

## In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv – August 4, 2021

1. NEW SOP: Inactivation of Biohazardous Materials for Future Use
2. Get Ready for the State RAD Audit
3. Revised Necropsy Biosafety SOP: Info for Lab Personnel
4. Do You Have an Emergency Plan?
5. CPR to Save a Life
6. Find an AED
7. CUSC Open Forum in September
8. Safe & Sound Week
9. Are You Satisfied?

### 1. NEW SOP: Inactivation of Biohazardous Materials for Future Use

Do you work with infectious materials in your lab? Do you analyze infectious samples in other labs with a lower containment level than your own? If you answered yes to either of these questions, EHS in collaboration with the UNL Institutional Biosafety Committee has created a new Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) you need to become familiar with!

The goal of the new procedure and policy is to enhance biosafety in BSL-2 and BSL-3 containment laboratories on campus. Sometimes researchers have a need to analyze infectious samples with equipment not in their lab. Sometimes those labs operate at a lower containment level and do not routinely handle infectious samples. To protect the occupants of those labs and the campus community we want to ensure that the samples being moved no longer present an infectious agent exposure risk.

This can be accomplished by treating the samples/materials by various chemical or physical means to inactivate the infectious components of the sample/material while maintaining the characteristics of interest. Inactivation procedures should be validated in the lab where they are conducted and verified to be effective prior to removing materials from the initial lab.

This new SOP details inactivation methods, validation of method and verification of testing procedures, and documentation requirements for the inactivation and testing. The policies detailed in this SOP **must be followed in all BSL-3 labs** on campus. At this time the policies are only recommended not required for BSL-2 laboratories.

Please contact the UNL Biosafety Officer with questions or concerns about this new policy. Email: [manderson11@unl.edu](mailto:manderson11@unl.edu) or phone: 402.472.9554.

### Resources

- **Inactivation of Biohazardous Materials for Future Use SOP**  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-inactivation\\_biohaz\\_mat\\_future\\_use.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-inactivation_biohaz_mat_future_use.pdf)

## 2. Get Ready for the State RAD Audit

Environmental Health and Safety is finishing up the audits of open source radioactive material users in preparation for an upcoming inspection from the regulating state agency, Nebraska DHHS – Office of Radiological Health. The inspections from the state are unannounced and can last a few days. When the state has finalized the inspection plan for laboratories to visit, the Radiation Safety Office will contact those selected to setup an inspection date and time during the state’s inspection time frame. There usually is very little notice.

During the state’s inspection of your laboratory spaces, the state inspector will ask questions and conduct radiation surveys of their own. When the inspectors ask you and other members of your lab questions, they normally are focused on how the laboratory operates safely while working with radiation. They could ask you to walk them through typical research activities using radioactive materials, for example, PPE worn, how to operate a radiation survey meter, or what to do during an emergency (spills, fires, etc.).

On the day of inspection, a member of the Radiation Safety Office will accompany each state inspector and will be available to help with any questions or issues. Please make sure you read relevant SOPs and are familiar with appropriate laboratory safety operations. If you have questions as you review relevant Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs) in light of your laboratory operations, contact EHS by email ([ehs@unl.edu](mailto:ehs@unl.edu)) or phone 402.472.4925 to speak with a Radiation Safety staff member.

### Resources

- Contamination Surveys for Radioactive Material Laboratories  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-contamination\\_survey.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-contamination_survey.pdf)
- Instructions for Personnel Entering Laboratories Containing Radioactive Materials  
<https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-radothers.pdf>
- Radiation Survey Meter Use  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM\\_survey\\_meter\\_use.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM_survey_meter_use.pdf)
- Radioactive Material Inventory Tracking  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM\\_inventory\\_tracking.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM_inventory_tracking.pdf)
- Radioactive Material Sewer Disposal  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM\\_Sewer\\_Disposal.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM_Sewer_Disposal.pdf)
- Radioactive Material Spills  
[https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM\\_spills.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-RAM_spills.pdf)

- Security of Radioactive Materials at UNL [https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-security\\_radmaterials.pdf](https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-security_radmaterials.pdf)

### 3. Revised Necropsy Biosafety SOP: Info for Lab Personnel

Are animals a part of your research program? If you work with animals in your research, it is likely you conduct necropsies of those animals to collect samples or determine cause of death should the animal die unexpectedly during a project. The **Necropsy Biosafety** SOP has been recently revised to be more broadly applicable in its guidance to the larger campus community working with animals instead of focusing on the activities of the Nebraska Veterinary Diagnostic Lab.

The revised document outlines a minimal set of standards for necropsy biosafety at UNL and its extension centers. Any facility-specific procedures should be at least as stringent as the SOP if not more so based on risk assessment. Highlights of changes to the SOP include:

- Completion of a risk assessment is needed prior to necropsy to determine containment, PPE and other precautions to be employed for the procedures
- Addition of guidance for teaching activities associated with animal necropsies
- Specify fluid-resistant gowns vs. “impervious”
- Specify required PPE when a zoonotic disease risk is present based on where the necropsy is performed (in a biosafety cabinet or outside a biosafety cabinet) and
- Addition of general guidance for vaccinations and medical surveillance based on the risk assessment

The EHS Biosafety staff is ready to assist with conducting risk assessments upon request. Contact the Biosafety Officer at [manderson11@unl.edu](mailto:manderson11@unl.edu) or 402.472.9554 for questions or to set up help with a risk assessment.

