EH&S Wants You: Create a Safety Culture in Your Workplace and Identify Your Required Safety Training

Creating a positive safety culture on campus is vital to ensure a safe and healthy environment for each employee. It is important for employees to understand their safety responsibilities, know the hazards in their work area, and incorporate safety as an essential part of their job. To create and promote a positive safety culture on campus, employees are required to do the following:

- Complete required safety training through the UC Learning Center. Completion of the Safety Training Self-Assessment will provide a listing of required safety training (under Required Activities) that applies to each employee.
- Partner with EH&S to implement the Safety on Site Program (SOS) program into your work area.
- Supervisors must take an active role in workplace safety by ensuring a safe working environment for their employees and are required to understand their safety-related supervisory responsibilities. The “Creating a Safety Culture” training can be accessed via UC Learning Center.

Completing the steps listed above is very important and we urge each one of you to do your part without further delay. If you have any questions, please contact EH&S at (949) 824-6200.

Connect with the EH&S office and visit us on www.facebook.com/UCIEHSOffice where you can read about current safety events, enter contests and stay up to date on campus safety matters. Also, don’t forget to share any comments, questions or concerns with the EH&S office. While you are there, remember to “Like” us on Facebook!
Upstairs...Downstairs - WATCH YOUR STEP!

Did you know over 10% of UCI campus injuries are due to falls on stairways. Don’t be a victim on the stairway!

Be aware of the following recommendations related to stair safety:

⇒ Do not rush - Never run or rush when using a stairway
⇒ Lighting: Make sure the stairway is well lit.
⇒ Clear the space: Don’t let clutter accumulate on the stairs.
⇒ Clean spills: Wet water or coffee spills can cause serious slip and fall.
⇒ No wax: Waxed floors look great but they are slippery - don’t ever wax the stairs. If they are slippery in any case, try nonskid tape or stair treads.
⇒ Handrails: Use the handrails. A handrail on either side of the stairs gives two people who are passing each other on the stairs something to hold onto.
⇒ Items in hand - Never carry excess material while on a stairway. You need your hands free to prevent a potential fall!
⇒ Avoid texting or using a cell phone: Whether at the top or the bottom of the stairs, avoid the distraction of electronic devices.
⇒ Eyes wide open - Look where you are going; don’t allow visual distractions

Cellphones, Texting and Distracted Driving

When you are behind the wheel of any vehicle your ONLY job is driving.

Please remember that drivers of University vehicles have an obligation to operate that vehicle safely. The use of cellphones or texting while driving any University vehicle from large trucks to golf carts is prohibited. Here are some facts about using cellphones or texting when driving:

* Over 80 percent of vehicle collisions involve driver distraction. Talking on a cell phone or texting is the number one cause of distraction.

* Up to 6000 people nationwide are killed in crashes where driver distractions are involved.

* Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)

* Using a cell phone while driving, whether it’s hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver’s reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent. (Source: University of Utah)

* Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent. (Source: Carnegie Mellon)

* The fine for a first time texting or hand-held cell phone violation is $159, with subsequent tickets costing $279.

Law enforcement is increasingly cracking down on cell phone use and texting while driving. The California Highway Patrol alone is writing more than 10,000 cell phone tickets each month.
Custodians who had been working for an outside contractor recently became UC Irvine employees as a result of the campus’s decision to insource custodial services. On March 27, 2012, 94 custodians were brought on-board to provide regularly scheduled cleaning services. The new employees received EH&S required safety training information conducted by Javier Mendez Safety Consulting Company (SafetySi) in Spanish covering subjects such as Core Safety, Hazard Communication, Back Injury Prevention & Manual Material Handling, Ladder Safety, Fire Safety and Bloodborne Pathogens. Training and instruction was also provided on new products and equipment which the employees will be using in their new assignments on campus. With the insourcing process complete, Facilities Management has now resumed regularly scheduled cleaning services. A copy of Facilities Management’s current Custodial Cleaning Services Schedule can be found on SNAP at: [http://snap.uci.edu/viewXmlFile.jsp?resourceID=1449](http://snap.uci.edu/viewXmlFile.jsp?resourceID=1449).

Safety Incentives Continue in Hospitality & Dining Services!

*Thank you to all employees for your significant participation toward injury prevention in the kitchens and dining service areas of UCI!*  

Hospitality & Dining Services Safety Incentives program, sponsored by EH&S and supported by OP BSAS, has been successful for the second consecutive year!

The employee injury prevention program, supported by Director Jack McManus, Associate Director Lin Tang, Senior Resident District Manager Robert Perez and Food Service Director Kelly Kuehnert has added positive energy to the ongoing injury prevention program for all Hospitality & Dining Services employees.

Dining Service employees at UCI Residential and Retail Dining locations are recognized by their supervisors for outstanding “injury prevention work practices” and selected to receive Target gift cards in appreciation of their individual contributions to workplace safety and injury prevention. Examples of injury prevention efforts include an employee wiping up a liquid spill and setting up "Cau- tion Wet Surface" cones, and immediately picking up and disposing of spilled food from kitchen floor.
Lessons Learned: Time Sensitive Chemical Incidents

Time sensitive materials are those chemicals, when stored for prolonged periods or under improper conditions, can become unstable. These additional hazards develop from inappropriate and improper storage conditions as well as simply storing the chemicals for too long. In the last few weeks, there have been two instances involving time sensitive chemicals. A chemical container exploded on a storage shelf and another container was found to have potentially explosive peroxide crystals which cost hundreds of dollars to dispose of through a hazardous waste contractor.

The explosion occurred because the chemical container was not stored under nitrogen which, over time, resulted in a build-up of acid gas. In the second case, the container was not dated and checked for peroxide forming crystals every 3 months. The root cause of these incidents is failure to have a procedure in place for tracking these time sensitive chemicals and failure to understand these hazards/decomposition products.

Researchers should always review the MSDS’ and research information on the storage and decomposition products of their time sensitive chemicals.

General categories of time sensitive chemicals:

- Chemicals that form explosive levels of peroxides after prolonged storage and exposure to air.
- Stabilized chemicals which can become shock sensitive when the stabilizer evaporates. These compounds form peroxides after a distillation process.
- Material that can undergo a slow chemical reaction (polymerization) which creates additional hazards.

Managing Time Sensitive Chemicals:

- Identify time sensitive chemicals in your inventory.
- Define the storage conditions of your chemicals by reading the MSDS.
- Track Time Sensitive materials by maintaining a log book (date received, date container opened, date tested/inspected)

Define inspection periods:

- Check peroxide forming chemicals every 3 months using peroxide test strips. The PS Chemical Storehouse sells the strips.
- Some chemicals may only need to be inspected before/after a specific use.
- In general, all chemical containers should be inspected annually.

For more information and a list of time sensitive chemicals, you can download a copy of Prudent Practices in the Laboratory, Handling and Disposal of Chemicals: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12654

If you discover time-sensitive materials that have expired or are undated:

1) DO NOT TOUCH THE BOTTLE.
2) Visually inspect the bottle for product identification and expiration date.
3) Visually inspect for water content, discoloration, crystal deposits on the walls, white residue around the neck or lids.
4) If you determine that the container may have crystals - immediately secure the area and notify EH&S at 949-824-6200.

For a list of peroxide forming chemicals, please visit the following references:

http://www.ehs.uci.edu/labres.html on Lab safety Guidelines, Appendix E, Section XIII