University Seeks new EH&S Director

The University is conducting a national search for a new Director of Environmental Health and Safety. Reporting to the Associate Vice President for Public and Environmental Safety, the Director provides strategic leadership on environmental health and safety issues for the University and its Regional campuses. More information about the position is available here.

This search comes after a two year vacancy following the untimely passing of our former Director, Frank Labato. Throughout his twenty year tenure, Frank accomplished much to advance the health and safety of the entire University community. We are grateful for his service and for providing a solid foundation to ably address UConn’s future health and safety needs.

The search committee is chaired by Larry Silbart, Department Head of Allied Health Sciences. Joining Dr. Silbart on the committee are Ashis Basu (Chemistry), Nancy Wallach (Office of Research Compliance), Mike Kurland (Student Health Services), and Terri Dominguez (EH&S). The entire EH&S staff looks forward to working with the new director and we thank the committee members for their interest and commitment to participate in selecting the best candidate for this important position.

Training Corner
On-Line Training Available

EH&S now has several safety classes that can be completed in HuskyCT:

- Lab Safety & Chemical Waste Management (Retraining)
- Bloodborne Pathogens Retraining
- Laser Safety
- EH&S X-Ray Safety Training

Register with EH&S before going to HuskyCT for access to the EH&S training modules. Log-in using your Net ID and Password. Allow up to 2 business days for access to HuskyCT registrations.

Visit our website for a complete list of safety training classes and checklists of mandatory training for personnel in laboratory and non-lab settings.
Updates to Animal Handler Program

The University of Connecticut Occupational Health & Safety Program for Animal Handlers (Animal Handlers Program) has recently gone through its 5th revision. Click here for the full program. This was the first major review of the Animal Handlers Program since 2003. If you have not looked at the program in a while please take some time to see what has changed.

The Animal Handler forms have changed as well. The proper forms to be using are Revision 5. A new form has been made for personnel who do not handle animals but have to work in animal areas (Form D). Forms have been updated to include questions about animal allergies, new signs have been made to raise awareness of animal allergies, and the First Aid sign for animal handlers has also been updated. Links throughout the program have been updated and you will note that the forms for the Animal Handler Program are no longer attached to the program document, they are found on their own at: ehs.uconn.edu/forms.

A reminder for all researchers, employees and/or students named on animal protocols and anyone who handles animals as an employee of the University: you must enroll in the Animal Handlers Program by completing the Animal Handler Personal Profile (Form A). You may opt out of portions of the program but you must still enroll. Yearly updates of Form A are also required and we contact you, as well, when that time arrives. If you have any questions about the Animal Handlers Program, email bill.field@uconn.edu

-Bill Field

Mandatory Compliance with NIH Recombinant DNA Guidelines

The University of Connecticut receives National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding. For this reason, compliance with the NIH recombinant DNA (rDNA) guidelines is mandatory. The University’s institutional policy requires that all investigators submit a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (MUA) for Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) review and/or approval if they conduct or plan to conduct experiments that use any recombinant DNA technology.

The MUA can be accessed by going to either of the following web page links:
Office of Research Compliance (ORC)
Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S)

The NIH Office of Biotechnology Activities (OBA) is responsible for institutional compliance with the rDNA guidelines and has published the following brochure to help investigators understand their responsibilities under the rDNA guidelines.

The IBC office administers and coordinates the MUA process at the Storrs and regional campuses. Contact Dr. Carol Auer (IBC Chairperson), Leslie Delpin (Institutional Biological Safety Officer/IBSO) or Cindy Hall (IBC Coordinator) with any questions about the MUA process.

-Leslie Delpin
MAKE THE RIGHT CALL…

USE THESE TAILGATING FOOD SAFETY TIPS

✓ Bring plenty of ice to keep food below 45°F.
✓ Pack a separate drink cooler. The cooler for food will be opened less and stay cool longer.
✓ Keep raw meat and poultry separate from ready-to-eat food, like veggies and cheese.
✓ Use clean plates, containers and utensils for serving cooked meat & poultry. Raw meat juices can contaminate cook foods. Discard any leftover marinade that was used for raw meat.
✓ Use a digital food thermometer to check the temperature of meat & poultry to make sure it is done. Food that looks done may not be cooked enough to kill harmful bacteria. Cook food to these temps -
  ✓ 145°F – steaks, chops, roasts, hot dogs, fish, shellfish
  ✓ 155°F – Hamburgers, ground meats other than poultry
  ✓ 165°F – Poultry (whole, pieces or ground), stuffing, soup, stew, casseroles
✓ Keep hot food above 140°F. Use insulated carrying cases with heated inserts to keep food hot, chafing dishes or a closed lighted grill.
✓ Do not let food or used utensils sit out for more than 2 hours.
✓ Don’t forget to wash your hands. Make a simple hand wash station. Bring a container of water with a spigot, soap, paper towels and a bucket for waste water.

