



# 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!***

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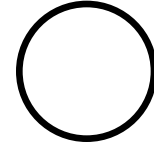
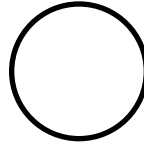
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Some of you have also submitted Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plans to fulfill part of your obligations under the OSHA Laboratory Standard. Each investigator assumes similar obligations to those shouldered under the OSHA Laboratory Standard 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.

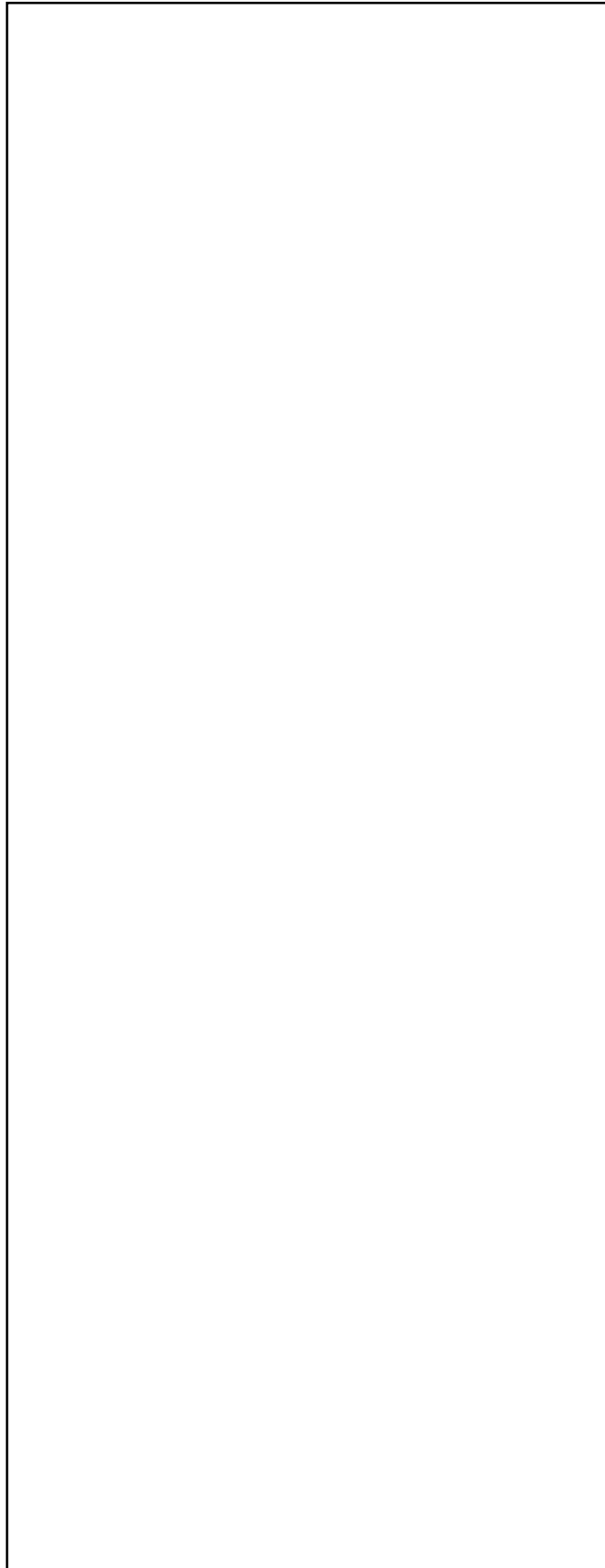
Thank you for your active participation in and compliance with these State and Federal safety programs. All investigators are reminded that the Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety offers classes for all employees on the Laboratory Standard, the Bloodborne Pathogen Stan-

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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/](http://www.osha-slc.gov/ergonomics-standard/) or call (202) 693-1888 for a hardcopy or CD-ROM.



## **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/securi>

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**Safety News For the Campus Community**