

Oct – Dec 2007

Upcoming Events and Reminders

*EH&S /Radiation
Safety Committee
Meeting:*

*December 2007
Bayer 201*

*Mellon Hall Evacua-
tion Drill:
October 2007*

Looking for more in-
formation about
EH&S policies and
procedures? Check
out our website at:
www.ehs.duq.edu

Inside this issue:

Label, Label, Label!

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Questions or concerns
regarding this newslet-
ter or safety in general
may be directed to:
safety@duq.edu.

What's in a name?

Just as a safe campus is more than a collection of policies, EH&S believes there is more to a name than a collection of letters. We invite you to become part of the process and help us select a name for our new newsletter. Submit your ideas to safety@duq.edu and next quarter, everyone will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite. So, what's in a name? The habit of safety? A sense of ownership? A prize?

Welcome to the New EH&S Newsletter!

By Vanessa Fowler

The Environmental Health and Safety Department at Duquesne University has been growing steadily since its formation four years ago. EH&S has been working aggressively at the grassroots level, meeting with supervisors, work leaders, labs and individuals on a one-on-one basis to help them incorporate safe practices and safety-mindedness into their work functions.

In an effort to communicate to Duquesners on a larger scale, provide up-to-date information on safety issues and create an open forum for discussion, EH&S is happy to introduce the new EH&S Newsletter!

We hope everyone can find something useful and relevant to them in these newsletters and we encourage you to take full advantage of this venue- send us your questions or ideas for topics that

you'd like to know more about. In upcoming issues, we will be featuring "Regulatory Updates", "Hot Topics and Cool Links" and "Profiles in Safety" (If you know someone who sets an example for safety- tell us about him or her!)

Until our next edition, take note of the new EH&S email address: safety@duq.edu. Send us your questions, topic ideas, newsletter name ideas and nominations for "Profiles in Safety!"

Environmental Health & Safety Audit

By EH&S

EH&S has been making great strides in recent years to create a safer working environment, improve work practices and create an atmosphere of safety and ownership for Duquesne's staff and faculty. Despite our accomplishments, it's always good to get a second opinion.

Earlier this year, we invited an independent consulting firm to perform a compliance assessment and compare our current efforts with federal, state and local regulations and good management

practices. We discovered many things we are doing well, and others that could do with improvement.

In Mellon Hall, labs were found to be very cluttered and in need of housekeeping. Containers are unlabeled or improperly labeled and hazardous waste is being stored outside of approved satellite accumulation areas. Paula Sweitzer is assisting labs to address these issues promptly. George Bender will be conducting job hazard analyses to address the need for more accurate chemical

exposure data. The third major issue found was improper respirator usage; improper cartridges and storage, usage without medical surveillance and potential situations requiring a respirator where one is not used. The results of the hazard analyses will help us and Mellon Hall staff to clarify this issue.

Keep an eye out for ongoing performance inspections and stay tuned to the EH&S Newsletter for updates on our and your efforts on these and other EH&S Audit issues!

“If you think your safety specialist is a pain...try a leg fracture.”
—The Naval Safety Center



Paula Sweitzer, Hazardous Materials Manager; George Bender, EH&S Manager and Vanessa Fowler, EH&S Coordinator

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Label, Label, Label!

By Paula Sweitzer

Hello Mellon Hallers! As the Hazardous Materials Manager for Duquesne University, I oversee labs to ensure a safe working environment and am responsible for all of the chemical, radioactive, and biological wastes generated. As noted earlier, the EHS assessment we had over the summer has shown that our labeling system is in need of improvement. Whether a container is being reused or if it is a new empty container, the

label must accurately represent the contents. This includes the proper chemical name (no chemical formulas, structures, or acronyms) and appropriate hazard warnings (which could include the NFPA diamond). These labels must be legible and securely affixed to the container.

EHS will be assisting and advising each of you on how to improve your labeling systems. Till next time....be safe!

Upcoming Hazard Assessment

By George Bender

My responsibilities as the Manager of Environmental Health and Safety here at Duquesne include the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, and control of hazards in the campus workplace. Along those lines of recognition and evaluation, one aspect of the recent EH&S audit addressed our lack of data with regard to laboratory exposure to the thirteen

“OSHA carcinogens,” particularly methylene chloride. In order to obtain this data, EH&S will be conducting job hazard analyses over the next few months: collecting air samples from laboratory workers using any of these chemicals. The samples will be collected simply by placing a badge, similar to dosimeter badges, on laboratory workers during the course of their normal daily lab work. After

analysis and evaluation of exposure based on OSHA requirements for each chemical, recommendations will be presented to assist each laboratory in their compliance efforts.

If you have been identified as working with one of these chemicals, EH&S will be in contact with you soon to discuss the process and to provide you the opportunity to participate in the effort.

Training Highlight

Environmental Health and Safety provides various training opportunities throughout the year: from general lab safety to more specific issues, such as gas cylinder safety.

We are currently developing online training modules through the Blackboard learning system—check out future newsletters for online training updates! In the meantime...

Laboratory Safety Training is required annually for anyone wishing to work in a lab (this training excludes all faculty). If you missed the training sessions in August, contact Paula Sweitzer to schedule a make-up session.

Plan on working with x-ray equipment or radioactive materials? **X-Ray Training** (30 min) and **Radiation Safety Training** (2 hrs) are

available as needed. Contact John Volpe to schedule a training session.



John Volpe, Radiation Safety Officer