

GERMS AT WORK

Workstation Hygiene

There are many ways that we touch the lives of others in our work at OHSU. We strive to make a difference for the health and wellbeing of all Oregonians. The following is some important information on how to start right where you are—improving the health and wellbeing of yourself while at work.



How Touching!

What do you touch with your hands during the course of your day? A keyboard, mouse, phone, desk surface, door knobs, handles, power buttons, and any other surface that comes into contact with hands, can contain germs that make us sick.

It's not surprising to hear that research studies have found that computer keyboards host a galaxy of germs just waiting to move from the keys into your body via your nose, mouth or eyes. Preventing the spread of colds, flu, and other illnesses should be important to every one of us.

Germ studies conducted by Dr. Charles Gerba, University of Arizona, found that, while toilet seats showed a germ count of 49 germs per square inch, keyboards harbored 3,295 per square inch. But wait, there's more... phone germ counts were at 25,127 per square inch!

Keyboards and phones are subject to coughs and sneezes. In addition, eating at our desks can add to the situation by providing a buffet of food matter — a free lunch for germs! To prevent the growth and spread of germs, we need to routinely clean up our act.

Clean-Up time

Experts recommend wiping your work station components at the beginning and end of each day and also before eating at your desk. Workstations can be effectively cleaned with supplies available at OHSU Logistics. See links for placing an order below.

The Infection Prevention and Control Program supports the use of Sani-Cloths (product number below) for

- cleaning computer components and other surfaces such as desk tops, phones, and door handles. However, monitor screens should be treated differently. It is best not to touch them, but if cleaning is needed, ITG recommends a cloth dampened with a mild soap and water solution). The same applies to a mouse's optical sensor.

PLACE AN ORDER WITH LOGISTICS

There are two ways to order supplies:

1. Logistics Warehouse ORDER SHEET

For placing orders by fax, follow this link to the form:

http://pdxlogappsvr/logistics/linen_pyxis_&Supplies/documents/LogisticsOrderSheet.pdf

2. Logistics Warehouse ONLINE ORDERING

Register to place web-based orders, with the form linked here:

http://pdxlogappsvr/logistics/linen_pyxis_&Supplies/documents/Logistics_Web_Ordering_Reg.pdf

Fax the completed Registration Form to Logistics and you'll get an email confirmation once entered into the system. From there, you can login to place orders online.

Recommended Supplies:

- # 125483 HAND SANITIZER AVAGARD
- # 125365 WIPE GERMICIDAL SANI-CLOTH

For more information on ordering and products at Logistics, contact: Jane Ali 494-5666, alij@ohsu.edu



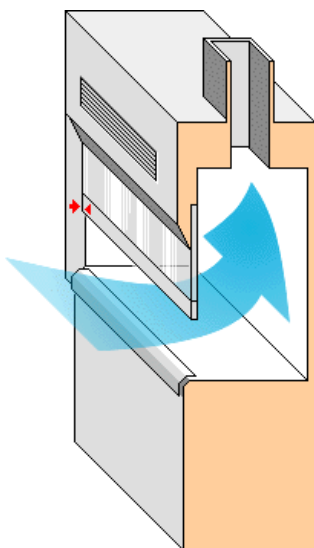
Topic of the Month

Chemical Fume Hoods

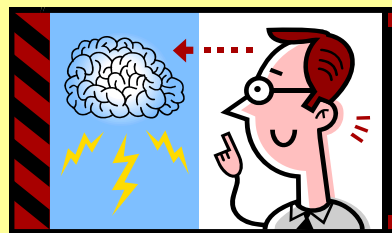
Environmental Health & Radiation Safety (EHRS) certifies chemical fume hoods at OHSU. Daily users should make sure that hoods are functioning correctly, used appropriately, and all safety precautions are followed.

