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Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety NEWSLETTER

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Special Radiation Training Session

On October 18th, the Radiation Safety Office will present a Radiation Awareness Training session designed for ancillary personnel, those who do not use radiation but work in its proximity in the lab. These types of workers—which includes housekeeping, secretaries or students—often have many questions about radiation use in the lab. If you are curious or have any concerns and would like more information about radiation safety on CWRU's campus, you are welcome to attend the session. It will also serve as an annual retraining session for those who require it.

This session is basically an awareness course about the use of radioactive materials. It informs personnel about the Radiation Safety Office, how it functions on campus, and the interactions, precautions and rules it sets out for the laboratories. It also explains the signs and labels that many personnel come across during the course of a day.

Most importantly, the course puts radiation risk into perspective, explaining the different types of radiation and carefully distinguishing between perceived dangers and the very low exposure rates that exist occupationally.

DOES encourages everyone who is concerned about or interested in radiation in the workplace to come to the session and be informed about these issues. It will be held on October 18th in the BRB, Room 15, from 12:00 - 1:00; call our office (x2906) to sign up.

Under Revision: the CWRU Safety Manual

The CWRU Chemical Safety Manual was developed to serve as the standard safety protocol document for the university as a whole. However, in compliance with the OSHA Lab Standard, each separate laboratory at CWRU must adapt and tailor that manual to the meet specific needs of that lab, creating a Chemical Hygiene Plan, or CHP. When the Safety Manual revision is complete, all PIs need to review it and re-tailor their lab's CHP accordingly.

The Lab Standard

One of the main tenants of the Lab Standard is the development and implementation of a Chemical Hygiene Plan, a set of written procedures designed to

What WASTE!

Package Receipt Protocol:

Disposing the Container

After receiving a package containing radioactive material, it is vital that it be fully surveyed and decommissioned before it is set out for trash. Making sure the package is "clean" is a standard step in package receipt protocols. In addition to decommissioning any packages, all labels remaining on the package must be defaced. We have received complaints that some packages have not been defaced when set out for trash.

Many of you are returning pre-addressed styrofoam containers to their respective companies. These containers must be ready to send back before you take them to the mailroom (in other words, they must be surveyed for any contamination and their labels must be defaced). We strongly encourage this practice of recycling styrofoam; since return postage is already included, it costs nothing to mail these back and it saves a lot of room in landfills. Mail these packages from anywhere you would normally send a package; the new campus mail room is located at the Cedar Service Building. Please do not drop them off at the old receiving dock.

If you have any questions about package receipt protocols or other waste disposal procedures, contact Radiation Safety at x2906.

HEY! BIKE RIDERS!

While bicycles are a great way to get around on campus, some consideration should be given to where they are parked and/or stored when not in use.

Some buildings have outside racks to which the bikes can be secured; unfortunately, many do not. Most people, therefore, prefer taking their bikes inside for security and weather reasons. However, classroom, administrative, and other buildings do not have provisions for this indoor storage, and by bringing your bike inside, you are potentially blocking the safe means of egress for that building.

Some of these "no-no" parking spots include: stairways, landings, corridors, and in front of doors. Bikes also cannot block or impede access to safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire hoses, alarm pull stations, or control panels. Bikes parked in these places will be removed--the lock will be cut and the bike will be confiscated and held by Security.

Blocking or impeding access to a means of egress or to safety equipment is a violation of the Fire Safety Code (NFPA standard #101) and state and local fire codes. Please don't park your bike where it would be in violation of these codes. If the building where you are going does not have a bicycle rack, park your bike at a building nearby, and petition the dean of your building to ask that a rack be installed at your own.

Upcoming Training Sessions

Radiation (x2906)

See article on page 1 for information on a Radiation Awareness Training Session (Oct. 18)

- **New Training:** Oct.15 (9-12), 24(1-4)
- **Retraining:** Oct. 8(2-3), 18(10-11), 29(2-3)
- **X-ray Training:** call office to set up training session

Chemical (x2907)

- **OSHA Lab Standard:** Mondays 1-3 (Adelbert Room 2)

Bloodborne Pathogen (x2907)

- **New Training:** Mondays 3-4 (Adelbert Room 2)
- **Retraining:** call office to reserve videotape

Under Revision: The CWRU Safety Manual

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HOT TIPS

Eye Protection: A Little Means A Lot

On the average there are 1000 eye injuries throughout the country each day. Fortunately, 90% of all eye injuries are preventable with just minimal precautions.

We strongly encourage all laboratory workers to wear safety glasses while in the lab, especially when working on an experiment. Even if your job isn't very hazardous, eye injuries can result from a fellow worker's operation.

Since blindness can result from almost any eye injury, wearing eye protection should be part of your daily lab routine.

Choices, choices

Regular corrective eyeglasses do not offer the amout and scope of protection necessary in the lab. The proper protection varies, depending on the nature of the potential hazard. Each lab supervisor is responsible for creating a comprehensive eye safety protocol as part of the Chemical Hygiene Plan, determining when hazards exist and what protection is required.

Below are the most common forms of eye protection for in the lab.

Safety glasses. Many stores offer OSHA-approved safety glasses: clear wrap-around goggles that protect but do not impair vision. Make sure safety glasses are of an approved material and

Contact Dermatitis: Are You Allergic?

Occupational skin diseases, most of which are contact dermatitis, are the second most common occupational disease reported to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Contact dermatitis falls into two categories, allergic and irritant, both of which can share common symptoms. Pruritus (itching) is the most common symptom, but others may include redness, swelling, crusting, or scaling. Contact dermatitis may have a temporary or long-term effect on the

ins, chromium salts, paraphenylenediamene, and formaldehyde. The best prevention against allergic reaction is to remove these allergens from the environment of the worker. When this is not practical, lab workers should wear personal protective clothing (which includes gloves) and use fume hoods for all procedures.

Unlike allergic dermatitis, irritant contact dermatitis does not require prior sensitization and develops as the result of the direct effect of chemicals on the skin. Irritant contact dermatitis will develop in all workers exposed to significant concentrations for an adequate length of time. Mild irritation is characterized by itching, redness, and scaling. More acute cases may result in the formulation of bullae and ulceration. Substances which cause irritant contact dermatitis include strong alkalis and acids, soaps and detergents, and many organic compounds. Aggravating factors may include reduced humidity in the workplace, excessive heat, and friction.

As with allergic contact dermatitis, prevention is the key with irritant contact dermatitis. Always wear gloves and protective clothing. If it is necessary, the Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety (DOES) will recommend changes in lab procedures which may allow for a less irritating chemical to be used.

If for any reason contact dermatitis does occur, please seek the medical advice of University Health Service (368-2450), and report the incident to DOES. However, the best solution is prevention, so wear gloves and protective clothing and follow other “lab smart” procedures.

If you have any questions about which gloves and protective clothing are appropriate to particular procedures, contact DOES at x2907. Specific gloves are often required for protection from some substances found in the lab.

Eye Protection: A Little Means A Lot

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irrigate the eye because of involuntary spasms of the eyelid. Furthermore, anyone attempting to irrigate the eyes of an unconscious victim may not be aware of the contact lenses and hence not realize that they must be removed.

For these reasons, do not wear soft or hard contact lenses in work areas or laboratories where there are liquids or solutions which are injurious to the eye. Where eye protection is required, contact lenses are never substitutes for safety glasses or goggles. Neither, for that matter, is eyeglasses alone—always wear proper eye protection.