

January - March 2009

Upcoming Events and Reminders

ACHD Air Emissions Report Data due:

February 1st

EH&S / Radiation Safety Committee Meeting

February 10th

Biology Lab Inspections

February

Chemistry Lab Inspections

March

Evacuation Drills

March

Inside this issue:	
New RSO: Paula Sweitzer	2
Eye on PPE: Safety Glasses	2
Lab Inspection Annual Report	3
Clarifying Smoking Restrictions	3
Regulatory Update	3
Evacuation Drills	4
Radon Safety at Home	4

Questions or concerns regarding this newsletter or safety in general may be directed to:

safety@duq.edu

The Safety Chronicle

Changing of the Guard: EH&S Welcomes New Director

Madelyn A. Reilly, JD, QEP has joined the Duquesne community as the new Director of Environmental Health and Safety. Madelyn comes to Duquesne with an environmental and legal background that includes experience in environmental management, risk management, environmental and corporate law, compliance and ethics. Her experience includes roles as Assistant General Counsel at PPG Industries, Inc. and Corporate Counsel, InterTECH Security, LLC. Madelyn also served briefly as the

Executive Director of the Institute for Professional Environmental Practice located here at Duquesne and has taught several environmental law related courses over the years as an adjunct at both Pitt and Duquesne.

After obtaining her B.S. in biology from IUP and Masters degree from WVU, Madelyn received her law degree from Duquesne. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Allegheny Land Trust, Holy Family Social Services and Oakland Catholic High School.



"I am honored and delighted to become part of the Duquesne community. I look forward to working with Duquesne's highly regarded Administration, faculty, staff and student communities to continue to build on Duquesne's already strong EHS and Risk Management programs."

Winter Weather Driving Safety



Vanessa Fowler

Winter weather can give even the most seasoned driver major problems. Snow, ice and steep Pittsburgh streets make for a dangerous situation; throw in some speeding and tailgating and you have a deadly situation.

While you can't control the other drivers on the road, there are some basic steps you can take to protect yourself. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) promotes the three "Ps" of safe winter driving:

Prepare

- Maintain and winterize your car.
- Carry supplies for emergencies (jumper cables, flashlight, ice scraper/brush, shovel and sand or kitty litter). Think about blankets, food and water for trips to more remote places.
- Plan your trip and let others know your route and arrival time.
- Review winter weather driving skills. Find an empty parking lot and practice maneuvering and braking. Be familiar with how to work your brakes (hold down

antilock brakes and pump non-antilock brakes).

Prevent

- Slow down and increase following (and stopping) distance.
- Stay alert to pedestrians in the road or stopped vehicles. Remember to move to the opposite lane of disabled vehicles and put the cell phone away. (A recent study showed that texting while driving decreases drivers' reaction times by 35%.)

Protect

- The Minnesota OSHA branch warns that "if you are not wearing a seat belt, your chances of being killed or injured in a crash are four times greater." The seat belt is the single best piece of safety equipment in your car, so put it on.
- In case you get stuck, make sure to have a charged phone and clear around the tailpipe if the car is running.

Taking a little extra time to prepare, prevent and protect yourself from winter weather accidents can protect more than your car- it can save the lives of you and your loved ones.

New RSO: Paula Sweitzer

Paula Sweitzer

As the new Radiation Safety Officer, I would like to take this opportunity to review some of the Radiation Safety Policies here at Duquesne University...

Training must be completed before any individual may start their work with radioactive materials (RAM). This training is now available through blackboard, and can be done at the individual's convenience.

Radioactive Rooms, labs using RAM, are marked with a sign that states "Caution - Radioactive Materials." These rooms must be locked at all times unless somebody is in that room.

Radioactive Materials in Mellon Hall are in a liquid form, called "unsealed materials." Since there is a potential for contamination, it is important that the users are careful and follow their SOPs.

Transport of RAM (new order, waste or equipment) may be performed only by designated individuals in the EHS Department.

Radioactive Incident/Accidents should be handled according to the lab's step-by-step guide of what to do in the event of an accident. The main concern is contamination, which could occur by walking around or leaving the lab.