Top 10 Chemical Fume Hood Safety Tips:

1. Equipment and other materials should be placed and all work performed at a minimum of 6 inches behind the sash. This practice will reduce exposure and provide protection to laboratory workers from hazards.
2. The fume hood sash should be pulled down to the optimal working level indicated by an arrow that has been placed on the fume hood by EHRS. Safe air flow was measured at this sash level, and placing the sash higher or lower than this level may affect air flow.
3. Paper and other materials should not be permitted to enter the exhaust duct or baffles of the hood. Foreign objects, like paper, can block the air from flowing freely through the baffles and exhaust duct, or get caught in the fan.
4. When handling electrical equipment in a hood, take extra precautions. Protect spark sources from flammable vapors.
5. Hoods are not intended for the long-term storage of chemicals or equipment. All excess chemicals and equipment should be stored appropriately. Most fume hoods are designed with flammable storage cabinets in the base.



6. Equipment and other materials should not be stored against the baffle area (slot at the back of the hood). This baffle provides means for air movement through the fume hood. If blocked, air will not flow properly through the hood. Minimize items stored in the hood.
7. Large equipment placed in fume hoods should be elevated a minimum of 1 ½ inches above the work surface to allow unrestricted air movement beneath equipment.
8. Reduce pedestrian traffic in front of hoods to minimize release of contaminants into the work area, particularly when using hazardous materials. Also be aware of—and minimize—nearby disturbances, such as doors opening or closing and quick motions in order to prevent cross drafts.
9. Do not rely on the fume hood exhaust to protect you from splashes or projectiles. Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves and goggles, as needed.
10. DEQ prohibits evaporation of chemical waste in fume hoods. Please call EHRS at 503-494-0425 or for West Campus call 503-690-5390 to pick up waste as it is accumulated.



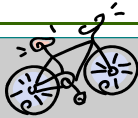
Remember:

The General & Laboratory Safety Course is for anyone who works in or enters a lab at OHSU on a regular basis.

The course is available on Big Brain!

www.ohsu.edu/integrity

Save the Date:



BICYCLE COMMUTING WORKSHOP!

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance is once again offering a workshop at OHSU to help employee cyclists commute safely to work.

Monday April 19, 12:00 pm

In the Media Room at the Student Center

Stay current with bike news at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/about/parking/pages/bike.html>

Email John Landolfe, Bike Liaison at Transportation and Parking for any additional questions: bike@ohsu.edu

Systems Thinking: What a Shock!

The following incident was reported in the Worker & Student Injury Reporting System (WSIRS). The system asks for report details from both the employee and the supervisor.

Employee: I was putting supplies away and lifting boxes. This involved bending, stooping, and pushing a cart. I'm not sure how the injury occurred. My back started hurting within a few hours of the task. I didn't take any immediate action but if I'm not better soon, I'll seek medical attention.

Supervisor: The staff member is not sure how the injury happened. Stocking is physically demanding. Perhaps an evaluation of body mechanics would help, but I'm not sure. Beyond speaking with the employee, no further action was taken.

This example portrays a lukewarm reaction. A more careful examination of the problem might result in a solution that prevents similar injuries in the future.

The manager's instinct to examine body mechanics is a good one, and that should have been done.



SafetyTeam Member Drive

Our goal for 2010 is to establish membership in all OHSU buildings and include all off-hill locations. Ideally, there would be members in each department at OHSU!

With educated eyes everywhere, we're able to maintain a safer work environment, one of the building blocks for a great workplace.

Membership is on a volunteer basis, and requires less than 15 minutes per month to participate. SafetyTeam members receive a monthly email with a link to this newsletter and a few short questions to answer.

Members are asked to communicate any safety concerns to their manager first, then any unresolved problems needing assistance to the SafetyTeam Coordinator by way of email or a phone call. Posting SafetyNews in common areas is also highly encouraged.



Do you know anyone who might like to volunteer 15 minutes each month for workplace safety?

If so, please contact the SafetyTeam Coordinator at safeteam@ohsu.com or 4-7795.

For a current issue of SafetyNews online, and for archives, visit:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetynews.cfm>

The SafetyTeam page is available at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safeteam.cfm>

These pages are updated regularly. If there are OHSU resources you'd like to see linked, please send suggestions to the SafetyTeam Coordinator at:

safeteam@ohsu.edu

Questions? Ask Environmental Health & Radiation Safety:

503-494-7795

