

In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv – April 6, 2022

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1. Severe Weather Possible Anytime

Severe weather can happen anytime, in any part of the country. Whether you work on campus or in the field, do you know what to do in the event of severe weather? Unless you’ve recently taken the EHS web-based **Emergency Preparedness** training, now would be a good time to review that online module and related resources including UNL’s Emergency Planning and Preparedness website and the resources provided there.

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. Here are short reminders from Ready.gov about how to deal with a number of natural disasters:

- **Lightning.** Lightning is a leading cause of injury and death from weather-related hazards. When thunder roars, go indoors!
- **Tornados.** Tornados can happen anytime anywhere and increasingly are common any time of the year. When a warning is issued you need to take shelter immediately. Always be aware of the location of the nearest tornado shelter.
- **Flooding.** Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. Do not try to walk, swim or drive through flood waters. Turn Around, Don’t Drown!
- **Earthquake.** Lincoln is in a moderate earthquake zone. Injuries usually result from falling debris. When the earth shakes, drop, cover and hold on.

A number of areas have established Emergency Action Plans. Does your building have one? If not, now would 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. If your area does have an Emergency Action Plan, review it now to be sure you are familiar with the components.

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.

Review the resources listed for more in-depth guidance on preparing for and responding to various types of severe weather.

Resources

- EHS web-based **Emergency Preparedness** training <https://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training#EP>
- UNL Emergency Planning and Preparedness website <https://emergency.unl.edu/>
- Ready “It’s Not Luck” <https://www.ready.gov/>
- National Weather Service Lightning Safety Tips and Resources <https://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning>
- OSHA Factsheet “*Lightning Safety When Working Outdoors*” <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3863.pdf>
- NOAA “*The Online Tornado FAQ*” <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/faq/tornado/>
- Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills <https://www.shakeout.org/dropcoverholdon/>
- EHS Safe Operating Procedure **Communication of Work Area Safety Information** <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-workareasafety.pdf>

2. Sustainability on Wheels & Stormwater Pollution Reporter

Environmental Health and Safety has partnered with the UNL Sustainability on Wheels program to promote campus community outreach and involvement by raising awareness of the university’s current sustainability initiatives. The grant funded program aims to raise awareness at each of the UNL Colleges by engaging faculty and staff with on-campus experts that describe the current practices and goals that align with the UNL’s Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience Master Plan.

Check out the upcoming events at the Sustainability on Wheels website for upcoming scheduled stops around campus. To learn more about Sustainability on Wheels and take the pledge, visit <https://sustainability.unl.edu/sustainability-on-wheels>.

As a reminder, you can report stormwater quality issues through the publicly available Stormwater Pollution Reporter tool on the EHS website (<https://ehs.unl.edu/stormwater-pollution-reporting-form>). Learn more about the stormwater program or report a pollution concern that could affect our receiving waters by visiting the Stormwater Management area of the EHS website: <https://ehs.unl.edu/stormwater-management-unl>.

3. Office Safety “Shorts”

Are you an office worker? Do you know there are hazards associated with your work? Most office workers do not think of any aspect of their job as hazardous. But there ARE hazards associated with office work. Review the following videos for tips on how you and your co-workers can stay safe at work.

- **Office Safety Animation** (Joseph Marshall, 1.5 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWKqUkNBEVE>
- **Office Safety Training** (Atlas Staffing, 19.15 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyA5iRzgnUM>
- **Hazards in the office** (David Pardey, 2.46 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgFrA9-kks4>
Find the 18 separate safety and health hazards in this video

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. April Distracted Driving Awareness

Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading causes of death in the United States for all ages. The National Safety Council designates April as Distracted Driving Awareness Month to help raise awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

According to the National Safety Council, indications are that our roads are more dangerous than they have been in years. On a typical day, eight people are killed and hundreds more are injured in distraction-affected crashes. Drivers face distracted driving risks on every trip no matter how short, from the driveway to the parking lot and back home again. Last year, 248 people died on Nebraska roads in traffic accidents and 17,198 individuals were injured. You can do your part to prevent injury to yourself, your family, and others by:

- **Wearing a seatbelt.** Make sure all in the vehicle are wearing their seatbelt.
- **Cell phone use.** It is best to not use cell phones at all, even hands-free. Leave your phone out of reach. Never text while driving, even at a stop light.

- **Distracted driving.** Never do any task while driving, for example, eating, putting on makeup, taking photos, managing infotainment systems, inputting destinations into GPS, and so on. Just drive.
- **Drowsy driving.** Before undertaking a trip be sure you are well rested. Use special care returning from a late night/early morning work shift or event.
- **Impaired driving.** When taking certain prescriptions have someone else drive you where you need to go. Don't drink and drive.
- **Drive defensively.** Watch out for others who may be driving distracted and be prepared to act quickly.

Free resources are available through the National Safety Council (NSC). You must register at <https://www.nsc.org/faforms/ddam-signup>. Commit to driving distraction-free by taking the NSC Just Drive pledge (<https://www.nsc.org/faforms/ddam-pledge>).

5. Colors of Safety

We see safety-related color commands in our daily lives. The American National Standards Institute has requirements indicating what specific colors should be used to communicate hazards to workers.



Do you know what these colors are communicating? Take the quiz to test yourself: https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/22125-safety-colors-a-quiz?utm_source=feb1st&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inThisIssue. The six-question multiple choice quiz allows a reset so you can retake the quiz to ensure your understanding.

Resources

- "Safety Colors: A Quiz." *Safety+Health Magazine*, Safety+Health Magazine, 16 Feb. 2022, <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/22125-safety-colors-a-quiz>

[quiz?utm_source=feb1st&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inThisIssue](http://ehs.unl.edu/quiz?utm_source=feb1st&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inThisIssue)

6. EHS Needs 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.

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 if you would rather communicate outside the parameters of this survey.

THINK SAFETY – DON'T LEARN BY ACCIDENT!

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