Regulations concerning RAM come from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) and Duquesne University Regulations.

Exposure Control should be practiced using Time, Distance, and Shielding when using RAM. All radioactive labs are surveyed each month to check for contamination.

If there are ever any questions concerning our Radiation Safety Program, feel free to contact me.



Congratulations, Paul King, on your retirement! Thank you for all your invaluable leadership and service. Enjoy your time on the beach- you deserve it!



Eye on PPE: Safety Glasses

Comparison of the Protective Capabilities of Safety Glasses and Goggles

Impact Safety Glasses with Non-Vented Side Shields	Impact Safety Glasses with Vented Side Shields	Impact Visorgogs®	Impact Safety Goggles	Indirect Vented Chemical Splash Goggles (Required for wet lab use)

© Copyright Science & Safety Consulting Services 2006.

For more information about policies at DU, see our "Chemical Hygiene Plan" and "Minimum PPE Policy" on our website: ehs.duq.edu. For more information on OSHA's Regulations, visit: http://www.osha.gov/pls/osahaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9778.

Paula Sweitzer

Eye protection is an important aspect of job safety, as potential eye hazards can be found in nearly every industry. When there is any opportunity of something to fly or splash into your eye(s), protection should be worn.

According to OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces every day. These injuries then lead to lost production time, medical expenses and workers compensation, which equates to a loss of more than \$300 million per year. OSHA reports that wearing the proper eye protection could have prevented more than 90 percent of these injuries.

What contributes to eye injuries at work? According to BLS (Labor

Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics) eye injuries are due to individuals not wearing eye protection. Nearly three out of every five workers injured were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident.

But there is some good news: there are ways to prevent eye injuries. To be effective, it is important for individuals to know what hazards they will be exposed to when selecting the proper type of eye protection.

In the event of an eye injury, all workers should be familiar with the proper procedures for washing out your eye(s). Each lab is equipped with an eyewash station, so become familiar with what you have in your lab. Plumbed eyewash stations should be flushed often to ensure they are working.

Lab Inspection: Annual Report

Nicole Rodrigues

Throughout 2008, the number of safety policy violations in the Melon Hall laboratories decreased. Overall, the departments of biology, chemistry, and pharmacy reduced the average number of policy violations each week over the course of the year. However there is still much more work to be done. Laboratory inspections will continue through 2009 in an effort to further reduce unsafe behavior and increase safe lab practices.

2008 SATELLITE ACCUMULATION AREA/LAB INSPECTION MONTHLY SUMMARY

BIOLOGY

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Haz. Waste	5	1	11	7	5	9	8	5	4	3	6	1	65
Food/Drink	2	3	3	2	0	1	0	2	1	1	2	3	20
Misc.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Total	7	4	14	10	5	10	8	8	5	4	9	4	88
Average/Lab	0.16	0.09	0.31	0.22	0.11	0.22	0.18	0.18	0.11	0.09	0.20	0.09	1.96
Average/Week	1.75	1.00	3.50	2.50	1.25	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.25	1.00	1.80	1.00	1.76
Average/Month	7.33												

CHEMISTRY

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Haz. Waste	11	12	16	15	7	12	17	12	6	9	19	5	141
Food/Drink	10	3	8	5	1	0	1	2	4	2	2	4	42
Misc.	2	3	2	2	7	1	0	2	2	0	5	2	28
Total	23	18	26	22	15	13	18	16	12	11	26	11	211
Average/Lab	0.64	0.50	0.72	0.61	0.42	0.36	0.50	0.44	0.33	0.31	0.72	0.31	4.69
Average/Week	5.75	4.50	6.50	5.50	3.75	2.60	4.50	4.00	3.00	2.75	5.20	2.75	4.22
Average/Month	17.58												

PHARMACY

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Haz. Waste	8	8	2	4	2	7	8	3	2	5	6	3	58
Food/Drink	2	3	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	12
Misc.	2	4	0	3	4	3	0	2	0	0	2	1	21
Total	12	15	2	10	7	11	8	5	3	5	8	5	91
Average/Lab	0.44	0.56	0.07	0.37	0.26	0.41	0.30	0.19	0.11	0.19	0.30	0.19	2.02
Average/Week	3.00	3.75	0.50	2.50	1.75	2.20	2.00	1.25	0.75	1.25	1.60	1.25	1.82
Average/Month	7.58												

Clarifying Smoking Restrictions

George Bender

Pennsylvania recently enacted the Clean Indoor Air Act which prohibits smoking in most work and public places within the Commonwealth.

