Benefits of Design Review

In the complex organizational and highly visible arena in which Harvard exists, it important to evaluate every aspect of construction planning and project design processes. From electrical to HVAC, to fire and life safety, to environmental impacts and compliance, as well as sustainability; it is unfeasible for any project manager or architect to be an expert in all of these areas. With multifaceted scopes, it’s necessary for all capital projects to receive a thorough design review by Campus Services technical staff. The design review process allows for subject matter experts from E&F, EH&S, GBS, and OFS to review and provide input on their areas of expertise. This review process is extremely valuable and has numerous benefits to the project team, the school funding the project, end users, and their customers.

Throughout the design review process, the EH&S department provides feedback on environmental compliance and remediation risks in effort to avoid costly surprises. In a recent project, a crucial regulatory requirement associated with building wastewater was identified during the design review that could have resulted in significant cost over runs and re-design. However, EH&S was able to work with the project team to identify an alternative design solution that both improved the regulatory compliance of the project and resulted in significant cost savings to the project as a whole. In another project, potential issues with fire prevention and containment were identified early on in EH&S’ design review, resulting in the project team being able to quickly address these oversights before getting too far into construction. In short, although the design review process may appear to be onerous, the benefits of identifying and solving potential safety, compliance, and energy issues early on are well worth it.

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Campus Chemical Clean-up Effort

Unwanted items such as old, dusty chemical containers on overcrowded shelves or hazardous chemicals that have been replaced with safer alternatives, can always be tagged by lab personnel as hazardous waste and placed in their Satellite Accumulation Area. However, sometimes a spring cleaning is in order. This past April, Harvard Medical School, School of Dental Medicine, T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences sponsored a chemical cleanout and amnesty event. This event, coordinated by Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), was an opportunity to identify chemicals no longer needed and offer them for reuse by other labs, as opposed to tagging each container as waste. Chemicals not reclaimed were then identified as waste, packaged and shipped for disposal by our hazardous waste vendors.

Participating labs were asked to submit a pre-registration form indicating the number of chemicals to be removed from each location. Labs then marked chemicals for reuse by placing a neon dot sticker on individual containers, bins or shelves. During the first two days of this week long event, vendors collected chemicals directly from each lab and brought them to one of six staging areas across Longwood and Cambridge campuses, where chemicals were collected and sorted. Chemicals were made available for redistribution to other labs on the third day if they were not opened, expired, highly toxic or reactive. Although the requirements were stringent, this was essential in effort to maintain safety, as well as the purity and viability of the chemicals. The final two days were dedicated to packaging and shipping of materials. By the end of the week, nearly all of the chemicals had been removed from campus. The only items remaining included highly hazardous compounds requiring special attention. These items were safely stored in the EH&S managed Main Accumulation Areas and shipped out mid-May.

Approximately 7,700 chemicals were removed from the Longwood campus and 475 chemicals were removed from SEAS. Due to restrictions on chemicals available for redistribution, more specifically the fact that they must be unopened, only 26 chemicals were reclaimed during the event. However, with over 8,000 unwanted hazardous chemicals removed from campus, we are happy to announce that Harvard is now a safer place to work!
Harvard EH&S is excited to announce the launch of a new training developed specifically for project managers and building or facility managers that oversee capital projects at the university. The training, entitled Capital Project Construction EH&S Requirements Training: Utilizing Resources, Recognizing Impacts, Understanding Your Responsibilities and the Role of EH&S, is an e-learning course that is currently available in the EH&S Training Management System (TMS). This training follows the stages outlined in the Project Delivery Guidelines developed by the UCMC from planning through feasibility, design, construction, turnover and closeout. It highlights important environmental and safety considerations during each stage that could impact a project if not identified and addressed. It also provides an overview of the important programs, requirements, and resources maintained by EH&S that can help guide you as you prepare for an upcoming project. Some of the topics covered in the training include use of the Environmental Issues Questionnaire and EH&S Construction Checklist in order to identify important EH&S considerations in the early stages of your project; permitting and notification through regulatory agencies; soils management and disposal; identification of hazardous materials, proper handling, removal, and disposal; use of the Contractor Safety Assessment Program for evaluation of contractor safety performance and monthly reporting; implementation of the Substance Abuse Prevention Program; and the importance of identifying and planning for high hazard construction activities. If you manage capital projects at the university, you will be added to a training roster and assigned the training. We look forward to hearing from you and continuing to support construction and renovation activities across campus!

Assessment & Inspection Management System

Laboratory safety representatives have been using the Assessment & Inspection Management System (AIMS) for more than a year in order to respond to findings identified during annual EH&S inspections and manage historical data. As of April 2015, they now also have the capability to conduct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) assessments. In the past, individuals were required to navigate to a separate online PPE assessment tool, but now all their inspection and PPE assessments can easily be found in one place. Users first identify the activities conducted within their laboratory group, specific room or processes. AIMS then notes the baseline university-wide required PPE, such as gloves and protective eyewear, specified for such activities. Lab representatives can also indicate specialized activities or any additional PPE requirements associated with their laboratory, department or school. There are two ways for the Principal Investigator (PI) or Core Facility Manager to approve these assessments. They can either do so online within AIMS or offline by signing a printout of the assessment, allowing for flexibility and efficiency for assessments.

Overall, the addition of PPE assessments to AIMS provides improved support for laboratories in adhering to the University PPE Policy issued by the Provost and Executive Vice President in December 2011. This alignment of efforts is more effective for both assessors and inspectors in this process, and it also equips them with the ability to access historical and current info in one place. This lays the groundwork to integrate other related inspection and reporting tasks into AIMS in the upcoming years.
New Faces at EH&S

Cynthia Parenteau
Env. Public Health Officer

Adam Kryskow
Asst. Radiation Protection Officer

EH&S By The Numbers:

2015 Commencement Food Inspections

• 53 Total Inspections
• 19 Volunteer Inspectors
• 51,328 Guests Served
• 257 Food Temperatures Taken

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my name is

Want to meet the whole staff?

CLICK HERE
to view our team!

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