-Cheryl Lebeau Radzvilowicz
When You Don’t Know
What You Don’t Know...

Do these statements sound familiar? “I didn’t know about that safety rule!” “This is the way we’ve always done it.” “I didn’t know there was required safety training for that!” Unfortunately, OSHA, EPA and other state and federal regulatory agencies do not consider these to be adequate reasons for not complying with their regulations.

So, how do you learn about what you don’t know about health and safety compliance? Here are some tips:

- **General Workplace Safety.** For non-laboratory work settings, the first step would be to thoroughly examine your Hazard Communication Program and Workplace Hazard Assessment for Personal Protective Equipment. Also, look at the Occupational Safety Training Checklist for guidance. Know the hazards of the materials you use and the activities that you perform.

- **Student Employees.** Keep student employment in mind with the beginning of the semester. Student employees are considered true employees by OSHA and thus must be afforded the same protections as regular employees. Thus, they must be included in training and provided the same personal protective equipment (PPE), dependent upon the hazards to which they are exposed.

- **Renovation and Repair Work.** Think ahead prior to conducting or arranging for renovation activities. Building materials must be assessed for asbestos prior to conducting any renovation or demolition, including minor activities such as replacing carpets, and installations that affect walls, floors or ceilings. Our website provides guidance on procedures and general information about asbestos.

In addition, products (such as paints and adhesives) and processes (such as drilling, cutting, and sanding) used during renovations have the ability to negatively impact the indoor air quality for students and other building occupants. Know what is being planned, products being used, as well as the controls necessary to minimize exposures to occupants and students.

- **Val Brangan**

User & Non-User Safety with RAM, X-Rays and Lasers

Are you new to the University of Connecticut or returning to campus and will now be working in a laboratory that uses radioactive materials? Or will you be working directly with lasers or x-ray producing equipment? There are required initial training programs you will need to complete prior to working in those laboratories.

**Radioactive Material Laboratories** have training requirements for both non-users and users in Radioactive Material Labs:

- **Non-Users in Radioactive Material Labs**
  Non-users are classified as workers who work in a radioactive materials designated laboratory but do not handle or use radioactive materials. *Non-users only need to attend the first 1.5 hours of a 4 hour initial training session.*

- **Users in Radioactive Material Labs**
  Users work directly with radioactive material and are required to attend the full 4-hour training session.

**X-ray Producing Equipment Users**

Register with EH&S for access to the HuskyCT training module. An [X-Ray Laboratory-based training form](#) must be completed by the X-Ray supervisor and user then sent to EH&S.

**Laser Users**

Register with EH&S for access to the HuskyCT training module. A [laboratory-based training form](#) must be completed with the Laser supervisor and user and returned to EH&S.

-Amy Courchesne
Vacuum Systems

Vacuum work can result in an implosion and the possible hazards of flying glass, splattering chemicals and fire. All vacuum operations must be set up and operated with careful consideration of the potential risks. Equipment at reduced pressure is especially prone to rapid pressure. Such conditions can force liquids through an apparatus, sometimes with undesirable consequences.

Vacuum Trapping
When using a vacuum source, it is important to place a trap between the experimental apparatus and the vacuum source. The vacuum trap can be as simple as an additional vacuum flask connected in series to the flask upon which the filtering funnel is attached.

Proper Trapping Techniques
To prevent contamination, all lines leading from experimental apparatus to the vacuum source should be equipped with filtration or other trapping as appropriate.

Cold Traps
For most volatile liquids, a cold trap using a slush of dry ice and either isopropanol or ethanol is sufficient (to -78 deg. C). Avoid using acetone. Ethanol and isopropanol are cheaper and less likely to foam.

Safe Use of Fume Hoods
Fume hoods are one of the most effective ways of protecting researchers from air contaminants associated with irritating and/or hazardous chemicals. However, it is the responsibility of each researcher to engage in safe work practices while working in fume hoods to provide adequate protection for both themselves and others. The following guidelines should be followed at all times when using chemical fume hoods:

"Where are you located?"

Find the EH&S office using this Interactive Search Map (hint: search for ehs)

Traveling South on Rt. 195, go past the blue UConn sign on your right, then turn left at the 3rd traffic light - Gurleyville Rd. Bear left onto Horsebarn Hill Rd. (Gurleyville Rd. veers hard to the right). Take the second right into our cul-de-sac, directly across from the red Horsebarn Hill Arena (the University sign reads "Horsebarn Hill Sciences Complex, 3107"). Environmental Health and Safety (3102) is the third building on your left (brown modular). Short-term parking is available.

Traveling North on Rt. 195, the blue UConn sign will be on your right at the corner of 195 and S. Eagleville Rd. Continue north on 195 and turn right at the 5th traffic light - Gurleyville Rd. Continue with the directions above.

- Stefan Wawzyniecki