

SAFETY WAVE

Plan Now for 2009 Hurricane Season

The 2009 Hurricane Season is approaching and now is the time to begin our preparations for the upcoming season. The Office of Emergency Response is requesting that each department review and revise their Department Hurricane Plan. Please encourage employees to begin working on their personal hurricane preparedness plans as well. Although we sincerely hope we will not have to use them, sound personal and departmental plans will help keep us safe and productive in the event of a storm this season.

A template has been developed for use in completing the 2009 department plans. The template can be found on the Office of Emergency Response webpage at <http://tulane.edu/emergency/preparedness/index.cfm>. As in previous years, each department is requested to complete their 2009 hurricane plan and submit it to the Office of Emergency Response by April 10.

In addition to providing a template for department plans, a series of webinars are being scheduled for early April to assist departments in completing their plans. These webinars will be an opportunity for departments to seek assistance in revising their plans and to ask questions regarding their plans and the University Administrative Plan. Details on how to attend the webinars will be distributed by the Office of Emergency Response at a later date. In the interim, if you have any questions regarding the development of your 2009 Department Hurricane Plan, please contact Greg Southworth, director of Emergency Response, at gsouth@tulane.edu. Thank you in advance for your efforts in preparing for the 2009 Hurricane Season.

Walk This Way

In 2008, most of the work-related injuries reported to Workers' Compensation here at Tulane involved walking and working surfaces:

- Tripping on flat surfaces
- Falling down/up stairs
- Tripping on sidewalks/carpets
- Slipping on wet surfaces

The following are walking tips we should practice to keep us on the right track and off the incident logs:

- Wear slip-resistant shoes if your job responsibilities consist of a lot of walking, especially up and down stairs.
- Keep a look out for large cracks or elevation changes on sidewalks and walkways.
- Don't multi-task while walking, such as talking on the phone or reading.
- Don't rush! Allow yourself time to get where you are going without rushing.
- Watch your step - especially in dark stairways and garages.
- Pay attention to posted signs (i.e., Slippery when wet).
- Be extra careful on rainy days – use plastic bag for storing wet umbrellas.
- Wipe your feet when entering buildings.

Please call the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at (504)988-5486 if you notice any potential areas where an incident may occur because of contributing factors such as steep stairs, water holding areas and lifted tiles or carpet.



Do You Have a Safety Story or Message to Share?

Do you want to tell others of a safety concern you may have, or do you have some advice that could possibly prevent others from having an accident? Contact OEHS and we will be glad to review your safety story for possibly inclusion in future editions of the Safety Wave newsletter.

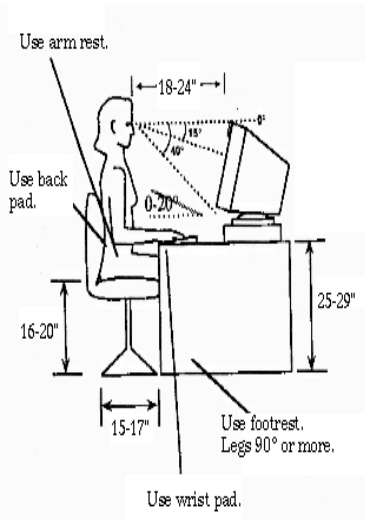
Recommendations for Computer Workstations

Chair:

- The chair must be fully adjustable from a seated position. The lumbar or lower back area should be properly supported; the support should fit the curve of the lower back. The chair should have armrest support; for some employees a foot rest may be necessary. Employees should be instructed on operating their chair's controls.

Monitor:

- The monitor should be raised so that the top of the viewing screen is at or below eye level and approximately 18 to 24 inches from worker's face, with a 10 to 20 degree tilt back, unless the angle causes additional glare.
- An anti-glare filter over the viewing screen should aid in reducing serious glare problems caused by direct or indirect light sources.
- A document holder should be placed at the same distance and height as the monitor.



Keyboard and Mouse:

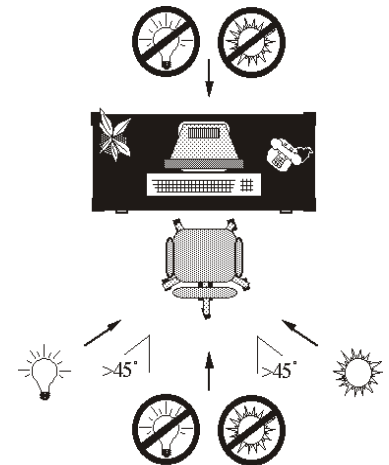
- The keyboard should be aligned with the monitor.
- During use, arms should be at an angle of 80 to 100 degrees, with the upper arm almost vertical.
- The keyboard should be approximately at elbow height, no higher than 2 ½ inches above the work surface.
- An ergonomic mouse should be placed to the right or the left of the keyboard and at the same height as the keyboard.

