

In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv – June 8, 2022

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1. Stormwater Management Annual Report and Sustainable Yard Work Practices

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln holds a permit with the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) that allows the discharge of stormwater runoff from Lincoln campuses to receiving waters. The permit requires UNL to create and implement a Stormwater Management Plan. In the plan there are 36 best management practices that the University must follow to remain compliant with the permit.

Every year an annual report is delivered to NDEE. This report provides information on measurable goals and strategies that were achieved for each best management practice during the previous year. EHS makes this plan and report available for public review and comment. The plan and 2021 report can be found within the Stormwater Management area of the EHS website (<https://ehs.unl.edu/stormwater-management-unl>). To submit a comment, hit the “Submit Comments” button located directly above the annual reports section (<https://ehs.unl.edu/stormwater-management-unl#AnnualReports>).

May is the time of year when most of us are planning or have already begun to landscape and garden. Listed below are a couple quick tips that will reduce the impact of stormwater runoff from your spring yard work activities.

- Prevent grass clippings, leaves, sediment, and other debris from entering the storm sewer by sweeping them up and composting if possible.
- Do a soil test on your lawn and garden to better understand how much and what type of fertilizer to apply.
- Prevent fertilizer from entering a storm sewer by not over-applying and sweep up fertilizer that lands on hard surfaces during application.
- Repair irrigation devices so that excess water is not flowing to the storm sewer.

- Vegetate bare spots in your yard.
- Regularly pick up pet waste in your yard.

The University's Runoff Control Plan uses similar practices and much more!
View the Runoff Control Plan online:

https://ehs.unl.edu/Runoff_Control_Plan_2021.pdf .

Questions about the information on sustainable yard practices may be submitted to stormwater@unl.edu.

2. Respiratory Protection Program Update

Everyone at UNL who needs to use a respirator for their job tasks or research because they may be exposed to air contaminants at levels above occupational exposure thresholds, must be enrolled in the Respiratory Protection Program prior to initial use. There are a number of requirements Aaron Araiza, the program administrator, can guide you and your supervisor through.

Respiratory Protection Program training, required annually by those enrolled in the program, is now online. This training can be accessed at <https://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training>.

Anyone with knowledge of existing or planned operations that may present a respiratory hazard, particularly supervisors/PIs, must notify EHS before workers/researchers use any type of respirator.

Questions? Contact EHS by email ehs@unl.edu or phone 402-472-4925.

Resources

- Respiratory Protection – Program Summary
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/RPP_SOP_Respiratory_Summary.pdf

3. Avoid Disease from Insect Bites

It is that time of year when there is alternating wet weather and hot weather in the transition from spring to summer. That weather pattern creates standing water, which is the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes, ticks, fleas and other insects. With an increase in ticks and flying insect populations comes an increased risk of contracting diseases that these insects can carry.

Mosquitos or tick bites can transmit vector-borne diseases such as West Nile (mosquitos), Lyme disease (ticks) and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (ticks). These diseases are called "Vector-Borne Diseases" because they are transmitted through an insect or "vector." Vectors are living organisms that can transmit infectious diseases between humans or from animals to humans.

Many of these vectors are bloodsucking insects, which ingest disease-producing microorganisms during a blood meal from an infected host (human or animal) and later inject it into a new host during a subsequent blood meal. According to the Centers for Disease Control, vector-borne diseases have increased threefold in the United States between 2004 and 2016.

Problems associated with vector-borne diseases:

- They are hard to predict, prevent or control.
- Only a few have vaccines.
- Some vectors are notoriously hard to kill and develop resistance to insecticides.
- Almost all vector-borne viruses and bacteria are zoonotic, meaning they can cause disease in animals as well as in humans.

To avoid “getting bit,” follow these prevention tips:

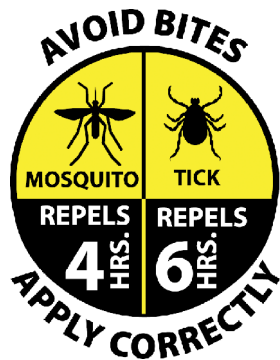
- Apply lotion, liquid, or spray repellent to exposed skin. Insect repellent is the BEST way to protect against insect bites—even children and pregnant women should protect themselves. Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer lasting protection. It is best to use an EPA-registered insect repellent and the EPA has developed a web tool to help you select the right repellent for you (<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>). Below are some of the common active ingredients in repellents and example products.
 - DEET. (CDC recommends products with 20%-30% DEET) Products containing DEET include Cutter, OFF!, Skintastic. NOTE: Concentrations of DEET > 30% do not provide greater protection and products with higher levels are unnecessary.
 - Picaridin (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel, and icaridin). Products containing picaridin include Cutter Advanced, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus, and Autan (outside the United States).
 - Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD). Products containing OLE include Repel and Off! Botanicals. Do not use these products on children under 3 years old.
 - IR3535. Products containing IR3535 include Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus Expedition and SkinSmart.
 - Para-menthane-diol (PMD) Product examples are Off!, Off! Botanicals
- Cover up. Wear long-sleeved shirts, socks and pants. Thoroughly check skin and clothing daily for ticks.
- Keep mosquitoes outside. Use air conditioning or make sure that you repair and use window/door screens.
- Avoid areas prone to insect infestation and take action to eliminate or treat potential breeding grounds.
 - Mosquitos breed in stagnant (still) water so areas with lakes and ponds are prone to large populations. Empty containers in your yard

that may collect water from rain regularly to eliminate breeding grounds.

