LSU

LIFE LINE

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DIRECTOR'S LOG

By: Mike Durham

Summertime is here! Beautiful time of the year, but hot. It is a time to beware of the sun and its devastating effects on our health if we are not careful. Wear loose clothing, preferably one layer, drink plenty of fluids (and yes, water is perfectly acceptable and preferred), take adequate breaks if your labor is heavy or you are in the sun for extended periods and look for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. The following are signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke and demand quick action:

Heat Exhaustion – Profuse sweating, weakness, dizziness, sometimes cramps; skin cold and pale, clammy with sweat; weak and rapid pulse; sometimes vomiting. Move to cooler place immediately; make victim rest; give limited water at 15 minute intervals; increase fluid intake after period of rest. Be sure to treat the signs and symptoms, as untreated heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, a life threatening condition.

Heat Stroke – Weakness, dizziness, nausea, cramps; skin is hot and dry, although clothes may be soaked with sweat; high body temperature (can be 106 degrees or more); rapid and weak pulse; flush and pink skin in early stages, may turn ashen or purplish later. Move victim to cooler place immediately and seek medical attention; remove clothing and reduce body temperature with ice, ice water, wet sheets, fans, to below 103 degrees; pulse below 110; make victim rest until medical attention is available.

Safety Improvement

Many of you have seen the memo several weeks ago entitled "Safety on Campus Announcement" distributed by Bob Kuhn, Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administrative Services. We are rolling out the features of the program now, and I want to address some of the features of the new program below:

The program grew out of concern about the number of injuries on campus, and a task group composed of representatives of Risk Management (RM), Environmental Health and Safety (EHS), and Human Resource Management (HRM) worked up a proposal for reducing accidents. This proposal was approved, and we formed a Safety Improvement Team to guide the formation of the plan. These "stakeholder" representatives met with the task group to review needed changes to policies and processes in place for preventing, reporting, and investigating accidents, and handling injured employees after an accident occurs. Coming out of this was a four point improvement effort:

1. Make policy changes to enable better handling of injuries, investigation of accidents, and return to work procedures that enable employees to get back to productive work quickly.
2. Update and revise policies related to misuse of alcohol and drugs to minimize impact of substance abuse on safety.
3. Special emphasis on preventing accidents related to animal handling procedures.
4. Special emphasis on preventing slips, trips and falls on campus.

As a result of the analysis and input of the Team, PS 90, Workers' Compensation and Work Related Accidents (name changed) was revised to include the following important points:

1. Accidents and injuries must be reported immediately using an on line reporting form;
2. All accidents will be investigated as soon as possible, with results reviewed by a Safety Review Committee on serious accidents to assure consistency and emphasis;
3. Employees are required to return to work as soon as able to original or modified jobs. Departments are required to accept these employees back under these conditions. (Return to work guidelines are now incorporated in PS 90 and the old university policy for this, PS 105, has been eliminated);
4. Communications with injured employees are improved and required to help the recovery process;
5. Made participation in safety activities, including accident investigations, fall within the scope of every employee's job and
6. Clarifies responsibilities of employee, supervisor, and departments for actions in the process.

To keep the impact of drugs and alcohol misuse down, PS 67, Misuse of Alcohol or Drugs (name changed) has been updated to comply with the Governor's Executive Order and the rules and regulations of the State on workers compensation. This policy was also revised using input from the Team and after being reviewed by the by legal counsel, the State Department of Justice, and affected internal departments at LSU. The new policy clarifies the times when post-accident drug/alcohol screening is applied, and is updated on other situations where screening is appropriate.

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Office Hazard prevention:

Can you find the hazards in this picture?

