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### 1. Safety on Steps

Injury incidents related to navigating stairs are common at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln regardless of worker age. We tend to discount stairs as a potential hazard, however, falls on stairways can have very serious consequences. According to the National Safety Council, there were 2,285 fatal falls on Stairs in 2017. To maintain your personal safety on the stairs, follow a few basic tips:

- **Use handrails.** Workers of any age should always use handrails when going up or down stairs.
- **Keep the stairs clear.** Steps should be clear of clutter, debris and spills. Avoid using stairways with any of these impediments to safe navigation.
- **Ensure proper lighting.** Avoid using stairways with inadequate lighting.
- **Wear appropriate footwear.** Avoid high heels, flip-flops, or shoes with slippery soles. Make sure your shoelaces are tied.
- **Be mindful of medications.** Be aware of how any medications you are taking might affect your balance or depth perception.
- **Avoid distractions.** Stay focused on the steps not on a cell phone or conversation with others on the stairs.
- **Take your time.** Avoid rushing or running to maintain focus. Take one step at a time.
- **Maintain watchfulness.** Some research indicates that workers only see the first step and the last three as they descend. Focus on each step.
- **Carry items safely.** If you must carry items, be sure they do not obstruct your view or do not require both hands to carry. Ask for

help or use an elevator if large items cannot be broken into smaller loads.

- **Check for slippery conditions.** Be aware of weather conditions that may make indoor and/or outdoor steps slippery.

Stairways are an easily overlooked hazard because using stairs is second nature. Tread safely to avoid injury.

## Resources

- Workplace Culture & Safety. (2023, March 7). *Stair safety tips: Avoiding workplace falls* [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHxgkqMMoBk>
- BWCOhio. (2021, April 26). *Safety on the steps* [Video]. YouTube.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNehodX\\_LWQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNehodX_LWQ)
- Guzman, J. (2025, June 3). *Stair Safety | OSHA Safety topics - HazMatStudent.com*. Hazmat Student.  
<https://www.hazmatstudent.com/stair-safety/>

## 2. Safe + Sound Week August 11-17

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. 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.

The program emphasis this year is emergency preparedness. The resources include worksheets that guide departments/facilities through developing and fine tuning an emergency action plan. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has forms that can assist and in-person assistance. Contact [UNL Preparedness](#) for assistance.

## Resources

- *Safe + sound week*. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (n.d.). <https://www.osha.gov/safeandsoundweek>
- Business and Finance SAFETY AT NEBRASKA  
<https://safety.unl.edu/faculty-staff-departments/>

### 3. AEDs, PulsePoint® & CPR

Cardiac arrest is the third leading cause of death in the United States. Automatic External Defibrillators (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 free 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.

In addition to having the PulsePoint® Respond app, it's helpful to be aware of the location of AEDs in your workplace and areas of the community you frequent. The free 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 the information submitted is verified by local authorities the new AED location will be added to the map.

More than 17,000 people have subscribed to Lincoln Fire and Rescue's feed on the free PulsePoint® Respond app. This mobile 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.

CPR training is encouraged and available online through the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association. UNL Campus Recreation offers

CPR training in a blended format. The Nebraska Safety Council also provides classes in CPR as well as First Aid and AED use.

## Resources

- PulsePoint® Respond information  
<https://www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-respond/>
- PulsePoint® AED information  
<https://www.pulsepoint.org/pulsepoint-aed/>
- PulsePoint® Download (both AED and Respond apps available)  
<https://www.pulsepoint.org/download/>
- 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>
- UNL Campus Recreation <https://crec.unl.edu/outreach-classes>
- ***Automatic External Defibrillators*** SOP  
[https://go.unl.edu/aed\\_sop](https://go.unl.edu/aed_sop)

## 4. Stop the Bleed®

The American College of Surgeons Stop the Bleed® program has prepared 5 million people worldwide on how to stop bleeding in severely injured persons. The number one cause of preventable death after injury is bleeding. A severely bleeding person can bleed to death in as little as 5 minutes. The person next to a bleeding victim is the one who is most likely to save the person from bleeding to death. An ACS Stop the Bleed® Interactive Course available online guides you through three methods of bleeding control using video demonstrations, interactive learning, and spontaneous quizzes.

