Personal Protection in Laboratories

Earlier this year, a Harvard Laboratory Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy was created to provide baseline requirements and guidance for PPE assessment, selection, use and review. This policy, which was approved by the Provost’s Office and University Risk Management Council, was sent to the Deans for adoption in their various Schools. It addresses all types of personal protection equipment (PPE) for a wide variety of hazards encountered in laboratories, including chemical hazards, radiological hazards, potentially infectious biological materials and process hazards. The policy requires each laboratory to conduct a PPE assessment, inform lab personnel of PPE requirements within labs, provision of PPE to personnel at no cost and to ensure lab personnel follow all PPE requirements.

Since the Policy was created, EH&S Lab Safety Advisors have been assisting Lab Personnel with these requirements and have created an online tool to complete the required assessment. As of July 2012, over 425 labs have completed their PPE assessments. That represents a completion rate of over 90% University-wide! EH&S Lab Safety Advisors assigned to each of the School’s Laboratories are always available to provide training, regulatory and technical review and to provide assistance in selection and use. The continued commitment to this Policy from the Labs and Compliance Officers within the Schools, will ensure that Harvard will continue to provide a healthy and safe work environment for all members of the campus community.

Contact us with any questions at 617-495-2060

Low Accident Rates in 2012

The project support team has been providing environmental and construction safety support for over 100 projects thus far in 2012. Each project is somewhat unique and different, but all of the projects contain some element of construction safety, hazardous materials management, environmental permitting and consultant overview. Our efforts in FY12 were to transition this program into an internal consulting services operation, with clear cost and schedule accountability.

The University’s efforts on construction safety have resulted in significant dividends to those workers who support our construction projects. Through the first half of 2012, 44 projects have registered through the Contractor Safety Assessment Program, representing over 400,000 person-hours worked. During this period, 7 recordable injuries and 1 lost time injury were reported which is equivalent to 3.43 recordable injuries per 100 person hours worked and 0.49 lost time injuries per 100 person hours worked. Both rates are well below the industry averages of 4.0 and 2.1 respectively as reported for 2010.

Thank you to all those involved and we hope to continue this positive trend.

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A Growing Focus on Ergonomics

With an all time high number of ergonomic evaluations occurring in 2011 and 2012, it’s clear that having the proper workstation is important to Harvard employees. Many of those who use computers throughout the workday experience symptoms of general fatigue, eye strain/irritation and physical discomfort.

Ergonomics Program Coordinator and Facilities Safety Officer, Mary Streeto, emphasizes the importance of fitting a workspace to the individual, and not the other way around. Ergonomics, the applied science of equipment design, allows us to do just that. When ergonomics is utilized correctly, visual and musculoskeletal discomfort and fatigue are reduced significantly. EH&S offers individual workstation evaluations and/or a classroom based training session in order to educate employees on what they can do themselves and provide recommendations for improved workstation comfort.

Evaluations (usually 20-40 min) are scheduled upon request. Prior to our onsite visit, we request that the employee complete an online training session, found here. During the on-site evaluation we will assess the workstation and the typical tasks that are performed by the employee. We will follow up the evaluation with a written report that includes detailed information about recommendations and equipment changes.

“Make sure you’re working safely and comfortably!”

The Business Continuity Program has made significant progress in the development of school and department level business continuity plans across Harvard University since the addition of Chris Beaupere, Business Continuity & Emergency Planning Coordinator, to our team. Since his arrival to Harvard in October 2011, Chris has supported 24 schools and departments in the development of their business continuity plans. To date, 17 plans have been completed with more to come.

The next phase of the Business Continuity Program is to unite the school and department planning already underway with the creation of a university-wide planning structure. In July, the university-wide Business Continuity Steering Committee met for the first time to develop a university-wide business continuity planning process. The Steering Committee agreed on the following focus areas for FY13 business continuity planning: finance, human resources, information technology, physical resources, security, and student and health services.

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New Faces at EH&S

Angela Birnbaum
Senior Biosafety Officer

John Dembrowsky
Associate Director of Laboratory Safety Services

Kathryn Johnson
Manager of Environmental Programs

Greg Brady
Lab Safety Officer

Andrew Greenlaw
Assistant Health Physicist

Brad Parsons
Lab Safety Officer

EH&S By The Numbers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FY13 Emergency Responses To-Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
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<td>Spill Chemical</td>
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<td>Radiation</td>
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<td>Environmental</td>
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<td>Accident Investigation</td>
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<td>Water Disruption</td>
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We support the University’s mission of teaching and research by promoting a culture of safety, health, environmental protection, and emergency preparedness.