Prior to this action, Allegheny County passed an ordinance not only prohibiting smoking indoors but also within bars and restaurants. However, the ordinance was challenged in Common Pleas Court, and a subsequent ruling placed a stay on the bar and restaurant ban but permitted the implementation of the remainder of the ordinance. As a result, no smoking signs were placed at the entrances of all buildings on Duquesne's campus, with an addition: smoking is also not permitted within 25 feet of any campus building entrance or air intake. At first glance, this addition is above and beyond the requirements of either the state law or the county ordinance, and it is. But the 25 foot requirement was enacted on campus to address the university's

program to provide a greener environment.

Part of this effort involves Facilities Management's intent to have future renovation and/or new building projects meet the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) requirements of the Green Building Institute. There are a number of requirements that one needs to meet for a building or project to be declared LEED certified, but one mandatory requirement is that smoking is not only not permitted inside a building but also not within 25 feet of any building entrance or air intake.

With the passing of the state smoking ban, it was determined that the implementation of the 25 foot rule was just a natural progression for Duquesne. To date, compliance with the new requirements has been met with little resistance.

If you do experience a problem with compliance, please notify the dean of your school or contact EH&S.

• OSHA • CDC • PA DEP • EPA • NIOSH • NFPA • NSC • NRC • ACHD • OSHA • CDC • PA DEP • EPA • OSHA • CDC • PA DEP • EPA •

REGULATORY UPDATE:

New EPA "Lab Rule" and Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act

• NIOSH • NFPA • NSC • NRC • ACHD • OSHA • CDC • PA DEP • EPA • NIOSH • NFPA • NSC • NRC • ACHD • OSHA • CDC • PA DEP •

New EPA "Lab Rule"

George Bender

EPA has added a new subpart ~ Subpart K ~ to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste generator requirements. This new set of alternative regulations permits eligible academic entities the flexibility to make hazardous waste determinations in the laboratory; at an on-site central accumulation area; or at an on-site treatment, storage, or disposal facility (TSDF). This rule provides incentives for eligible academic entities to clean-out old and expired chemicals that may pose unnecessary risk. Further, it requires the development of a Laboratory Management Plan (LMP) which is expected to result in safer laboratory practices and increased awareness of hazardous waste management.

Eligible academic entities may, however, choose to remain subject to the pre-existing hazardous waste generator requirements. At this time, Duquesne University has elected to remain subject to the pre-existing

requirements and will continue our current practices. Although the new requirements do have advantages, the overall requirements would pose significant training problems for faculty and researchers and would be prohibitive. It is possible that the PaDEP in the future could adopt this rule and require all universities in the state to comply. Until that time, Duquesne will continue with its current program.

Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act

Vanessa Fowler

With the passage of the Campus Fire Safety RTK Act, we will be required to disclose fire safety standards and incident statistics in an annual report, made available to the campus community. The purpose of this Act is to create transparency and increase awareness among students and parents for better-informed decision-making. This report will contain the following:

- Incident statistics for each Residence Hall

- Number of fires and the cause of each.
- Number of injuries related to a fire that result in medical treatment.
- Number of deaths related to a fire.
- Value of property damage caused by a fire.
- A description of each Residence Hall's fire safety system, including the fire sprinkler system.
- Number of regular mandatory supervised fire drills.
- Policies or rules on portable electrical appliances, smoking, and open flames; procedures for evacuation; and policies regarding fire safety education and training programs provided to students, faculty, and staff.

This RTK Act also requires plans for future improvements in fire safety be reported, if such improvements are identified as necessary.

