



Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety NEWSLETTER

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CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

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OSHA Ergonomics Standard In Effect

As of January 16, 2001, OSHA's final Ergonomics Program Standard (29 CFR 1910.900) will have taken effect.

The rule covers all general industry employers. The Ergonomics Standard includes musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) such as carpal tunnel, back and neck problems, tendonitis, bursitis, and other problems of the shoulder, elbow, forearm, wrist, hand, abdomen (hernia), knee, ankle, and foot that are caused by exposure to risk factors including repetition, force, awkward postures, contact stress, and vibration. The standard does not include injuries caused by slips, trips, falls, vehicular or similar accidents.

Work-related MSDs are the most prevalent, most expensive and most preventable of all workplace injuries in the United States.

- MSDs account for more than 1/3 of all injuries that result in days away from work.
- More than 600,000 employees suffer lost-work-day MSDs each year.

Instead of instituting a blanket ergonomics program, the OSHA standard works to address and implement programs for individual jobs rather than entire workplaces.

If a covered MSD occurs, an employer has to implement either a full-scale ergonomics program for that job or a "Quick Fix" program which

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A Message from the Director

You should have received (or will shortly) your approved Chemical Hygiene Plan back from D.O.E.S.

The Chemical Hygiene Plan fulfills one of your obligations under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to provide a comprehensive safety plan for your laboratory's operation. This plan must be reviewed and updated annually.

The Chemical Hygiene Plan fulfills only one part of your obligation to provide a safe working environment for your employees, however. Your next obligation is to acquaint all members of your laboratory staff with the details of this plan and to renew this training each year. In this regard, it is important to keep a record of these safety activities in your laboratory by having each of your employees acknowledge their understanding of your laboratory's safety procedures with a dated

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What a WASTE!

Write it Out, Write it On

When filling out a chemical waste disposal sheet, you must write out the chemical compound in its full form. Abbreviations or chemical formulas are not sufficient.

Also, approximated quantities of each constituent must be listed. We ask that you also convert percentage concentrations into liters or kilograms.

The only way to get proper waste information from the hundreds of labs on campus is to make sure everyone uses standard chemical names. Abbreviations for material can vary from lab to lab (as can handwriting), making formulas sometimes difficult to interpret. If the chemical compound is not written fully, we have to call researchers for clarification, which slows us down, wastes the researcher's time, and possibly delays waste pick-up.

In addition to writing things out, be sure to identify any chemicals in your lab and make sure that these chemicals are properly labeled and easy to read; proper labeling is an OSHA obligation. Keep in mind that though you may know what everything is, someone else may not and may mistake something harmful for something harmless. This also applies to any chemicals you may have in storage -- you must make sure everything is labeled appropriately and that hazardous waste is labeled "Hazardous Waste."

Proper and complete information is necessary in order for the university to comply with OSHA and hazardous waste regulations. If you have any questions, or find something in your lab which is **NOT** labeled (and you don't know what it is) give us a call at x2907.

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signature.

After completing this process, I encourage you to review your plan to ensure that you have covered all issues that are important to the safe operation of your laboratory. The Chemical Hygiene Plan is your responsibility under the OSHA Laboratory Standard and as such places a heavy obligation on your active administration of its implementation. The Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety is happy to assist you in any way that will enhance safe practice in your laboratory. In the end, however, each principal investigator (P.I.) is in charge of the safety program in his or her laboratory and Safety Services' role is to provide resources to help you achieve your laboratory safety goals. In this regard, investigators who willfully disregard OSHA laboratory safety mandates and requirements place both themselves and their laboratory programs in jeopardy.

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Upcoming Training Sessions

Radiation (x2906) (see **Hot Tips** on next pg.)

- New Training:** 3/18, 3/23 (call for times)
- Retraining:** 3/15, 4/13 (call for times)
- X-ray Training:** call office to set up training

Chemical (x2907)

- OSHA Lab Standard:** Mondays 1-3 (Service Building Conference Room)

Bloodborne Pathogen (x2907)

- New Training:** Mondays 3-5 (Service Building Conference Room)
- Retraining:** 3/7, 3/21, 4/3 (call for times; Service Building Conference Room)

Don't forget: rad re-training is now also **ONLINE** on our website: <http://does.cwru.edu>.

Call us for upcoming training dates.

