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1. UNMC Tick Testing Program

One of the missions of the UNMC College of Public Health is to advance the scientific understanding of tick-borne disease and empower the general public with timely information about potential exposure. Toward this goal, the UNMC College of Public Health maintains a [Nebraska Tick Testing \(NeTT\) site](#). The site provides information on how to submit ticks to the program as well as providing Tick Resources, FAQs and information on how to contact the Nebraska Tick Testing program by phone or email. By identifying pathogens present in submitted ticks, individuals can assess their personal risk and make informed healthcare decisions.

2. Regulations Impact Laboratory Recycling Efforts

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) is collaborating with the Office of Sustainability (OS) to explore opportunities for recycling and other sustainability efforts in university laboratories. Because of the complexity of waste management regulations, it is important that all recycling initiatives be well-defined and in compliance with federal, state, and local rules and regulations.

A working group of interested stakeholders will be assembled to collaborate with EHS and OS to identify laboratory waste recycling and other sustainability opportunities. If you are interested in participating in this working group, please contact OS (sustainability@unl.edu). Please refrain from recycling laboratory waste materials until your specific initiative has been evaluated and authorized by OS and EHS. Contact EHS (ehs@unl.edu) or OS with questions.

3. Watch Your Back: The right way to lift objects

To avoid injury, it is important to know how to lift heavy or awkward objects the right way. Follow these four steps for safe lifting:

- **Size it up.** Is the load you plan to lift light enough to be lifted by one person? If not, use a hand truck/cart or ask for assistance. Check the container for exposed nails or staples that could cause injury. Make sure you have a clear path to where you are moving the load.
- **Safely lift.** If the load can be lifted without assistance, first bring it as close to your body as possible. Lift with your legs – never with your back. Keep your head up and your back straight.
- **Move with care.** Keep the load you are carrying close to your body as you walk and look ahead to be sure your path remains clear. Shift – don't twist – your body to turn. Pay attention to your hand placement when moving through doors and into/out of elevators.
- **Don't just drop it.** When you're ready to set down the load and someone is helping carry, first communicate the intention to set down the load. Whether you are carrying a load by yourself or someone is assisting, let your leg muscles "carry it down." Make sure your fingers and toes are clear of the load before setting it down.

Resources

- Depa, T. H. (2021, June 24). Watch your back: The right way to lift objects. 2018-05-02 | *Safety+Health*.
<https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/16962-watch-your-back-the-right-way-to-lift-objects>
- EHS Safe Operating Procedure, General Material Handling/Safe Lifting https://go.unl.edu/safelifing_materialhandling

4. Hydration Know-How

Proper hydration is necessary to avoid heat illness. The following are some facts that may not be well known.

- **How often should you drink?** The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends drinking 1 cup (8 ounces) of water every 15-20 minutes when working in the

heat. Drinking regularly rather than drinking large quantities at random helps better manage heat and heat stress.

- **How cool should water be?** Water should be “cool,” typical of the temperature of “cold” tap water. The point is to get the water consumed. In the heat no one wants to consume hot water. If water is icy cold, it’s harder to get more in.
- **Can you drink too much water?** NIOSH cautions against drinking more than 48 ounces in an hour because the concentration of salt in the blood can become too low causing “water intoxication,” a medical emergency.
- **When should you hydrate?** Hydrate before and after you will be out in the heat. It’s easier to stay hydrated if you are hydrated before going into the heat. Then when you are back in a cooler area at the end of the day continue to hydrate to replace fluid lost during the day and decreases the overall stress and strain on your body.
- **Do I need electrolytes?** Substantial loss of electrolytes can cause muscle cramps and other dangerous health problems. Consider using beverages with electrolytes to complement your water intake and not replace water. Too many electrolytes can throw off some body system functions the same way overhydration does.
- **What should you avoid?** Caffeine is a diuretic and causes your body to expel fluid, so it is not a good choice when planning to be in a hot environment. Some energy drinks contain electrolytes. But drinking several energy drinks a day can raise caffeine levels enough to affect your heart, per NIOSH. Consuming alcohol within 24 hours of being in the heat can put you at an increased risk of heat-related illness. NIOSH advises against salt tablets to replace salt lost through sweating. Regular water and meal consumption almost always will replenish your body.

Resources

- Druley, K. (2025, June 22). Hydration know-how. *Safety+Health*.
<https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/26987-hydration-know->

how?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inthisissue-july1st&utm_content=

5. Myth vs. Fact – Roadway Risks Quiz

Do you know the truth about roadway risks? Try to find the myths and facts in the National Safety Council questions as you take their [interactive quiz](#).

6. Situational Preparedness – Summer Driving Tips

Situational preparedness is so important that this listserv provides resources to promote safe navigation of roadways, whatever the method of transportation. There are some special tips for summer driving whether your driving is routine weekly driving or road trips.

- **Stay alert.** Warmer weather attracts more roadway users, such as motorcyclists, bicyclists, scooter users and pedestrians.
- **No distracted driving.** According to Travelers Insurance, distracted driving increases in summer. On average, drivers are distracted for almost 15 minutes of every hour of road time during summer.
- **Preventative care.** Safe and carefree summer driving starts with preventive car care and maintenance.
 - Check each tire's tread depth, inflation, and overall condition every season.
 - Summer is the perfect time to replace consumable items like air filters
 - Like rubber belts and hoses, wiper blades are vulnerable to the summer heat. Examine your wiper blades for signs of wear and tear on both sides. The blades can also deform and fail to work properly in both directions.
 - Make sure all brake lights, headlights, turn signals, emergency flashers and interior lights are working.
 - Scorching summer temperatures put serious stress on engines. Make sure your cooling system is ready.
 - Batteries have a life of three to five years. Have your batteries checked at the three-year mark and annually

thereafter so you don't get stuck out in the heat with a dead battery.

- **Buckle up. Every trip.** Ensure that everyone else is buckled up.
- **Watch out behind your vehicle.** Before you back up out of the driveway or a parking lot look again. During the summer there are more pedestrians. As the size and height of a vehicle increases, so does the “blind zone” area. Large vehicles, trucks, SUVs, and vans are more likely than cars to be involved in backing over obstacles – people or things.

Resources

- Control, T. R. (2023b, February 21). *Summer driving safety*. <https://www.travelers.com/resources/auto/travel/summer-driving-tips>
- *Summer Driving Tips from AAA*. YourAAAToday. <https://magazine.northeast.aaa.com/daily/life/cars-trucks/summer-driving-safety-tips-aaa/>
- *Summer driving tips*. (n.d.). NHTSA. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/summer-driving-tips>
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (n.d.). Summer driving tips. In *Summer Driving Tips*. https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/14190-summer_driving_tips_2019_050919_v2_tag.pdf

7. Satisfaction Survey - Help EHS Help You

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 whether negative or positive. By taking a few moments to complete the survey (<https://ehs.unl.edu/satisfaction-survey-0/>), you will be helping us to identify areas where we might need to focus more attention.

To effectively evaluate potential areas for improvement for focus/refocus, 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 directly.

ADOPT SAFETY AS YOUR ATTITUDE – DON'T LEARN BY ACCIDENT!

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