(<http://www.campusfiresafety.org/downloads/Campus%20Fire%20RtK.pdf>)



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

**Your one-stop safety info
source: check out our
website! Visit
www.ehs.duq.edu**

Main Phone: 412-396-4895

Fax: 412-369-5363

E-mail: safety@duq.edu

Website: ehs.duq.edu

Blackboard path: www.blackboard.duq.edu

→My Communities

→University Training

→Environmental Health and Safety

Evacuation Drills

Evacuation drills are an important and necessary part of any fire safety program. In accordance with City of Pittsburgh Fire Code and Good Management Practices, Duquesne will complete two evacuations of each building per year. The next round of evacuations will take place in March, so in preparation, everyone is encouraged to become familiar with the fire safety tools and procedures in their areas...

Before an Emergency Evacuation, it is important to identify and know the following:

- Phone number to call for Police, Medical or Fire: X2677 (COPS).
- Locations of alarms and how to activate them.
- Routes to and locations of emergency exits.
- Locations of fire extinguishers and how to use them.
- Locations of gathering points.
- Floor Marshals

During an Emergency Evacuation:

- Remain calm.
- Turn off equipment and appliances.
- Close, but do not lock, doors and windows.
- Proceed to the nearest exit. Use stairs only, DO NOT use elevators.
- Report to gathering point and check in with your Floor Marshal/ Supervisor.
- Do not re-enter the building until you have been instructed to do so by the person(s) in command.

“I hope some animal never bores a hole in my head and lays its eggs in my brain, because later you might think you’re having a good idea, but it’s just eggs hatching.”

☞ Jack Handey

Radon Safety at Home

Nicole Rodrigues

January is National Radon Action Month. The US EPA and US Surgeon General urge Americans to prevent unnecessary radon exposure by testing for radon in the home, and fix problems that cause unnecessary exposure.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless, inert radioactive gas. There is no way to sense radon; radon is only detected by a specific test. It is formed naturally by radioactive decay of uranium, trace amounts of which is commonly found in rocks and soil. Once radon gas is formed, it moves quickly and easily through the soil to the atmosphere or dissolves into groundwater.

The majority of indoor radon enters buildings through the soil or rock beneath the building. These gasses are trapped under the building and as they build up, the pressure of gas eventually becomes greater than the air pressure in the home, and the gasses are forced through floors and walls into the

building. Openings such as cracks in floors and walls, gaps in suspended floors, openings around sump pumps and drains, wall cavities, construction joints, caps around pipes and wires and crawl spaces that open directly into the building provide easy flow of radon into buildings and enclosed spaces.

Exposure to any radon carries a health risk. When radon is released to the atmosphere, there is only a very low health risk associated due to the dilution factor; however, when released into a home or other confined space in which people live and work, exposure increases the chance of very dangerous health risks. The Surgeon General lists radon as the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, second only to smoking. An estimated 21 thousand people die of lung cancer caused by radon each year. Individuals who smoke and are exposed to radon gas have especially high risks of lung cancer.

The majority of radon water problems occur when the water source is ground water such as private well water or a public water supply that is derived from ground water; water from surface water sources releases the majority of dissolved radon into the atmosphere before it reaches the tap. The primary concern with radon in household water is the risk that the radon will be released in an enclosed space, such as a shower, exposing individuals to high concentrations of the radioactive gas.

The EPA estimates that one out of every fifteen homes in the United States is estimated to have elevated radon levels.

Short term radon tests provide an indication of indoor radon levels in as little as 48 hours, while long term tests are administered over a minimum of 90 days and reflects the building’s year-round radon level average. Radon levels often change on a day to day basis with the highest indoor levels oftentimes found during the colder months of the year.

To reduce radon levels in the home, there are several methods that a homeowner may use; the EPA recommends that a homeowner uses methods to prevent radon entry, rather than methods to reduce radon levels. Installation of underground pipes and an exhaust fan may be used to reduce radon levels without major changes to the home. The most basic approach to radon prevention and reduction is simply sealing cracks and other openings in the floors and walls; this technique is not recommended alone by the EPA, due to the fact that normal settling of a home opens new entry routes and reopens previously sealed spaces.

Exposure to radon is preventable; during this month, please take the time to test your home’s radon levels.