Become empowered to make a life-or-death difference if a bleeding emergency happens.

## Resources

- Stop the Bleed – American College of Surgeons  
<https://www.stopthebleed.org/>

## 5. Working Safely with Sharp Tools

Recent injury incidents at the university involved workers required to work with sharp tools such as knives, box cutters, scissors or razor blades. To prevent cuts, sharp tools must be handled and used correctly. If possible, eliminate the blade. If other options to accomplish the task are not available, follow these steps:

- **Make sure the blade is sharp.** Dull blades require more force, which increases your risk of injury.
- **Work in a well-lit space** so you can see what you're cutting.
- **Cut on a stable surface**, using a cutting board or slip-resistant matting to prevent the material/item from slipping.
- **Hold the tool with your stronger hand.** This increases control of the tool.
- **Wear cut-resistant or mesh gloves.** If disposable gloves are needed, those can be worn over the cut-resistant or mesh gloves.
- **Cut in a direction away from your body.** Then if the sharp tool slips it will not come into contact with your body.
- **Retract the blade immediately** after use, or close scissors when not in use.
- **Never try to catch** a sharp tool that is falling. Quickly move out of the way to let it fall, then pick it up.

If the tool in use is sharp, stay mentally sharp and follow safety recommendations.

## Resources

- Work safely with sharp tools. (2025, June 17). *Safety+Health*.  
[https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/26984-work-safely-with-sharp-tools?utm\\_source=sfmc&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=inthisissue-july1st&utm\\_content=](https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/26984-work-safely-with-sharp-tools?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inthisissue-july1st&utm_content=)

## 6. Updated Biosafety Safe Operating Procedures

Be sure to review any of the following SOPs relevant to your work.

- **Autoclave Performance Testing for Biohazardous Waste**  
<https://go.unl.edu/autoclaveperf-sop>

Added “Figures” for clarification. Made changes to sterilization time/temp. Added PPE requirement. Added positive control for testing BIs.

➤ **Biological Decontamination of Laboratory Equipment**

[https://go.unl.edu/biodecon\\_sop](https://go.unl.edu/biodecon_sop)

Changed title of section for clarification. Added procedures for equipment not previously included. Updated OUT OF SERVICE signage

➤ **Biosafety Cabinet Classification and Design**

<https://go.unl.edu/biocabclassific-sop>

Class sections updated for clarity

➤ **Chemical Disinfectants and Biohazardous Materials**

[https://go.unl.edu/biodisinfectants\\_sop](https://go.unl.edu/biodisinfectants_sop)

Updates to provide further information and clarification. Explained how different disinfectants react with biological material.

➤ **National Institutes of Health Incident Reporting for r/sNA Molecule Work**

<https://go.unl.edu/nihreptg-sop>

Updated information and added a section on incidents subject to the NIH guidelines reporting process. Added an NIH Reporting template.

➤ **Spill and Exposure Response for Biohazardous Materials**

<https://go.unl.edu/biospill-sop>

Added procedures to clean up small spills confined within a BSC. Updated exposure response and biohazard spill kit guidance.

➤ **Transport of Biohazardous Materials**

<https://go.unl.edu/biotransport-sop>

Included information on transport from one entity to another and noted not to use public transportation. Broadened scope to include pathogens of any kind.

➤ **Working in a Biosafety Cabinet**

<https://go.unl.edu/biocabworkingin-sop>

Included information regarding set up to work with infectious substances. Updated UV section and Proper Use section. Reorganized for clarity.

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

**Environmental Health and Safety**

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