- Ticks live in brushy, wooded, or grassy areas. Wear long pants, tucked into white socks for quick detection and removal. Avoid brushy, wooded, or tall grassy areas and walk in the center of trails.

Optimizing protection against mosquito and tick bites:

- Always follow the product label instructions.
- A new graphic appearing on the label of insect repellents applied to the skin helps consumers more easily identify how long the repellent is effective against mosquitoes and ticks. Use of this graphic by manufacturers is voluntary. Companies that apply to the EPA for permission to use the graphic must first provide data documenting their current testing protocols and standard evaluation practices.



- Treat clothing with products containing permethrin (0.5%) or purchase pretreated clothing.
 - Permethrin-treated clothing will retain repellent activity through multiple washes. Permethrin sprays are available to treat clothing (Sawyer Clothing & Gear, Repel Clothing and Gear)
 - Repellents intended for use on skin can also be applied to clothing, but may provide a shorter duration of protection compared to permethrin-treated clothes and the repellent must be reapplied after laundering.
- Use repellent whenever outdoors (or indoors if mosquitoes can get inside); mosquitoes can bite any time of day or night.
- Reapply insect repellent as directed.
 - If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.

Tick Detection and Removal

- Check yourself during and after outdoor activity (your entire body); remove any attached ticks promptly. Check your gear. Check your pets as ticks can “hitchhike” on your pet so ticks are brought indoors on their fur.
- Check your clothing for ticks. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing. If clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.
- Remove embedded ticks as soon as possible using fine-tipped tweezers, grasping the tick as close to the skin's surface and pulling straight out. If the mouthparts break off and remain in the skin, try and remove them with the tweezers.
 - If you are unable to remove the mouthparts easily, leave them alone and let the skin heal. After removing the tick, clean the bite area and your hands with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
 - Removed ticks may be disposed of by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag or container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Never crush a tick with your fingers. If you would like to bring the tick to your healthcare provider for identification, put it in rubbing alcohol or place it in a sealed bag/container. More information is available in the **CDC Tick Bite: What to Do Fact Sheet** (https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/pdfs/FS_TickBite-508.pdf)
- Avoid folklore remedies such as “painting” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Such methods are not effective and might actually increase the risk of disease transmission.

Disease Symptoms and Foreign Travel

- Know the signs and symptoms of potential vector-borne diseases and seek prompt medical attention if experiencing symptoms.
- Many vector-borne diseases cause symptoms which resemble cold and flu symptoms and can include fever, headache, muscle pain, swelling at the bite site, rashes, and fatigue. If you have been outdoors or know you were bit and experience any of these symptoms within 30 days, call your healthcare provider.

Researchers traveling to other countries/parts of the United States to conduct research activities should review the prevalence of vector-borne diseases as they review other local safety considerations.

Resources

- Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services (NeDHHS) (phone: 402-471-3121)
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – Division of Vector-Borne Diseases <https://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/>
- CDC Symptoms of Tickborne Illness: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/symptoms.html>
- CDC Insect Repellent Use & Safety <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/faq/repellent.html>
- CDC Lyme Disease <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever <https://www.cdc.gov/rmsf/index.html>
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services WNV (West Nile Virus) Surveillance <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/West-Nile-Virus-Data.aspx>
- DHHS Tick-borne Diseases in Nebraska New Release (5/27/21) <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Tis-the-Season-for-Tick-borne-Diseases-in-Nebraska.aspx>
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services General Information on WNV <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/West-Nile-Virus.aspx>
- CDC Zika Virus Information:
 - (1) <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html>
 - (2) <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>
 - (3) <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>

4. June is National Safety Month – Plan Ahead & Heads Up!

The National Safety Council has designated June as National Safety Month. Safety should be part of your personal attitude at work and in other aspects of your daily life so you “don’t learn by accident.” The majority of injury incidents at UNL are due to factors that can be controlled: inattention/distraction, deviation from established safety protocols, and worker fatigue/stress followed closely by conditions in the work environment including worker positioning in relation to a hazard. Stop and think before you begin work. Here are a few tips:

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SAFE MOVES
=
SMART MOVES
PLAN AHEAD ⚠️