Lighting:

- If computer work is the employee's primary task, consider lowering the general room lighting level and use properly placed task lighting.
- Position the work area so that light sources, such as windows, are perpendicular to the monitor rather than directly behind or facing the monitor. If necessary, use shades or blinds to reduce intensity of direct sunlight. (See diagram)

Telephone:

- As a rule, to minimize neck strain, employees whose jobs require heavy phone usage should be supplied and encouraged to use headsets; all other employees whose jobs require phone use should be issued shoulder rests. Note that headsets should be selected by the employee who will be using them. Employees should then be instructed on how to properly operate and adjust the headsets they have selected.



Calculator:

- Heavy users of calculators should lower the calculator to the same level as the keyboard.
- Use a positive or negative slope wrist rest pad. It is suggested that employee try each to see which is more suitable for his/her needs. The pad will also soften the impact from finger strokes.

Accessories that Can Enhance Work Environments:

- Foot rest pads, keyboard and mouse rest pads, phone shoulder/neck pads, etc.
- Anti-glare or security/anti-glare filters for monitors.
- Document holders to the left or right of monitor and at equal height of monitor.
- Electric or light touch staplers, collators, etc., depending on the task and frequency of the task.
- Ergonomically designed hand tools, such as pens, pencils, letter openers, etc.
- Height adjustable desk/tables are particularly helpful at multi-user workstations.

Contact OEHS for more information at (504)988-5486 or visit our website at www.som.tulane.edu/oehs.

In depth information on ergonomic computer workstation set up can be found at the following website: the **Occupational Safety and Health Administration** (OSHA) website at www.osha.gov/SLTC/computerworkstations_index.html, the **Centers for Disease Control** website at www.cdc.gov/od/ohs/Ergonomics/compergo.htm, and the website for **Cornell University** at www.ergo.human.cornell.edu/culaptoptips.html. The lighting graphic on this page showing the complete workstation set up was provided by the University Information Technology Services at **Indiana University**, www.indiana.edu.

Shipping Hazardous Materials



Federal law requires that anyone who is involved in or responsible for preparing or transporting a hazardous material must have DOT (Department of Transportation) and/or IATA (International Air Transport Association) training and certification. No one offering hazardous materials for shipment is exempt from federal transportation requirements. At Tulane, personnel who ship research samples containing hazardous materials to other schools, facilities, or researchers must receive hazardous material

shipping training. Even though many third party carriers ultimately transport hazardous materials, it is the researcher's/principle investigator's responsibility to ensure the material is properly packaged, labeled, and manifested for shipment.

Hazardous materials can include compressed gases, flammable liquids and solids, oxidizers, poisons, corrosive materials, radioactive and biological materials, and even dry ice. Hazardous material regulations may apply to commercial products, chemical mixtures, newly synthesized compounds, and biological samples fixed in formalin and ethanol. If you are shipping materials described above and/or are planning to ship these types of materials, contact OEHS for training and other information. Bruce McClue can be reached at (504)988-2865, or contact Kellie Mayer at TNPRC at (504) 862-8040, ext. 6653.



Health Hazard Chemicals - Usage Records

Are you proactive concerning the use of high risk substances in your laboratories? If high risk substances (i.e., "select" carcinogens¹, embryotoxins, or substances having a high degree of acute toxicity) are used in your laboratories, you should be keeping usage logs for each of the high-risk substances used. The following is an excerpt from Tulane's Chemical Hygiene Plan (Laboratory Safety Section I.I. of the Environmental Health & Safety Policies and Procedures Manual <http://www2.som.tulane.edu/oehs/safety/30laboratory.pdf>) dealing with this issue. (Note: Examples of high risk substances can also be found at this listed Policies and Procedures Manual link.)

Supervisors/principal investigators must ensure that an accurate inventory and usage record of high-risk substances used in the work area be maintained and kept current. The record must include a) the amount of material on hand, b) amount and date of usage, and c) names of workers involved.

These usage logs can be used to determine who may have been exposed to a highly hazardous chemical and the amount and frequency that they were exposed to (in the event that the user should someday become ill possibly due to exposure to the chemical). In addition to the usage logs, highly hazardous chemicals must be used in a designated area with appropriate ventilation, personal protective equipment, and containment devices. Special handling, storing, disposal, and emergency procedures should be included in the standing operating procedures (SOPs) for the laboratory.

If anyone feels that they are routinely exposed to a chemical above the occupational exposure limits and that monitoring or additional study may be needed to reduce exposure levels, please contact OEHS. The OEHS staff will review the situation and will work with you on a plan to reduce exposures.