KEY POINTS

- Falls are the most common source of injury
- Wearing flip-flops increase chances of slips and falls
- Simple fixes to an office area can be effective in eliminating hazards
- Administrative interventions such as scheduled walkthroughs and established hazard reporting and prevention programs help protect workers in an office environment

Click HERE for answers on page 3

1. Cords running across an office can be a tripping hazard and should be avoided.
2. Materials such as boxes should be stacked no higher than 18 inches beneath a sprinkler to ensure the sprinkler's effectiveness.
3. Ensure space heaters are approved for commercial use, and never leave them unattended or near any combustible materials.
4. Boxes should not block an exit path.
5. Never leave file cabinets open and unattended; someone could trip over or bump into them.
6. Paper cutters should be guarded and closed when not in use.
7. All food should be properly stored; studies show 400 times more germs are present on a desktop than on the average toilet seat.
8. Keyboards should be adjustable to improve comfort and reduce strain.
9. Electrical hazards are one of the leading causes of office fires; never overload an outlet.
10. Keep papers clear from devices such as hot plates, and never leave them on while out of the office.
11. Coffee cups should have a lid to reduce spills.
12. Chairs should be ergonomic and include arm rests and an adjustable back.

Drowning: Get the Facts

- From 2005-2009, there were an average of 3,533 fatal unintentional drownings (non-boating related) annually in the United States — about ten deaths per day. An additional 347 people died each year from drowning in boating-related incidents.
- About one in five people who die from drowning are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency medical care for nonfatal submersion injuries.

  More than 50% of drowning victims treated in emergency departments (EDs) require hospitalization or transfer for further care (compared with a hospitalization rate of about 6% for all unintentional injuries). These nonfatal drowning injuries can cause severe brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities such as memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning (e.g., permanent vegetative state).

Tips to help you stay safe in the water:

- **Learn to Swim.** Formal swimming lessons can protect young children from drowning. However, even when children have had formal swimming lessons, constant, careful supervision when children are in the water, and barriers, such as pool fencing to prevent unsupervised access, are still important.
- **Supervise When in or Around Water.** Designate a responsible adult to watch young children while in the bath and ALL children swimming or playing in or around water. Supervisors of preschool children should provide "touch supervision", be close enough to reach the child at all times. Because drowning occurs quickly and quietly, adults should not be involved in any other distracting activity (such as reading, playing cards, talking on the phone, or mowing the lawn) while supervising children, even if lifeguards are present.
- **Use the Buddy System.** Always swim with a buddy. Select swimming sites that have lifeguards when possible.
- **Seizure Disorder Safety.** If you or a family member has a seizure disorder, provide one-on-one supervision around water, including swimming pools. Consider taking showers rather than using a bath tub for bathing. Wear life jackets when boating.
- **Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).** In the time it takes for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills could save someone's life.
- **Air-Filled or Foam Toys are NOT safety devices.** Don't use air-filled or foam toys, such as "water wings", "noodles", or inner-tubes, instead of life jackets. These toys are not life jackets and are not designed to keep swimmers safe.
- **Avoid Alcohol.** Avoid drinking alcohol before or during swimming, boating, or water skiing. Do not drink alcohol while supervising children.
- **Don't let swimmers hyperventilate before swimming underwater or try to hold their breath for long periods of time.** This can cause them to pass out (sometimes called "shallow water blackout") and drown.

Know the local weather conditions and forecast before swimming or boating. Strong winds and thunderstorms with lightning strikes are dangerous.

Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention

Research Safety Lessons learned: UCLA and Texas Tech

Safety in academic research laboratories has received national attention due to significant accidents at University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and Texas Tech University. These events have the potential to impact the laboratory safety culture at LSU.

On December 29, 2008, a researcher in a UCLA chemistry lab was badly burned when handling pyrophoric tert-butyllithium. She died of her injuries 18 days later. The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office filed felony charges against the University of California Regents and the Principle Investigator (PI) due to willful violation of workplace safety standards.

On July 27, 2012, the UC Regents signed an agreement accepting responsibility for lab conditions at the time of the accident. The charges against the UC Regents were dropped and they agreed to maintain a comprehensive lab safety program. The PI was not included in the agreement and is still facing felony charges related to the accident. While the agreement applies only to California, it has the potential to set the standard for lab safety programs throughout the nation.