N

CHECK YOUR
STACK IN CASE
IT SHIFTS
PLAN AHEAD ⚠️

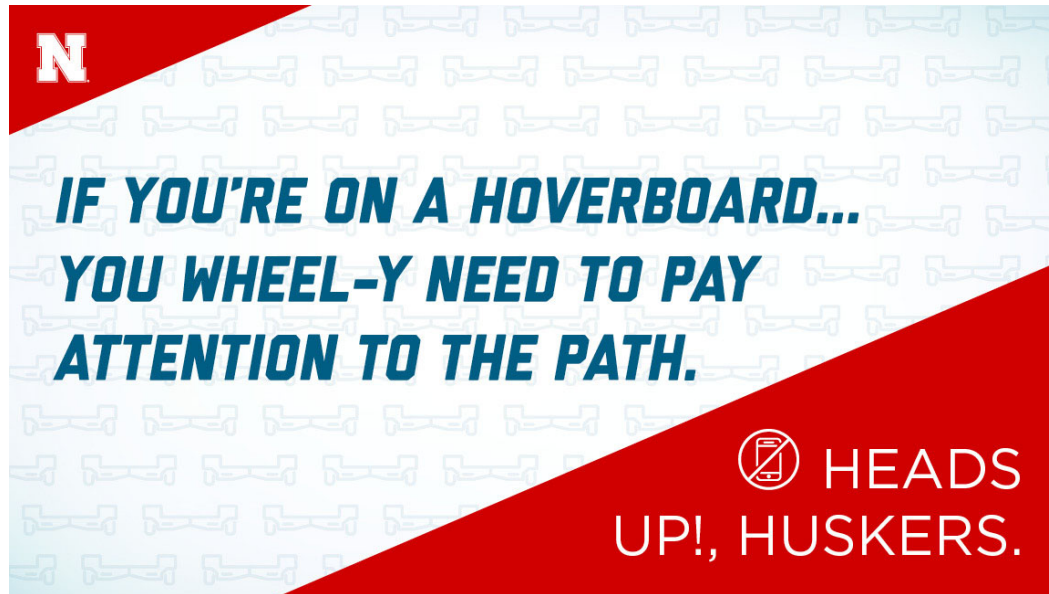


N

THINK BEFORE
YOU LIFT
PLAN AHEAD ⚠️




Safety isn't just for indoors. Safe practices should be observed while walking around campus, driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle or motorcycle or using a scooter or skateboard. Here are a few recommendations:



N

***IF YOU'RE ON A HOVERBOARD...
YOU WHEEL-Y NEED TO PAY
ATTENTION TO THE PATH.***

 **HEADS
UP!, HUSKERS.**

This graphic features a light blue background with a repeating pattern of hoverboards. A red diagonal banner is in the top-left corner with a white letter 'N'. A larger red diagonal banner is in the bottom-right corner containing a white 'no cell phone' icon and the text 'HEADS UP!, HUSKERS.' in white.



N

***DISTRACTED DRIVING
ISN'T WORTH THE RISK.***

 **HEADS
UP!, HUSKERS.**

This graphic features a light blue background with a repeating pattern of cars. A red diagonal banner is in the top-left corner with a white letter 'N'. A larger red diagonal banner is in the bottom-right corner containing a white 'no cell phone' icon and the text 'HEADS UP!, HUSKERS.' in white.

N

***IF YOU'RE ON A SCOOTER...
YOU WHEEL-Y NEED TO PAY
ATTENTION TO THE PATH.***



HEADS UP!, HUSKERS.

N

***AVOID CAMPUS
COLLISIONS – STAY
OFF YOUR PHONE.***



HEADS UP!, HUSKERS.

Every two months there are new Plan Ahead and Heads Up! tips published on the EHS website. Graphics for either safety program may be downloaded and printed for posting directly from the EHS website. If you would like EHS to provide a color copy or copies to post, send your request with the number of copies and your campus address to ehs@unl.edu. To receive the Heads Up! or Plan Ahead graphics in a format suitable for digital displays, contact ehs@unl.edu and we will send you the current months recommendations or all seven graphics.

- Plan Ahead posters <https://ehs.unl.edu/plan-ahead>
- Heads Up! posters <https://ehs.unl.edu/heads-up-graphics>

5. Your “Near Miss” Can Help Others

The Chancellor’s University Safety Committee (CUSC) is reaffirming their goal to focus more intensely on Near Miss/Close Call reporting and to also encourage reporting of unsafe practices. To support that effort, the EHS **Near Miss/Close Call Incident Reporting Form** allows for reporting of unsafe practices either self-identified or anonymously.

By reporting all near misses, often thought of as “close calls,” or unsafe practices, you are contributing to a safer and healthier campus environment. Information reported is shared throughout the University for educational/awareness purposes. Specific identifying information (e.g., names, departments, etc.) is not included in informational articles. Participation will benefit the entire campus community. Per the Injury and Illness Prevention Plan there is no risk of repercussions for reporting a situation or hazard.

A “near miss” can also be viewed as a “near hit!” Next time you see something and think, “This could have ended up very badly,” report that circumstance online to help your fellow workers throughout the university stay safe.

Resources

- Near-Miss/Close Call Incident Reporting Form <https://ehs.unl.edu/near-missclose-call-incident-reporting-form>

THINK SAFETY – DON’T LEARN BY ACCIDENT!

Environmental Health and Safety

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