

**Environmental Safety
Health
and Update
Safety Newsletter**

EH&S SERVES UP NEW WEB SITE

EH&S has at long last opened its web site at <http://www.ehs.ucsf.edu> (it is also directly accessible from the UCSF home page). The site is intended for you, our many campus and clinical customers, so that we can provide for you the most up-to-date versions of our documents, forms, and EH&S information.

Among the useful things you can currently find are the Safety Manuals for Radiation Safety, Biological Safety, and Controlled Substances. The Chemical Safety Manual is currently being updated and will be available shortly. These are directly accessible - all you have to do is click on the title of the manual you want. Have you lost your copy of one of our recent newsletters or update flyers? They are there, too. The newsletters are found under "What's New?" and the flyers are neatly categorized by topic as "Safety Updates". Do you need an EH&S form? Click on "Forms": we're in the process of adding our standard forms - if the one you need isn't there today, it should be in the near future!

Do you want to send e-mail to someone at EH&S? Our employee roster is included, and you can access the employee's e-mail by clicking on his/her name.

Do you want to know what it currently costs for disposal of radioisotope waste? What it would cost to have EH&S perform your radioisotope wipe tests? Our recharge rates are conveniently provided on the website, under "Administration".

Are you looking for electronic access to MSDSs? We've provided several direct links to reliable sources - take your pick! Other direct links will connect you with an assortment of Safety Organizations and safety technical information sites including regulatory agencies, professional associations, and useful sites at other universities.

We are anxious to make our website as useful to you, our customers, as we can. If there are materials or resources you need which we haven't yet included, please let us know by contacting your Department Safety Advisor or sending an e-mail to us at: webmstr_at_ehs@ccmail.ucsf.edu. Within the constraints of our budget and available resources, we'll do everything we can to meet your needs.

We're anxious to get your opinion on what we've done so far; compliments are always appreciated!

**NEW FIRE ALARM
SYSTEM ON PARNASSUS
CAMPUS**

Most of us are all too aware that the Parnassus Campus is getting a new fire alarm system - we've been experiencing the sounds of repeated testing over the last few months. EH&S has received many inquiries about the new system - how it works, when to respond, when to re-enter the building, etc. To alleviate the confusion, a flyer has been published which describes the operations of the system. Copies may be obtained by calling your Department Safety Advisor (DSA) or Lynda Purves, the Emergency Preparedness Program Coordinator at 476-5507. This article is a short summary of the information presented in the flyer.

What is new and unique about this system?

First, the alarm consists of a loud, pulsating tone plus flashing strobe lights. Pre-recorded emergency instructions are broadcast over the fire alarm address system in non-clinical areas. In clinical areas, there is not a pre-recorded message - voice notification (Dr. Red) will be given over the public address system. The clinical alarm is a chime tone.

Next, the automatic-closing fire doors are connected directly to the

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IS YOUR LAB MOVING ?

If your lab is about to be remodeled, moving out of the laboratory is a harrowing experience, at best. The process includes a lot of activities you never find out about until you're in the midst of packing up to move. Then, WHAM, you find out that EH&S needs to check your fume hood for contamination before it can be dismantled, or that you have to show that there are no chemical residues which can harm the contractor. Worse yet, you want to get rid of lots of old chemicals and EH&S tells you that it will cost you! And you have to provide a new inventory to EH&S for UCSF's Hazardous Materials Business Plan. Each day brings a new surprise!

To make your life easier and more predictable, EH&S and the Facilities Management (FM) Relocations Coordinator are developing guidelines for you to use in planning and executing your next move. The guidelines deal with disposal of hazardous materials, thorough cleaning of the laboratory and equipment, and EH&S' Certification of Decontamination of laboratory space and equipment. Some of the key issues addressed include early notification of EH&S and FM, and ways to minimize disposal costs. A timeline for all these pre-move activities is included.

These guidelines resulted from "lessons learned" during previous remodeling projects. Many of the "lessons learned" have been costly and time-consuming. Hopefully, the new guidelines will help to minimize costs to the Investigator or department, and to assure prompt access for the construction workers. Sometimes researchers deal with getting rid of unnecessary chemicals in a very straight-forward way: they

work with the movers to pack up everything of value, leave the remaining stuff, and request EH&S to pick it up and dispose of it. Out of sight, out of mind! This approach works, but it can be very expensive.

Routine disposal of waste chemicals is not charged directly to the Investigator. However, when large numbers of chemicals must be dealt with in a short period of time, EH&S' storage and handling capabilities are exceeded. Special arrangements must be made with the UC waste contractors, and this cost must be passed back to the Investigator or department.

A good way to avoid or minimize these costs is by scheduling pick up of a few chemicals at a time over a longer period of time. At least a couple months before the move is scheduled, begin "housecleaning": identify old chemicals and chemicals you don't use, and get these picked up by EH&S over a period of time. That way you can avoid the disposal charges.

There are also some chemicals that present special hazards and are thus very costly to dispose of. In this group are explosives, highly toxic materials, unidentifiable chemicals, and some non-standard compressed gases. Even these disposal costs can be minimized if you notify EH&S early so we can work with you to arrange for the least expensive disposal.

The last minute disposal approach can be costly in another way: if the contractor is waiting for you to move out of the lab to begin the remodel, then has to wait until EH&S picks up your chemicals, and then you come back and clean and decon-

taminate the lab, the construction schedule can be delayed. Time is money - usually yours, as you may be paying for the contractor's delays.

