The holidays are getting closer everyday. As we begin to prepare for the holidays, safety may not be the foremost thought on our mind. However, the decorations we use can potentially lead to serious safety hazards if we are not careful. We need to be especially aware of increased fire hazards during the holiday season. Here are a few safety measures to keep in mind as you decorate:

1. Decorations must be flame-proofed or made of non-flammable material.
2. If decorating a live tree, be sure to...
    - use a fresh evergreen that has been treated with a flame retardant.
    - equip it with a tree stand that can hold water at the base of the tree; keep it full.
    - remove the tree prior to closing for break.

No electrical equipment or devices are permitted on or under trees; only indirect lighting may be used. Nor are candles or open flames allowed on, under, or within 10 feet of the tree. SEVERAL fires at Case have started this way in the past.

3. If using a metallic tree or decoration, do not place electrical lights or objects on

"Turn off lights or other electric devices when not in your office or room."

6. Door decorations must not overlap the top, bottom, or sides of doors.

7. Do not leave lights unattended.

8. Do not place **any** decorations where they would hinder access to safety equipment (fire alarms, extinguishers) or exits.

REMEMBER that if a fire does occur:

- Warn/remove people in danger.
- Activate a pull alarm (usually near exits).
- Call Protective Services at x3333 and give a complete description of the fire. **DO NOT CALL 911.**
- If the fire is manageable, and **ONLY if you have been trained**, use your fire extinguisher. Only attempt to put out the fire **after** the alarm has been sounded and the evacuation of the building has begun. If you are **NOT** trained to used the fire extinguisher, sound the fire alarm and get out of the building.

“If you or someone from your lab authorized to use radioactive material is not present, all

Gloves are an integral part of PPE in laboratory situations. However, if your hands are red and itchy and/or you are sneezing or your nose is running when you are around your gloves, then you may be allergic to latex.

Latex allergy is an extremely common reaction to certain proteins in natural latex rubber. While many experience a contact dermatitis of dry skin, this is not a true allergy, which manifests as several symptoms and must be diagnosed by a doctor.

Mild reactions range from itching to redness while more severe symptoms may involve asthma or even shock. Even if you are not wearing gloves, latex proteins can become fastened to the lubricant powder used in some gloves and can become an airborne inhalant. The best way to avoid latex contact dermatitis is to follow these guidelines:

"Latex gloves should not be used for chemical protection, and are not appropriate for handling infectious materials."

- Use non-latex gloves for activities that are not likely to involve contact.
- While latex gloves will provide adequate protection from infectious materials, *latex gloves are not designed for chemical protection and should not be used when handling chemicals.*
- *Nitrile gloves* will provide adequate protection from infectious materials while eliminating the problem of latex allergy.
- If you choose latex gloves, use only powder-free gloves with reduced protein content. So-called hypoallergenic latex gloves do not reduce the risk of latex allergy. However, they may reduce reactions to the chemical additives in the latex (e.g., allergic contact dermatitis).
- After removing latex gloves, wash your hands with a mild soap and dry thoroughly.
- Practice good housekeeping: Frequently clean areas and equipment contaminated with latex-containing dust in order to reduce the risk of airborne inhalants.

If you feel you might have a latex allergy, consult Health Services and follow the above steps to avoid unnecessary exposure. **Always observe proper PPE procedures; if an allergy prevents you from wearing gloves, find an alternative and DO NOT CARRY OUT THE PROCEDURE UNTIL YOUR ALLERGY PROBLEM IS ALLEVIATED.**