#### Resources

- **Necropsy Biosafety** SOP <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-bio-necropsyarea.pdf>

## 4. Do You Have an Emergency Plan?

September is right around the corner and is National Preparedness Month sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Now is a good time to ensure you have an up-to-date building/department/facility emergency plan in place. 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 ongoing research or other activities during natural or man-made disasters.

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). 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. Assistance and a fillable version are available upon request from [preparedness@unl.edu](mailto:preparedness@unl.edu).

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, and so on, they must be trained in those duties as well. In addition to regular review/retraining, make sure that all new workers are trained in the emergency action plan.

### Resources

- Emergency Planning & Preparedness: Building Emergency Action Plan <https://emergency.unl.edu/doc/Template%20Building%20Emergency%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

- EHS **Emergency Preparedness** Safe Operating Procedures  
<https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/emergency-preparedness>
- EHS **Emergency Preparedness** web-based training  
<https://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#EP>
- Department of Homeland Security Ready website  
<https://www.ready.gov/>

## 5. CPR to Save a Life

Cardiac arrest is the third leading cause of death in the United States. The PulsePoint's® Respond application for iPhone or Android users empowers everyday citizens to provide life-saving assistance to victims of sudden cardiac arrest. Application users may indicate they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and are willing to assist in case of an emergency. Early, effective CPR marks the best predictor of survival for people who go into cardiac arrest outside a hospital.

More than 17,000 people have subscribed to Lincoln Fire and Rescue's feed on the mobile app Pulsepoint®. The free PulsePoint® Respond app scans 911 calls and sends alerts to app users within a quarter-mile of an individual that requires CPR. The app then gives instructions on how to do CPR until first responders arrive. The minutes between a 911 call for CPR and when rescue workers arrive can be vital. In these situations, the sooner chest compressions begin, the higher the chances of survival.

Regularly, the American Heart Association (AHA) releases updated guidelines for how to improve the effectiveness of CPR. Leaders of the AHA are continuously reviewing recent research and studies to ensure improved training, leading to a better outcome for victims of cardiac arrest.

Training is encouraged and available online through the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association. UNL Campus Recreation offers training in a blended format. The Nebraska Safety Council also provides classes.

### Resources

- PulsePoint® Respond information  
<https://www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-respond/>
- American Red Cross classes (online)  
<https://www.redcross.org/local/nebraska/take-a-class/cpr-lincoln-ne>
- American Heart Association Hands-Only CPR resources  
<https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/hands-only-cpr>
- Nebraska Safety Council CPR/AED Training (Lincoln NE)  
<https://www.nesafetycouncil.org/index.php/worker-education-and->

[events/training-courses/16-workplace-safety/nebraska-training-courses/50-cpraed-training](#)

- UNL Campus Recreation <http://crec.unl.edu/>
- American Heart Association's 2020 CPR Updates <https://cpreducatorsinc.com/american-heart-associations-2020-cpr-updates/>

## 6. Find an AED

In addition to having the PulsePoint® Respond app, it's helpful to be aware of the location of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) in your workplace and areas of the community you frequent. AEDs are small, portable devices that can be used to treat heart attack victims. Because of their simple design and ease of operation, they can be safely used by members of the general public. Regardless of whether an AED is used, always call '911' to summon professional medical support. Any person acting in good faith can use an AED.

The PulsePoint® AED app for Android or iPhone exists to crowdsource lifesaving AED location information. Anyone can add AED locations to the app. If someone sees an AED, this app allows them to check if it shows up on the map. If not, it's easy to add a location to the registry. Once information submitted is verified by local authorities the new AED location will be added to the map.

### Resources

- PulsePoint® AED information <https://www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-aed/>
- PulsePoint® Download (both AED and Respond apps available) <https://www.pulsepoint.org/download/>
- **Automatic External Defibrillators** SOP <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-AED.pdf>

## 7. CUSC Open Forum in September

The Chancellor's University Safety Committee (CUSC) is a UNL committee established to assist the Chancellor by making recommendations of methods to reduce safety hazards at UNL. The CUSC charter, as well as links to the list of members, upcoming agenda, meeting dates/locations, previous meeting minutes, current year's goal and more, are available online.

Twice a year the CUSC holds an Open Forum meeting to which the campus community is extended a special invitation. The fall **Open Forum** meeting will be held in the Environmental Health and Safety Training Room,

Warehouse 1, East Campus and over Zoom. The meeting will take place from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 21, 2021.

The campus community is invited to share concerns or just observe the workings of the CUSC. To attend, contact [ehs@unl.edu](mailto:ehs@unl.edu) for the Zoom meeting link or directions to the EHS offices.

## Resources

- Chancellor's University Safety Committee information  
<https://ehs.unl.edu/chancellors-university-safety-committee-cusc#cusc>

## 8. Safe & Sound Week

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) encourages all to recognize Safe + Sound Week, August 9-15, 2021. Safe + Sound is a year-round campaign to encourage every workplace to have a safety and health program.

**Safe + Sound Week** is a nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and ideas on how to keep America's workers safe.

### Why Participate?

Successful safety and health programs can proactively identify and manage workplace hazards before they cause injury or illness, improving sustainability and the bottom line. Participating in Safe + Sound Week can help get your program started, energize an existing one, or provide a chance to recognize your safety successes.

### Who Participates?

All organizations looking for an opportunity to recognize their commitment to safety are welcome to participate. Last year, more than 3,400 businesses helped to raise awareness about workers' health and safety!



## Resources

Visit this website for more information on how to participate:  
<https://www.osha.gov/safeandsoundweek>

## 9. Are You Satisfied?

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. 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.

**THINK SAFETY – DON'T LEARN BY ACCIDENT!**

**Environmental Health and Safety**

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