

# EH&S **safety Matters**

University of California, Irvine  
 Environmental Health & Safety  
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(From left to right: David Melitz, Joe Rizkallah, Rama Singh, and Chris Younghans-Haug)

## Do You Know Your “School Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator”?

- Do you know how to access required safety information for your lab?
- Do you know how to report a safety concern or an accident?
- Do you know what specific training you need to safely do your work?
- Do you know the locations of the nearest Fire Extinguisher or the Eyewashes and Safety Showers?
- Do you know the location of your office Building Evacuation Assembly Point?

From the School of Biological Sciences to University Extension, UC Irvine Environmental Health & Safety has a School EH&S Coordinator ready to provide campus safety related assistance and guidance. Your School EH&S Coordinator is your safety liaison to many services provided by EH&S. Don't hesitate to speak with or make an appointment with your School EH&S Coordinator.

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## Clean Areas in Campus Laboratories



At UC Irvine, research work in many laboratories requires the use of various chemicals, biological agents or radioactive materials. With this in mind, EH&S has a commitment to provide a safe and healthy work environment for faculty members, research staff, students and visitors. It is therefore essential that precautions be taken to avoid accidental exposure or ingestion of hazardous substances.

The separation of food and drink (including coffeemakers and water coolers) from locations containing hazardous materials and potentially contaminated items minimizes the risk of accidental ingestion. The risk of exposure is also reduced by not using laboratory appliances (i.e., designated refrigerators, freezers, microwave ovens) for the storage or preparation of food and beverages.

Additionally, the insertion or removal of contact lenses, and any other manipulations that could transfer hazardous materials to your eyes or mouth, is another potential source of contamination.

For the same reason, it is not advisable to apply cosmetics or lip balm while in many areas of a typical research laboratory.

Ideally, a separate room should be designated for food storage/preparation and eating and drinking – a place where chemicals, biological agents and radioactive materials are prohibited. When this is not practical, a “Clean Area” within a laboratory may be designated, but only under certain conditions:

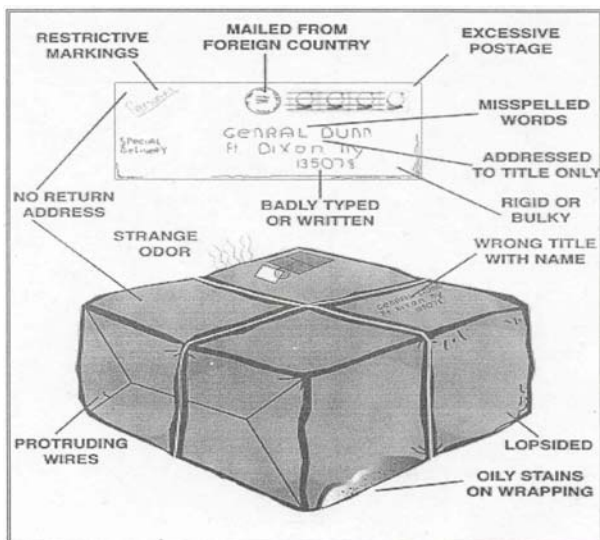
1. The Clean Area must be adequately separated from a location of potentially hazardous operations. This can be accomplished by putting sufficient distance between the two, or the installation of a splashguard of an appropriate height.
2. An on-site evaluation by an EH&S professional to ensure that the designated Clean Area is properly situated with adequate separation from hazardous material use and storage locations.
3. Conspicuous signage and labeling to designate Clean Areas and food appliances. This is especially important when a laboratory has multiple refrigerators, freezers or microwave ovens. Those labeled for food use must be kept within the Clean Area.
4. A waste basket designated for food and drink related trash must be located within the Clean Area. Food related trash items may not be disposed of in laboratory waste receptacles.

EH&S will provide Clean Area signs and labels upon request. For additional details on the campus Clean Area program, please refer to the Clean Area Fact Sheet, available on our website at <http://www.ehs.uci.edu/programs/radiation/CLEAN%20AREA%20FACTSHEET.pdf>.

*Rocky Dendo*

## Handle Suspicious Packages With Care

(Some characteristics of a suspicious package are provided in the illustration below)



- **Origin** – Postmark doesn't match the city of the return address, or name of sender is unusual or unknown, or no return address is given.
- **Postage** – Excessive or inadequate postage
- **Balance** – Lopsided or unusually thick
- **Weight** – Package seems heavy for its size
- **Contents** – Stiffness or springiness of contents: protruding wires or components; oily outer wrapping or envelope
- **Smell** – Particularly almond or other suspicious odors
- **Writing** – Handwriting of sender is not familiar or indicates a foreign style not normally received by recipient or cut-and-paste or rub-on block letters are used. Common words are misspelled or special instructions like “fragile”, “confidential”, or “do not delay” are present

For more information on this topic, visit our EH&S website at <http://www.ehs.uci.edu/programs/ih/SuspiciousPackage8152003.pdf> or contact [John Chan](#) at 949-824-7101.

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## **HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT**

(By Brian Johnson)

Amid the turmoil of budgetary crisis, the University of California Irvine continues to exemplify the ability to grow. This is visibly seen in the construction of new facilities to house learning centers and research laboratories.

While our campus grows, so do our responsibilities. One highly noticed, but not much talked about responsibility, is proper waste management and disposal. As you can see in the above photograph, one day's worth of hazardous waste from our campus can be quite significant. Last year alone, this campus generated and disposed of 111 tons of hazardous waste.

Although this number is quite large, it can be reduced through waste minimization, which can be achieved in many ways, such as: a) review of each experimental protocol and purchasing only the amount of materials needed, b) utilization of micro-scaled research, c) use of chemicals that are not hazardous and which can be easily neutralized.

As our campus continues to expand, Environmental Health and Safety's Hazardous Waste Management Team will continue to strive to uphold our reputation of timely and courteous hazardous waste management. Through training and waste minimization, we will be able to uphold the expected standards of a university campus of our stature.

For additional information regarding Hazardous Waste Management, please visit our website at <http://www.ehs.uci.edu/enviro.html>.



October is **Fire** Awareness Month, and it also includes **National Fire Prevention Week**. Remember this month and all year: When **fire** strikes, time is your biggest enemy.

**Make sure you know:**

- Your escape routes
- Your emergency assignment
- How to sound the alarm
- Where to report once outside

**FIREPLACE SAFETY**

Fireplaces, while warm and cozy, must be used with care.

- Christmas wrapping, trees, paper and trash do not belong in your fireplace. Embers can be taken up in a thermal column and may land on your (or a neighbor's) roof or on dry vegetation surrounding the home.
- Have your chimney professionally inspected and cleaned if necessary at least once a year to clear out soot and creosote that can burn.
- Always use a fire screen and make sure a spark arrester is in place.

## Reduce Holiday Stress

### How to relax and enjoy yourself this year

Holidays can be exciting - or overwhelming. With all the extra work on top of your normal schedule, it's easy to get stressed out. But that just spoils the fun. So this year, keep the holiday spirit and...

### Plan Ahead

You may not be able to eliminate holiday stress completely, but there's a lot you can do to minimize its impact. For example:

- Make your gift list early. Shop and wrap before you get caught up in other holiday activities.
- Schedule parties and visits to allow time to catch your breath.
- Plan holiday menus and parties in advance, and stock up on food.

### Take Care of Yourself

Too much stress can wear you out or even make you sick. This year don't let illness or fatigue cause you to miss the fun.

- Get enough sleep and exercise.
- Eat regular, healthy meals.
- Maintain a sense of humor.
- Don't overdo it. Know your own limits.



EH&S wishes everyone on and off campus a safe holiday season!