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Some of you have also submitted Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plans to fulfill part of your obligations under the OSHA Laboratory Standard. Each investigator assumes similar obligations to those shouldered under the OSHA Laboratory Standard when working under the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard. In addition, each investigator is required to offer his or her employees the opportunity to receive or decline the Hepatitis B vaccination.

Thank you for your active participation in and compliance with these State and Federal safety programs. All investigators are reminded that the Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety offers classes for all employees on the Laboratory Standard, the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, and the Formaldehyde Standard. All of these classes will soon be available on the Internet but they will also continue to be offered as didactic classes at the Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety Office. Please call Safety Services at 368-2907 if you have any questions about your responsibilities for procedural safety matters covered by OSHA programs.

W. David Sedwick, Ph.D.
Director, D.O.E.S.

NO FOOD IN LABS!

Q. Can I keep food in my lab?
A. No.



See how simple? And there are **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS**. If we are walking through and see any kind of ingestible item -- it's ours. If OSHA walks by, the fines come. This may seem a bit severe, but think of the materials you work with every day. Are you that meticulous a worker and eater that you could absolutely insure that no materials, however small or minute, might have made their way into your egg salad? We didn't think so.



HOT TIPS



Radiation Safety Training/Retraining

Radiation Safety retraining can now be done via the Internet all the time, since the restriction limiting it to alternate years has been lifted.

We also have defined new categories of laboratory workers to relax the training requirements for personnel who do not directly work with radioactive material in laboratories.

Radworkers: Personnel who work directly with radioactive material and who are listed as radworkers under an Authorized User. These personnel must initially train by attending the new lab worker rad safety class before starting work in the laboratory, and retrain by attending a radworker retraining classroom session or by using the rad worker retraining material on the Internet

Ancillary Radiation Laboratory Workers: Personnel listed under an Authorized User and who work in RAM laboratories but have only minor, incidental contact with radioactive material, such as dish washers. Initial training can be the three hour initial radworker training, Right-to-Know training, or initial ancillary worker training. The initial training must be completed and verified by a record or statement of completion in the possession of the RSO within 30 days of beginning work. Annual retraining is required. These personnel are subject to the same retraining requirements as Radworkers.

Non-Rad Lab Workers: Personnel who, though listed as workers under an Authorized User, have no direct contact with radioactive material. As a minimal training requirement they

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means the specific problem could be fixed in 90 days or less. OSHA is using actual injuries to trigger the standard instead of vice-versa. If you experience any possible MSD symptoms (numbness/tingling in the hands, pain in the neck or forearms) which you believe to be related to repetitive work, consult with D.O.E.S. and Health Services immediately.

The document itself is a part of the Plain Language Initiative in Washington and uses a Q&A format, short active sentences, and If-Then tables to make it much easier to read and understand than some of OSHA's previous monstrous documents. You may access the rule and the preamble at www.osha-slc.gov/ergonomics-standard/ or call (202) 693-1888 for a hardcopy or CD-ROM. You may also come to D.O.E.S. for a copy.

D.O.E.S. has a long history of helping with ergonomics problems on campus before they became fashionable and the Newsletter has run several in-depth articles on MSD-preventive measures over the years -- see our old issues (1999 especially) on the web at <http://does.cwru.edu> -- we will be running some updated versions over the coming months here in the Newsletter to prepare for compliance.

The good news about MSDs is that eliminating or preventing MSDs is often very easy and if done early enough, can spare further pain, missed days, and possible permanent damage. Preventing MSDs can include simple things like adding a book under your monitor so that it is at eye level, taking short rest breaks while typing, substituting a trackball for your mouse, changing your microscope posture, or changing your pipetting equipment.

If you suspect you have an MSD: 1) complete an accident/illness report 2) mail to Laura Corrigan, then 3) notify your supervisor and D.O.E.S. Call us at x2907 if you have further questions.



Contest! Winner

Congratulations to **MARYANNE PENDERGAST** of Neuroscience, who **SUCCESSFULLY** identified **ALL** (and then some!) of the errors in last issue's Spot-the-Safety-Mistake picture. Great work, Maryanne! Your prize is in the mail!