If you've been using radioisotopes in your laboratory, EH&S must come and verify there is no radioactive contamination in the area before the contractor can begin. This can be expedited by staying in close contact with your DSA, letting him/her know when you'll no longer be using isotopes, and scheduling your radioisotope usage decertification before you begin packing for the move!

Depending on what materials you've been using in the lab, you may need to demonstrate that your fume hood or biosafety cabinet poses no hazard for the construction workers. EH&S can check the fume hood; but the biosafety cabinet must be checked by the contractor who certifies it yearly. Make sure you schedule these visits long before your need date.

One last note - the occupants of the laboratory are responsible for

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actual cleaning and decontamination of the laboratory. If this has not been done when EH&S personnel arrive, they may find contamination. This means you'll have to come back and clean, and we'll have to come back and retest - further delays!

What do these delays mean to the Investigator and laboratory personnel? They can mess up a carefully orchestrated sequence of construction steps, resulting in final delays far longer than the actual time spent on the decontamination process. These delays translate directly into additional costs for the construction project and indirectly into less value from the Investigator's funds.

If you have special "lessons learned" from a remodel project, and would like to see them incorporated into the guidelines, contact your DSA. Once the guidelines are completed, the information will be available on our web site; meanwhile, contact your DSA directly to avoid some of these common pitfalls.



(Alarm, Continued)

system and will automatically close to prevent smoke and fire from spreading to other areas. All fire doors are not automated, so you must make certain you close those which are still manually operated, should they be standing open.

The biggest noticeable change is in the campus areas of high-rise buildings, i.e., Health Sciences East (HSE), Health Sciences West (HSW), Medical Sciences and Long-Moffitt Hospitals. Here, the new fire alarm system activates *only* on the

incident floor plus two floors above and one below the incident. Only those floors must evacuate. If the alarms are not activated on your floor, it is not necessary that you evacuate. Should the fire spread, alarm systems on the additional affected floors will activate, and informational announcements will be made.

For those buildings not considered high-rise, the alarms will activate on all floors, and all occupants must evacuate.

How do I know whether its the real thing, a false alarm, or one more test?

During 1997, there were 18 actual fires on the Parnassus Campus. Fortunately, none was major, and there were no injuries. Every alarm must be considered to be the "real thing" unless Facilities Management has notified you that it's a test. State law requires that you evacuate when you hear/see the fire alarm. If you choose not to evacuate, you may be risking not only your life, but the lives of those individuals responsible for your safety and rescue.

Where am I supposed to go when required to evacuate?

This information is available in your department's Emergency Action Plan. Please contact your department's Emergency Coordinator for this information. It is critical that you report to your department's Emergency Assembly Area so you may be accounted for. For those persons who cannot be accounted for, Emergency Response personnel may have to re-enter the area and conduct a room-by-room search at great risk to themselves.

How will I know it's safe to return to my work area?

The San Francisco Fire Department will determine when it is safe for people to re-enter the area. You will be notified by a UCSF Campus Police Representative when you may return. Do not re-enter without this official notification.

How should I report a fire if I'm the person to discover it?

You must pull the nearest fire alarm **and** call 9-911 (replaces 6-6911) from the nearest safe telephone. The **R A C E** procedure should always be followed: **RESCUE** yourself, employees and visitors from danger; **ANNOUNCE** - pull the fire alarm and call 9-911; **CONFINE** the fire by closing doors and windows; and **EVACUATE** the area (**EXTINGUISH** only if you've been properly trained).

The new alarm system is for the Parnassus Campus only. For those at other locations, please continue to follow the existing practices and use the existing emergency phone numbers.

Fire drills are extremely important. They are intended to strengthen your understanding of life saving emergency procedures, and provide you with personal safety education and training.



NOTE:

WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED READING THIS NEWSLETTER, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO YOUR STAFF & CO-WORKERS.

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Environmental Health and Safety
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EH&S NEWS FLASHES

Do you know that UCSF has an EH&S User Committee? This committee acts in an advisory capacity to EH&S and assists EH&S in making sure new documents and policies are understandable and pertinent to the various UCSF work areas. The Committee keeps EH&S aware of unsafe or unhealthful conditions they encounter; together EH&S and the Committee work towards keeping UCSF employees safe and healthful. The committee is looking for new members: lab managers or supervisors in particular. Monthly meetings last less than 2 hours and occasionally small work groups form to tackle specific issues. If you wish to serve on the committee, contact your DSA, Lois Koren (476-5159), or Fran DeNoto (476-2433).



If you have a fire in your work area - even if it's a small one which you can extinguish yourself, you should report the fire to the Campus Fire Marshal at 476-0570.



EH&S is distributing a Customer Service Survey. Should you receive one of these, please complete and return it to EH&S. We'll be using the data for two things - one, to improve our services to our customers, and two, as a part of a UC systemwide EH&S study on making EH&S valuable to all users. The survey will be distributed to a small number of customers in February, and to all customers this summer. We appreciate your efforts to help us do a better job providing the services you want and need.



EH&S WILL HELP YOU WITH THE GRANT PROCESS

If you are processing an application for a Department of Defense (DOD) Breast Cancer Research Grant, or any other grant that requires health and safety permits or compliance certification, you need not contact outside agencies for assistance - EH&S is the department that will assist you in this process. Contact your Department Safety Advisor or call EH&S at 476-1300 for help in completing the required documentation.

Again, if you have any questions or need any assistance with any aspect of the grant process, simply call EH&S - we are happy to help you.