

Burning Urns



Burning Urns:

Smoking is allowed on the OHSU campus only in designated smoking areas. Designated smoking areas are scattered throughout campus. Each of the smoking areas has disposal for both regular trash and a separate container for cigarettes.

Cigarette urns are designed specifically to make sure that lighted cigarettes are extinguished. Cigarette urns are designed to only accept cigarettes, and are not designed to accept other forms of garbage including: chewing gum wrappers and Kleenex. When other forms of garbage are disposed of in the cigarette urns, fire may and has resulted. On several occasions, the cigarette urns in front of BICC have been reported to be emitting smoke. One of the fires melted the bottom of the urn, spilling garbage on the ground.



Fires in the cigarette urns can be prevented by only putting cigarettes in them, and disposing of all other trash in the appropriate trash receptacle.



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A Message From Your SafetyTeam Coordinator:

This section is reserved to report on SafetyTeam members' activities over the past month. Only 18 members submitted September's Monthly Member Updates, and none reported any activity or concerns. No news must be good news! Please don't hesitate to report any issues, and also please also let me know of your successes so you can encourage your fellow SafetyTeam members!



There are a few of you out there who have a high number of SafetyPoints! If you are interested in how many you have and would like to redeem those points for a prize, please give me a call.

Please continue to submit your monthly member update forms so that your safety concerns continue to be addressed. Don't forget to answer the Question of the Month, where correct answers will earn you valuable SafetyPoints!

I look forward to hearing from you!



Topic of the Month

This month's specialized training topic is a discussion of **Bloodborne Pathogens.**



Why Be Concerned?

If you work with or around blood and body fluids, you may be exposed to blood-borne pathogens, including HIV and hepatitis B and C. All three diseases are caused by viruses that are transmitted through exchange of body fluids.

Most transmission of bloodborne pathogens continues to occur through risky personal behaviors, but transmission in the workplace is possible if skin is punctured by a contaminated sharp, or broken skin or mucous membrane is splashed with blood or body fluid.

Needlestick is the most common cause for occupationally-related bloodborne pathogen infections, however many factors affect whether any exposure results in an infection. These include the amount of blood or fluid involved; the severity/depth of the injury; an individual's predisposition to infection; and the disease stage of the source.

Rights

State and Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (OSHA) guarantee your rights to a safe and healthful workplace. Employees who have contact with blood or other infectious materials have specific rights under OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, made law in 1991. Included are free hepatitis-B vaccine, personal protective equipment, immediate medical evaluation following exposures, and confidential medical treatment.

OHSU insists that standard precautions be practiced

institution-wide; employees must know which materials are potentially infectious; special containers are provided for sharps disposal; hazards are eliminated, when possible; and employees are trained prior to work, and annually, about hazards.

OHSU has policies and Hospitals and Clinics have Infection Control Plans (503 494-6694) in place that describe procedures in clinical settings. Find the details on the O-Zone or ask Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (503 494-7795).

Responsibilities

- **Always use standard precautions** when working around blood, body fluids, and tissues.
- **Respect sharps**, and use needle safety devices, when possible.
- **Get immunized against hepatitis-B.** Call Employee Health for details at 503 494-5271.
- **Immediately report all exposures** and comply with post-exposure follow-up procedures. **Don't wait...** the time frame for any necessary medical treatment is critical. Reporting is also essential for establishing a claim for workers' compensation benefits.
- **Support your peers.** Anyone exposed will need support to understand risks and process.
- **Help "design out" hazards** in your work area to eliminate or prevent exposure to hazards.
- **Be an agent of change.** Be open to new products or practices that could prevent exposures.

These are the basics.

Questions?

*ask your supervisor or contact
Environmental Health & Radiation Safety
at 503-494-7795.*

If you see a smoking urn, please report it immediately to Public Safety Dispatch at 4-4444.

What is being done to prevent future fires? Facilities Management is working on finding an urn that is better designed to withstand heat and that can hold more refuse. They also make sure that the urns are emptied once a day. By reporting incidents, putting garbage in the appropriate container and through equipment selection, fires in the urns can be better controlled.



URNS BURNING? DIAL 4-4444.

Traffic Flagging at OHSU

In the past few months, OHSU has provided refresher training to some Facilities Management staff on traffic flagging. You may be familiar with flaggers on the Hill, especially since construction started a few years ago. Our Facilities Management folks may also flag traffic when they perform maintenance work on campus, including when crosswalks are painted.



Public Safety also flags traffic routinely, most recently when there were car fires in the parking garages.

Please always pay attention to and follow the direction of flaggers on roads surrounding OHSU. The reason for altering traffic patterns may be due to maintenance or emergency and your attention to the situation as well as the person in the street directing you is vital to protecting you at work.

Q of M Answer!

Last month's Question of the Month was from the Focus Topic, "Driving OHSU Vehicles"

The question was, **"What are three examples of driving in a safe manner?"**

- 1. Wear seatbelts.**
- 2. Adhere to speed limits.**
- 3. Minimize distractions including: cell phones, radio and eating.**

Thank you to everyone who participated! If you answered correctly, you earned 1 SafetyPoint! Contact Kristine Abrahamson at 503 494-0215 for answers to your questions.

Glove Shelf Life

How long can a lab store latex and synthetic gloves and be assured of maximum performance?

Conservative guidelines are best to use if there is any doubt, but ultimately, it depends on how the gloves are stored and materials used to manufacture them. Natural latex gloves have an approximate three-year shelf life. Gloves made of nitrile, Hycar, neoprene, PVC, urethane, PVA, EVOH, polyethylene, and other synthetic coatings have a nominal five-year shelf life.

Generally speaking, if gloves look normal, can be stretched without surface cracks, and can be pulled onto the hand without breaking or tearing, then they probably can provide the level of protection they were designed for. In order to maximize the life of gloves, store them in a cool, dark environment, shielded from ozone and UV light, including from fluorescent lamps. Gloves should always be stored away from steam pipes, radiators, and other heat sources. For concerns with sterile gloves, packages can be considered sterile unless damaged or opened.



Slow down in Construction Work Zones!

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Question of the Month

The question of the Month is designed to challenge your safety knowledge and give you a chance to earn some cool, free stuff!



QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is the most common cause of occupational-related bloodborne pathogen infections?

Write your answer to the question in the appropriate box on your Monthly Member Update Form: <http://ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs/mh/pages/safetyteam/mmuf.shtml>. Correct answers to this month's Question will earn 1 SafetyPoint.

If you would like to become a member, contact Kristine Abrahamson, SafetyTeam Coordinator at 503 494-7795.



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HEALTH & SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY

OHSU includes four schools; two hospitals; numerous primary care and specialty clinics; multiple research institutes; and several public service and outreach units. OHSU is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.

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