UC System schools were required to provide a list of all laboratory facilities including the department, location of each laboratory, the principal investigator, and the general type of research. Each lab must maintain a formal written Laboratory Safety Manual, Chemical Hygiene Plan, and lab specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). All PI's and laboratory personnel must complete a Laboratory Safety Training program prior to working in the lab. PIs must immediately report all occupational injuries or illnesses to EH&S and secure the scene.

At UCLA specifically, PI's must define the level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) using a hazard assessment. The **use** of PPE must be strictly enforced. All PPE is provided free of charge and written records must be maintained by each lab verifying the date and type of PPE issued.

. On January 7, 2010, a graduate student within the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department at Texas Tech as severely injured when a chemical that he was working with detonated. This incident is significant because it was formally investigated by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) using the same standards and techniques as an industrial chemical accident. The mission of the CBS is the investigation of chemical incidents to determine root causes and to issue recommendations in an effort to prevent future events.

Research Safety Lessons learned
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Research Safety Lessons learned

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Texas Tech's laboratory safety management plan was modeled after OSHA's Laboratory Standard (29 CFR 1910.1450) which primarily addresses chemical **health hazards** and does not consider potential **physicals hazards** in the laboratory. The CSB report concluded that; practices and procedures were not in place to effectively assess and control the hazards of the energetic materials research work; Guidance for hazard evaluation in a research laboratory did not exist; Texas Tech did not have a comprehensive system to document and communicate near-miss and previous incidents; The principal investigators, the department, and university administration at Texas Tech provided insufficient safety accountability and oversight. The CSB also concluded that each layer of safety management within the university had deficiencies that contributed to the incident.

The report notes that generally academic laboratories have not utilized the vast number of references, standards and guidelines developed to promote different types of hazard evaluation methodologies in industrial settings. The CSB calls for all academic institutions to use the lessons learned from the Texas Tech incident as an opportunity to compare their own policies and practices for laboratory safety.

The largest challenge to improve safety and environmental compliance in the research laboratory is to instill a culture of safety. Researchers are responsible for the safety of the people in the lab. EHS can provide the necessary tools to assist in the development of a strong safety culture in laboratories at LSU. Introduction of new a training matrix, a lab hazard analysis tool, improved chemical management, and lab inspections are some of the tools that will be available in the near future. Proactive safety measures will benefit LSU and the Department of Environmental Health and Safety request your assistance to strengthen the safety culture at LSU.

Turn *OFF* when....

- **Turn Engine OFF before Getting out of vehicle….**
- **Turn Electricity OFF before doing any electrical repairs..**
- **Turn OFF distractions while driving…**
- **Turn OFF cooktops or fryers when leaving the room…**
- **Turn OFF unsafe habits….**

Director's Log

Continued from page 1

The list of "safety and security sensitive positions" which are subject to additional scrutiny, including pre-employment and random screening, has been updated and expanded.

To prevent injuries at the Vet School while handling animals, EHS has been working with administrators to improve safety training and develop better methods for working with animals.

For prevention of slips, trips and falls on campus, posters are being placed around campus alerting our pedestrians about these hazards. We have also undertaken a review of our sidewalk conditions, and authorized funds to repair them where appropriate. Notice the sidewalks in front of Hatcher, Johnson and Hodges, these have been repaired under this program. The sidewalk traversing the "Enchanted Forest" next to the Pentagon was installed and improvements made in that area with funds from this effort. Lighting improvements have been made under this program. More improvements will be in the pipeline as needs are identified. If you see a need for improvement on campus, feel free to contact me at mdurham@lsu.edu, or by phone at 225 578 8507. We also have a Hazard Hotline at https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/ehs/hazard-hotline-2/ for reporting safety issues.

You will hear more from this program as we move forward. Please take time to review the Policies above. We all want a safe campus, one that is conducive to learning and research, and one that our students and staff can brag about. Our hope is that everyone will pitch in to make it so!

++++ Safety Meetings ++++

As a minimum, Department Safety meetings should be conducted Quarterly. This newsletter can be used as safety meeting material. Please route through your department via e-mail and request a "return receipt," or circulate with "sign-in" sheet containing printed name/date/ and initial.

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