“A Safety

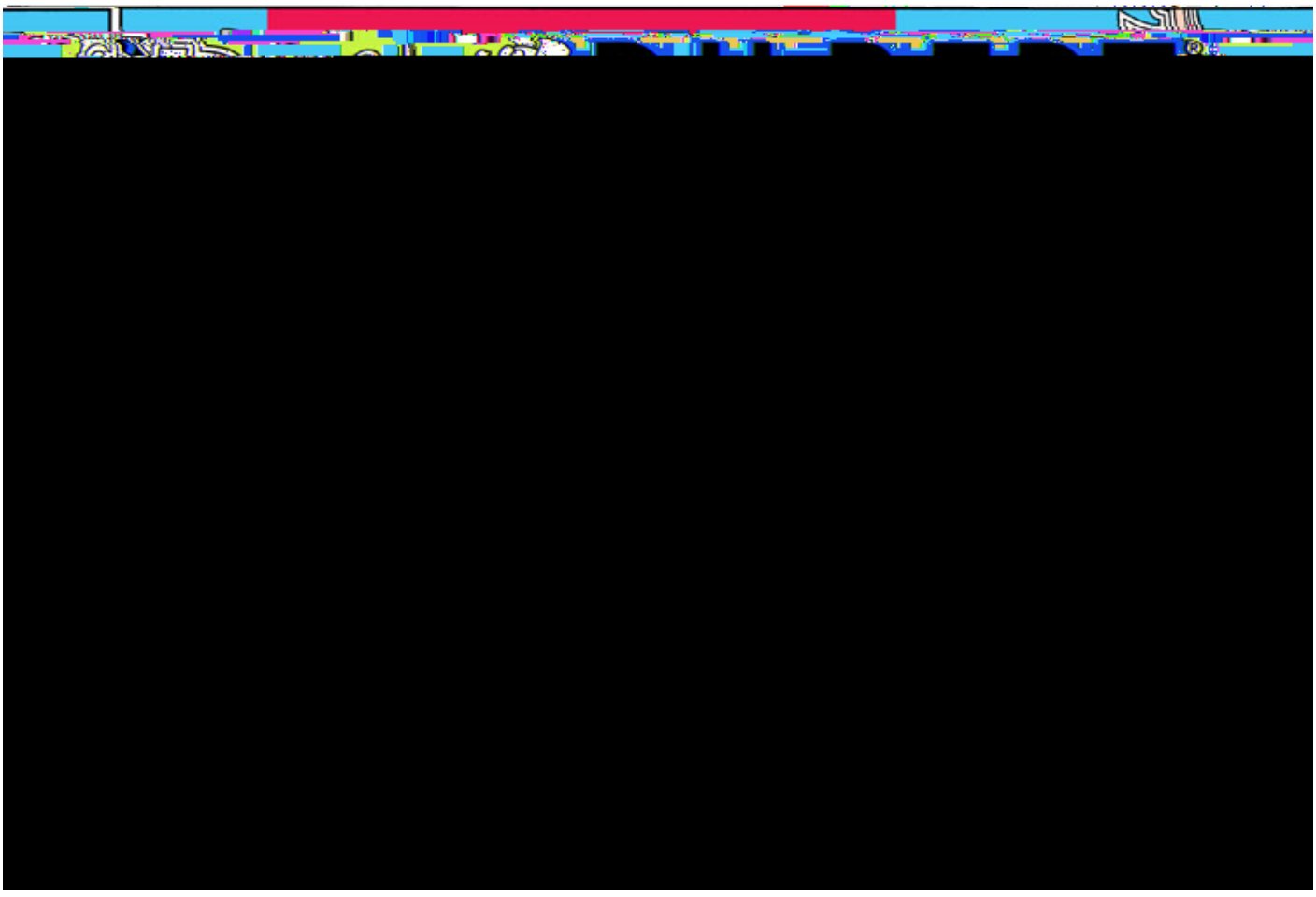
The laser program has now posted for your convenience the Laser Safety Manual, retraining slides and the laser safety exam. Simply go to the DOES website at <http://does.case.edu>. Additionally, a pamphlet of laser calculations will soon be posted to assist in Hazard evaluations.

Please remember that a copy of ANSI Z136.1-2000 is required in order to have access to all the graphs, tables, diagrams and correction factors used in the many examples of laser calculations.

If you have any questions, please email Wayne Justice (hwj@case.edu).

Please join us in welcoming Paul Holter (Specialist I) to DOES. Paul comes to us from the Case School of Engineering.

Also, please join us in congratulating and saying good luck to DOES staff member Mahdi Fahim (Specialist II) who is leaving DOES at the end of December. After 5 years of service to DOES, Mahdi is moving to North Carolina. Look for a detailed article in the next issue.



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