freeze, so they need to know what to do without having to think about it—that means training. If workers have additional roles to play in an emergency, such as shutting down equipment or assisting disabled co-workers, they must be trained in those duties as well. In addition to regular review/retraining, make sure that all new workers are trained on the emergency action plan.

Questions regarding any aspect of the development of an emergency action plan for your area or building may be addressed to Shannon McVaney by email at [preparedness@unl.edu](mailto:preparedness@unl.edu).

## Resources

- Emergency Planning & Preparedness: Building Emergency Action Plan <http://emergency.unl.edu/Building%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan%20Template.pdf>
- EHS **Emergency Preparedness** Safe Operating Procedures <http://ehs.unl.edu/sop/emergency-preparedness>
- EHS **Emergency Preparedness** web-based training <http://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#EP>

## 5. Situational Preparedness – In-Car Technology is Distracting

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.

In-car technologies are continually being added to our vehicles. New cars now have “infotainment systems” that allow drivers to program a GPS, surf the web, check social media, and dictate/ send text messages or emails. Even done hands-free, this technology distracts drivers for dangerous amounts of time. Just because technologies come with a vehicle does not mean they have been proven safe to use while driving!

While intended to improve safety, in a sense these additional technologies serve as distractions. Drivers believe they are making a safe choice to use hands-free devices, but it has been well documented that the brain is still otherwise engaged and distracted from the complex task/ judgments that are part of safe driving, often distracted well beyond the actual time of device use. Drivers need to realize attempting to multitask while driving is not safe.

A recent National Safety Council survey indicated how much risk U.S. drivers are willing to take. Although 83 percent believe that getting behind the wheel is a safety concern, 64 percent of those surveyed admit they are comfortable speeding, and 47 percent of respondents text either manually or through voice controls.

Here are a few recommendations for a safer experience on the roadway:

- Avoid the temptation to use in-car technologies while on the road. Use them only for emergencies or urgent driving-related tasks.
- Do not use cell phones at all, regardless of age and regardless of whether your state allows hands-free usage.
- Avoid driving impaired by alcohol, drugs, or lack of sleep.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle or bicycle even if the use of a helmet is not required by the laws of your state.
- Maintain situational awareness when driving: other motorist, pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles.
- Observe posted speed limits, adjusting speed for road conditions if conditions change.

## Resources

- Johnson, T. (2017, October 05). New Vehicle Infotainment Systems Create Increased Distractions Behind the Wheel. Retrieved February 21, 2018, from <http://newsroom.aaa.com/2017/10/new-vehicle-infotainment-systems-create-increased-distractions-behind-wheel/>
- Valentic, S. (2018, February 13 EHS Today). Sincerely Stefanie: Technology is Distracting. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from <http://www.ehstoday.com/safety/sincerely-stefanie-technology-distracting>

## 6. Spring Colloquium - Laboratory Ventilation

Environmental Health & Safety (EHS), in partnership with the Office of Research & Economic Development (ORED), is sponsoring a campus-wide Safety Colloquium, "**Laboratory Ventilation**," featuring Scott Ward, Labconco Product Manager, speaking on chemical fume hoods and Jacob Olson, UNL BSM Manager/Controls Engineer, speaking on room controllers and management of general laboratory ventilation.

Those who work in a laboratory with occupancy controls (generally "boxes" on the wall near the entrance to the room) and/or who use, intend to use, or select and purchase chemical fume hoods will find this colloquium particularly informative.

- East Campus Union on March 28, 2018, from 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.
- Hamilton Hall (Room 102) on March 28, 2018, from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

RSVPs are NOT required. The noon session on East Campus is repeated in the afternoon on City Campus. Select whichever session best fits your schedule and mark your calendar! For further information, or to suggest future colloquium topics, contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, [ehowe2@unl.edu](mailto:ehowe2@unl.edu) or (402) 472-5488.

### Resources

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

## 7. How Are We Doing?

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.

In order to effectively evaluate potential areas for improvement, please provide specific information or examples and your name and contact information. The Director, Brenda Osthus, follows up on all submissions. We greatly appreciate your participation.

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. Revised Safe Operating Procedures

- **Automatic External Defibrillators** SOP <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-AED.pdf>  
Updated the link to register AEDs through Lincoln Fire and Rescue.
- **Cryogenic Material** SOP [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-cryogenic\\_material.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-cryogenic_material.pdf)  
Information added regarding the need to verify the desired operating pressure/valve setting before opening any cylinder valves.
- **On-the-Job and Student Injuries** SOP <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-injury.pdf>  
Revised to reference the updates and changes in forms required by the Worker's Compensation Court/Claims Administrator Gallagher Bassett Services.
- **Pathological Incinerator Operator – Environmental Compliance Responsibilities** SOP [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-incinerator\\_operator.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-incinerator_operator.pdf)  
Revised to clarify the Visual Emission (VE) survey requirement, including who may conduct Method 9 reading.
- **Pathological Waste Incinerators – Operating Permit Requirements** SOP [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-p\\_waste\\_incinerators\\_permit.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-p_waste_incinerators_permit.pdf)  
Added two new incinerators.

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

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