

CLARIFICATIONS ON CHEMICAL SAFETY

Last month's focus topic on Chemical Safety presented some information that was not accurate. Specifically, some statements made reference to law requirements when they should have cited OHSU policies and best practices.

Clarifications on these details is as follows:

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

MSDSs are required for workplace chemicals, and all potentially-exposed employees must have access to these during their work shift.

MSDSs may be made available in a number of ways, including electronic databases or in paper form, as long as employees are competent in locating the resource.

OHSU requires that Healthcare operations maintain a binder of paper copies of MSDSs in areas where chemicals are used. Binders must include an alphabetical list indexing the included MSDSs. This ensures simplicity and consistency when employees need to access an MSDS.

Requirements for research laboratories are slightly different. MSDSs must be available if provided by the manufacturer. This is in acknowledgement that MSDSs may not be available for some older or exotic chemicals.

Where electronic databases are used, an inventory of chemicals is required to be maintained in the Written Hazard Communication Program, as required by law. If the University's program is used, the inventory is to be maintained by the department choosing to use the database. The University's written program can be viewed on the Integrity Website at www.ohsu.edu/integrity.

Chemical Containers and Labels

Containers that are created by an employee must be labeled UNLESS the container is under the creator's control the entire time that a hazard exists. A label is NOT required if there is no remaining hazard when the employee leaves, that is, the container is left empty and clean or discarded appropriately. Container examples may include squirt bottles, specimen cups, soaking tubs, and mop buckets.

Medications for patient use must **always** be labeled, without exception. Pharmacy can offer clear guidelines.

Healthcare's "Secondary Container Labels" Procedure states, "Good practice suggests that all containers be labeled to define any hazards." Labels must communicate (1) the product identity and (2) general information regarding the hazards, including target organs, as appropriate. Presentation of hazard information may include the use of symbols or pictures.

Container labeling expectations in research labs varies slightly, as noted in the OHSU Laboratory Safety Manual. "All secondary containers should be labeled in such a way that all workers in the laboratory can easily identify their contents." This allows for color coding, symbols, etc. The exception for containers under complete control of the user applies.

If you have any questions about this guidance or any other chemical safety concern, please contact Environmental Health and Radiation Safety at 503-494-7795.

Contents:	Clarifications on Chemical Safety.....Pg 1
	Submitting Work RequestsPg 2
	Systems Thinking: Stuck Again!.....Pg 3
	Back to SchoolPg 3



Topic of the Month:

FACILITIES WORK REQUESTS

Sometimes workplace safety issues arise that require attention from Facilities and Real Estate (F&RE). Facilities Triage receives both urgent and routine requests for repairs on Marquam Hill, West Campus and many off campus clinics as well. Center for Health and Healing (CHH) is an exception to this, as employees use the Angus system offered by the CHH building management team.



OHSU's single password efforts now make it easier than ever to login to Oracle and create Facilities Work Requests. Anyone with access to OHSU's network has the ability to initiate a request. Once logged in to Oracle, users can select the Facilities Work Request link, then select the 'create a work order' button. This opens a form that needs to be completed with as much relevant information as possible.

Here are some pointers from John Bernatz, Manager of the Facilities Triage Center:

Safety issues are urgent requests. If there is a safety concern, the work request should be noted as 'urgent'. This will ensure that Facilities starts addressing the issue within 24 hours. Examples of urgent requests: light bulbs out in a stairway, carpet problems that create a trip hazard, a loose cabinet on the wall. If the concern may directly affect the safety of a patient, an employee or a visitor, this is urgent. For emergency requests (issues that need immediate attention and cannot wait 24 hours), call 6-0000.

Be as descriptive as possible. The description field allows enough space to write a novella, so be sure to include all the pertinent information **in detail**. The specific location should include building, room number and any other de-

scriptors, as responders may be inspecting the situation when no one is available to provide additional information. Describe the exact nature of the problem so that Facilities responders can prepare appropriately. Also, include contact information (full name, email, phone) if responders are expected to contact someone other than the person completing the form.

Always include fiscal information. In the case of incomplete or missing fiscal information, response to a request will be delayed or suspended. Fiscal responsibility is determined based on the type of repair or service. This can be determined by viewing the Facilities Service Level Agreement (SLA) at:

http://ozone.ohsu.edu/fm/services/fre_sla.pdf

In general, if the issue is part of the building, this would fall into the Facilities budget. If it's a department added feature of any kind, the specific department is responsible. For example, Facilities covers the cost of changing out light bulbs in drop ceilings, but departments must cover changing out light bulbs in office furniture pieces or task lighting.



Before submitting the request, review the details and save a digital or hard copy for your records. Once you've submitted the request, a request number

will be sent to the email address provided. When a work order number is assigned, you'll be notified via email as confirmation that action is being taken to address the issue.

Follow the link below to visit the Facilities and Real Estate Operations & Maintenance site:

http://ozone.ohsu.edu/fm/services/services_opmain.shtml

For more information on submitting work requests contact F&RE Triage at 503-346-0000

SAFETYTEAM MEMBERSHIP

SafetyTeam Members spend approximately 15 minutes per month to help ensure a safe workplace at OHSU. Members receive a monthly email with a link to this newsletter and a few brief questions to answer.

Members then channel safety concerns from locations and departments all over OHSU to the SafetyTeam Coordinator, who then helps connect members with resources and when necessary, brings concerns to the OHSU Safety Committee.

To join, contact safeteam@ohsu.com or 4-7795.



Systems Thinking: What a Shock!

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

Employee: While on a ladder, working on an energized circuit in order to change an emergency light ballast, I got a shock. I followed all proper procedures but the hot wire sprung out and made contact with my pinky. My other arm was in contact with a grid and provided a ground for the electricity. Muscle contraction caused release from the energy source. I moved from the ladder and called a co-worker to come over. The pain subsided so I did not go to ED.

Supervisor: We are reviewing procedures to minimize the need to work on energized circuits. I spoke with the employee regarding the need for medical attention. We identified process changes we could make to eliminate the potential re-occurrence.

After an electrifying brush with serious injury, the manager and employee worked together toward a systems solution!



BACK TO SCHOOL!

Fall is an exciting time at OHSU. After a long and relaxing (...maybe not!) summer, we are about to be flooded with the newest batch of students, residents, and others returning from summer hiatus.

Please take the time to chat with new and returning folks about the capabilities of SafetyTeam members and other OHSU safety resources (Environmental Health & Radiation Safety, Employee Health, Student Health, the Infection Prevention and Control Program, Public Safety, the Wellness Program, and Facilities & Real Estate). Pay particular attention to people you don't recognize and who may not know where to find resources.



When you are walking on campus, be on the lookout for individuals or situations that may need attention. We have seen some of the best safety suggestions come from members who noticed a need outside their work area!

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. Send suggestions to the SafetyTeam Coordinator at:

safeteam@ohsu.edu

**Questions? Contact
Environmental Health &
Radiation Safety:
503-494-7795**

