OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

SAFETYNEWS

The Monthly Update for the OHSU SafetyTeam | Editor: Kristine Abrahamson | June 2007

How's the Water?

Sometimes, you may see colored water coming from your faucet. Some people are so concerned about the taste or odor of the water that they only drink bottled water. **So what about the water?**

OHSU buys water from the City of Portland (or the local utility), and they certify that it is safe to drink. Color in the water is a result of sediment that comes from water pipes. Sediments can be stirred up during the first run of water that has sat in the pipes over time (ex.: overnight or weekend); from water pressure variations; or from utility work.

Sediment may include; silt from the water source (ex.: fine river sediment - common in Portland water) and oxidation (rust). Silt poses no harm, aside from an aesthetic (color and taste) point of view. The rust (iron oxide) is actually beneficial to health, but may discolor the water.

OHSU drinking water is safe, but to flush the small amounts of sediments that may be present, simply run the water for at least 30 seconds or until the water runs clear and colorless, particularly in the morning after a weekend.

Questions? 503 494-7795.

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Shared Success

The following are interesting progress notes from SafetyTeam members' activities:

- A soap dispenser was lowered in the Phlebotomy clinic's restroom so that people can access it from wheelchairs.
- Two water leaks from the de-ionized water system in the CHH were reported to the CHH building maintenance group. Maintenance is working with the tenants to fix the leaks.
- The Core Lab located in Dillehunt Hall uses a bleach solution to clean surfaces. Management decided to try alternative cleaning chemicals because of some concern over consistency in creating the bleach solution. The new chemicals were irritating to employees, so management found the best solution… a bleach dilution station! The new station will automatically create the dilute bleach solution for employees! No new chemicals were introduced and the potential for injury is greatly reduced! Good Work Core Lab!

Please continue to submit your monthly member update forms so that your safety concerns continue to be addressed.

AFSCME Labor/Management Cooperation OHSU

Topic of the Month

This month's specialized training topic is a discussion of the **Safety of Young Workers.** This topic is presented to remind managers and employees about special considerations for young workers.

Employment or student internships of young people can yield many benefits for OHSU and for young workers. However, the potential for injuries and death must be recognized and addressed by everyone involved.

Common Problems

- **Inadequate Safety training.** Safety training may not adequately address how to safely perform assigned tasks.
- **Task training or experience.** Assigned to perform tasks for which they lack training or experience, or they may take it upon themselves to perform these tasks.
- **Lack of Adequate Supervision.**
- **Lack of Experience and Maturity.** More specifically, they may not yet have a sufficient understanding of work processes to recognize hazardous situations!
- **Emergency procedures.** Lack of training or experience to handle emergencies or injuries.
- **Child labor law compliance.** Young workers and supervisors may disregard or be unaware of child labor laws that specify the jobs and the hours that young workers may not work.

Recommendations

Young workers should take the following steps to protect themselves:

- **Learn about and follow safe work practices.** Recognize the potential for injury at work.
- **Participate** in training offered by OHSU, or request training if none is offered.
- **Ask about hazards.** Don't be afraid to ask questions if unsure about the safety of any task. Discuss concerns with your supervisor.
- **Know your rights.** Be aware that you have the right to work in a safe workplace free of recognized hazards. You have the right to refuse unsafe work tasks and conditions!

Supervisors should take the following steps to protect young workers:

- **Recognize the hazards.** Assess and eliminate hazards in the workplace to reduce the potential for injury or illness. Make sure equipment used by young workers is safe.
- **Supervise young workers.** Make sure that young workers are appropriately supervised at all times; they should never work alone! All supervisors and coworkers must be aware of tasks young workers may or may not perform.
- **Watch for work around and exposure to radioactive substances.** The law forbids or limits exposures depending on worker age.
- **Provide training.** Provide training in hazard recognition and safe work practices. Have young workers demonstrate that they can perform assigned tasks safely and correctly.
- **Report any injury and illness to Risk Management (503 494-2451).** Accident and claim reporting is the same as for employees. Medical attention for injuries and illness should be sought immediately.
- **Work hours.** Child labor laws specify acceptable hours and total time worked per day/week. These vary depending on the age of the worker.

Questions?

EHRS

503-494-7795

Do YOU know how to use a fire extinguisher?

We all know what a fire extinguisher is, but do YOU know how to use one? Used properly, a fire extinguisher can save lives and property by extinguishing a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives. Used improperly, an extinguisher can endanger you and those around you by making the fire worse! It is therefore very important to understand which type of fire extinguisher to use for each type of fire and how to use it.

Types of fire extinguishers:

1. Water Extinguishers should be used on Class A fires (ordinary combustibles such as wood, paper, cloth and rubber).

2. Carbon Dioxide extinguishers are designed for Class B (flammable liquids such as gasoline, grease, oil and paint).

3. Class C extinguishers are used for energized electrical equipment such as wiring, computers, fuse boxes and appliances ONLY.

4. A fire extinguisher labeled with Class D is for use on fires that involve combustible materials like magnesium, titanium, or sodium.

5. A fire extinguisher with the letter "K" is for use on Class K fires. Class K fires are fires that involve vegetable oils, animal oils or fats in cooking appliances. This is for commercial kitchens, like the OHSU Mac Hall Cafeteria and Marquam Hill Cafeteria.

At OHSU, most fire extinguishers are the ABC Type. This type is a combination of the A, B and C types and is a general purpose fire extinguisher.

How to Use an Extinguisher: PASS

The best technique to fight a fire can be remembered by the acronym **PASS**:

1. **P**ull the pin
2. **A**im the extinguisher
3. **S**queeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.
4. **S**weep the nozzle, aiming at the base of the fire with a side to side motion and working towards the center of the fire.

If you see a fire: RACE

RACE

1. Rescue or remove anyone in immediate danger.
2. Activate a local fire alarm (pull station).
3. Contain the fire by closing doors.
4. Extinguish the fire or Evacuate.

If you have any doubt about fighting a fire – DON'T! Instead, get out, closing doors and windows behind you to slow the spread of the fire, and let the professionals do their job.

If you have any questions about fire safety or the building safety features in your area, please contact EHRS: 4-7795.

For all emergencies, please call:

4-4444