1. Party announcements covering First Aid information.
2. Overloaded outlet.
3. No safety glasses in safety glass cabinet.
4. Person spraying chemicals in the air.
5. Fire extinguisher not in its correct place.
6. Window of left exit door broken.
7. Right exit door blocked with boxes.
8. Alarm buzzer looks as if it is blocked with paper.
9. Fire extinguisher on floor, ready to be tripped over.
10. Overloaded outlets have cords extending across floor.
11. Worker has head IN hood.
12. Worker listening to loud music on personal stereo.
13. Coffee machine on the chemical bench.
14. Coffee machine cord attached to too many extension cords; tripping danger; risk of hot spills, no food in lab!
15. Coffee mug on bench.
16. Worker drinking out of Erlenmeyer flask.
17. Worker pipetting by mouth.
18. Bunsen burner out on open bench and burning gas.
19. Kaclioachue spill.
20. Chemical waste drum in lab; too large; too many.
21. Worker sitting in Radioactive waste.
22. Worker smoking.
23. Drawer left open for someone to trip over.
24. Contents of drawer spilling out onto floor.
25. Worker not wearing gloves.
26. Worker not wearing safety glasses.
27. Worker not wearing face mask (draped around neck)
28. Worker not wearing lab coat.
29. Spilling chemicals all over bench top.
30. That worker should be under the hood.
31. Worker throwing chemicals down sink.
32. Boxes being stored under shower.
33. Box with up arrows being stored upside down.
34. Worker climbing shelving to reach...
35. ...chemicals stored too high.
36. gas tank unsecured — could fall over.
37. Workers drinking coffee in lab.
38. Laser in open lab — should be in separate room.
39. Worker leaning against laser (on wheels)
40. Laser on and worker playing with laser beam.
41. Worker wearing shorts.
42. No workers wearing lab coats.
43. No workers in proper shoes.
44. More chemical waste bins — some open
45. Some turned on their sides.
46. Path of laser beam is unprotected
47. Dark glass
48. Location of shower a little inconvenient(!)

Hand Lotion: NOT with Latex Gloves



Hand lotion storage and use **IS** permitted in laboratories, but note that **petroleum-based creams can adversely affect latex glove integrity. If you use LATEX GLOVES do NOT use petroleum-, or mineral-based hand lotions.**

Since it is not a cosmetic, hand lotion is permissible under OSHA regulation 29 CFR 1910.1030. And if you suffer from contact dermatitis due to wearing latex gloves, you may be tempted to use hand lotion under your gloves. **But this can actually make the situation worse:** petroleum-based lotions leach proteins out of the glove, increasing skin exposure and the risk of developing a true allergy. Likewise, skin breakdown associated with irritation allows more latex protein or chemical additives to enter the body, contributing to more significant allergy and less protection. For more info, see <http://www.bestglove.com/resources/Latex%20Allergy.htm>

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must take the Right-to-Know training within 30 days of starting work. No retraining is required.

Every radworker or ancillary rad lab worker will be informed of the expiration of his or her training at least 30 days before the expiration occurs. Authorized users will also be informed simultaneously of the impending training expiration for any of their laboratory workers. A limited number of classroom sessions will be held for those individuals who do not want to retrain on the Internet.

It is the responsibility of the Authorized User to inform the RSO of the category of each person working in their laboratory by written memo or e-mail, and to update this list when changes occur.

Security: Think Again

Do you often find yourself alone in the lab at night? Do you walk to your car alone after a late-night class? Do you think this is wise, safe behavior? Think again.

CWRU's annual security report is now out and includes statistics for the previous three years concerning all reported crimes and where and when they occurred. To check your building's safety record, log on to <http://www.cwru.edu/finadmin/security/reports/secul999/report99.htm>

Or call Security at x2908 and ask for a hard copy.

Feel free to discuss these issues in your lab or classroom with your co-workers and students. If you think that your students are old enough to know better, think again. Remind them

- to lock all belongings safely.
- to never travel alone at night, especially if you are a woman.

If you teach a late-night class or lab, this is an absolute must. Institute a buddy system or call a Campus Escort at x3333 for them AND you. They will think you're being old-fashioned, but what do they know? With the recent, unresolved attacks last semester, taking these extra precautions is not only smart, it's necessary.

Many of you will no doubt remember Dr. Thomas Murray, former head of the Center for Bioethics and beloved CWRU mainstay for 15 years before he moved to New York in 1999. As you may or may not know, his daughter Emily, a student at Kenyon College, was tragically found slain this past December. She had been returning home to her dorm from work when she was abducted.

She was 20 years old.

So if you think this can't happen here, to your students, or even to you -- think again.



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Safety News For the Campus Community