¹A "select" carcinogen is defined by OSHA as any substance which meets one of the following criteria:

- It is regulated by OSHA as a carcinogen; or
- It is listed under the category "known to be carcinogens" in the Annual Report on Carcinogens published by the National Toxicology Program (NTP) (latest edition); or
- It is listed under Group 1 (carcinogenic to humans") by the International Agency for Research on Cancer Monographs (IARC) (latest editions); or
- It is listed in either Group 2A or 2B by IARC or under the category "reasonably anticipated to be carcinogens" by NTP, and causes statistically significant tumor incidence in experimental animals in accordance with any of the following criteria:
 - (A) After inhalation exposure of 6-7 hours per day, 5 days per week, for a significant portion of a lifetime to dosages of less than 10 mg/m³;
 - (B) After repeated skin application of less than 300 (mg/kg of body weight) per week; or
 - (C) After oral dosages of less than 50 mg/kg of body weight per day.

Contributors: Pam Fatland, Mitzi Hithe, Louis Mayer, Bruce McClue, Charles Reindl, Yesenia Vasquez

Departmental Safety Representatives (DSRs)

As a reminder, the Second Quarter DSR meetings have been scheduled for April 2009. The topic will be Emergency Preparedness, and the presentation will be given by [Mr. Greg Southworth](#), Director of [Emergency Response](#) for Tulane University. Meetings will be held at the following locations, dates, and times:

Uptown Campus – April 21, 2009 (**Tuesday**) from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the **Rogers Memorial Chapel**

TNPRC – April 22, 2009 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the **Auditorium of Building 1 (A Bldg)**

TUHSC – April 24, 2009 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in **Room 1201** of the **Tidewater Building**

Every department is required to have a DSR. A DSR is designated as a laboratory, facility, or office DSR depending on the nature of the department. Some departments, due to their size and structure, have two or more DSRs. To find out whom your DSR is, please check with your supervisor or department head.

If your department does not have a DSR, then one must be appointed as per university policy. As an important health and safety function at Tulane University, these representatives serve at the departmental level to coordinate safety training, inspections and other functions as well as serve as a liaison with OEHS.

If you have any questions, please contact Louis Mayer at lmayer@tulane.edu or 504-988-2447.

Radiation Alert: Tritium EXIT Signs



Self-luminous EXIT signs containing the radioactive gas tritium are widely used anywhere the public needs a rapid exit path. The signs do not require electricity or batteries and are often used in areas where it is difficult to install electric signs (e.g., above doors). They serve a safety function by remaining lit during power outages and emergencies.

The tritium exit signs pose little or no threat to public health and safety. The tritium gas is contained in sealed glass tubes lined with a phosphor which glows when beta particles in tritium strike it. Beta particles are very low energy and cannot penetrate a sheet of paper or clothing.

There are several ways to determine if an EXIT sign contains tritium. It should contain a warning label that mentions tritium (H-3), displays the three-bladed radiation symbol, and states "Caution, Radioactive Materials." If the label is not observable, try extinguishing all lights. If the word EXIT is green, the sign contains tritium.

Although not regulated, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission suggests that an inventory be kept of such signs. If you are aware of the location of any such signs, please contact Charles Reindl, Radiation Safety Officer at 504-988-2867 so that the signs can be entered into the inventory and tracked to avoid improper disposal of damaged signs.

External Defibrillators Recalled

Welch Allyn is recalling about 14,000 AED 10 external defibrillators manufactured between October 3, 2002 and January 25, 2007 after 39 reported incidents, including two that involved patient deaths. Materials Management is searching its purchase order records to determine if the University has purchased any of the affected defibrillators directly from Welch Allyn, the manufacturer. However, Materials Management does not have direct visibility of purchases made by a purchase card, or from a life safety or medical supply distributor, or as part of a building modification or renovation project. Please canvas the facilities under your control for defibrillators that may be covered by this recall. If you need assistance in determining if a Welch Allyn AED 10 device installed in your facility or building is covered by this recall, please contact William M. Van Cleave of Materials Management at (504) 865-5767.

The following links include information on the recall and possible distributors within a 100 mile radius of Tulane.

Recall info: http://www.welchallyn.com/support/customer/AED_lookup.jsp

Distributors: http://www.welchallyn.com/apps/partners/dist_locator_results.jsp?countrycode=US&postalcode=70118&radius=100

Environmental Health & Safety

Pam Fatland, Editor

Tulane University TW16

1430 Tulane Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70112-2699

Phone (504) 988-5486 Uptown (504) 865-5307

FAX (504) 988-1693

Web site: www.som.tulane.edu/oehs

Tulane University

Office of Environmental Health & Safety - TW16

Tulane University

1430 Tulane Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70112-2699