

# Department of Environmental Health & Safety

## Newsletter

<http://www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/>

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937-775-2215

### From The Director's Chair:

The hustle and bustle of another holiday season is now in the past. I always find it amazing (and satisfying) how much work a person can get done being on campus

#### Did You Know.....

- » **WSU has formed a "planning task force" and is beginning to consider how we will prepare for a pandemic flu.** (see related article on page 3)
- » **The Department of EH&S will be hosting the American Society of Safety Engineers local chapter meeting.** (see related article on page 3)
- » **There is more to cleaning out a lab than boxing up chemicals ...** (see related article on page 2)
- » **TVA Life and Fire Safety will be on campus performing loss control inspections of labs.** (see related article on page 2)

in the week between Christmas and New Years. This past break was spent finalizing our Strategic Plan which we will begin initiating this year. The plan is an 8-goal, 18 month, strategy that when accomplished will establish a university EHS management system that will define the university's commitment to environmental health and safety, define roles and expectations of the campus community, and organize EHS in a manner that will allow for the efficient and consistent operation of EHS programs. Staff goals have been set and the department is excited about improving the environmental health and safety culture of the university and improving our overall operation.

Of course, just because the holiday season is over doesn't mean that the hustle and bustle for EHS has slowed down. The search for a new Radiation Safety Officer and a new Biological Safety Officer continues. The EHS staff has been tasked with picking up the slack in these two areas until these positions are filled.

We are also working hard to develop a new EHS training process that will allow us to offer training more frequently and meet the demand of this important EHS function. The post holiday months

are also the time when we have to begin writing and submitting the numerous reports and annual summaries required by the various environmental health and safety agencies (i.e. EPA, OSHA, RAPCA, ODH). We will also soon begin the overhaul of our departmental web site in an effort to make it a more user friendly, information filled site that hopefully will help in our efforts to improve university EHS programs.

These are but a few of the many activities we currently have our hands in. As always, I invite your involvement in helping us improve the environmental health and safety culture on campus. Please feel free to call our office at 775-2215, or e-mail me directly at: [stephen.farrell@wright.edu](mailto:stephen.farrell@wright.edu) if you have any questions or suggestions for improved environmental health and safety programs.

On behalf of the EHS staff I extend our wishes to you for a safe, healthy, and prosperous 2007. Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter.

-Steve

## Lab Inspections On The Way

As part of the university's casualty and property insurance program the university's insurance broker schedules annual loss control inspections on campus. These inspections are performed by a third party life and fire safety firm and are part of an overall loss control program that Wright State shares with other state universities in a collaborative effort to receive better insurance premiums while keeping all safe. Each year these inspections take place on the campuses of the participating universities and every year there is a different focus for the inspection. Last year's focus was on dorms and apartments and this years

focus is on laboratories.

During the three days of February 14, 15, and 16, **TVA Life and Fire Safety will be on campus performing loss control inspections of labs** on campus. TVA will be accompanied by representatives of EHS and Physical Plant's Casualty Prevention. They will be arbitrarily selecting labs focusing on National Fire Protection Association Guidelines; primarily reviewing fire ratings of labs, quantities, storage and use of flammable and combustible materials, fire protection, alarm features, and egress issues.

Any recommendations generated from their visit are compiled in a report and the university is required to respond to the recommendations with plans for corrective action.

We ask that you and your staff provide information to any questions they pose during their visit and work with EHS, Physical Plant, and Risk Management to develop appropriate corrective actions.



## WSU Implements Lab Exit Policy

It has happened on several occasions. EHS takes a call from a department asking to have a vacated lab cleaned out because a contractor is on-site to begin renovations. In other cases the call comes from a newly arrived faculty member who was just given a lab to move into which is full of potentially hazardous material, a lot of which are labeled with nothing but a number, obscure chemical formula, or named after some individual (i.e. "Smith's Reagent"). In these and similar situations the caller assumes EHS can drop what we are doing and clean out the lab. What folks don't realize is **there is more to cleaning out a lab than boxing up chemicals**, putting them on a cart, and rolling them away. First, the EPA has specific rules that make it illegal to dispose of chemicals that are not properly classified based on their hazard. Chemicals that are labeled "Cl<sub>2</sub>CHN<sub>3</sub>OHS<sub>4</sub>Hg", "Solution 34A", or our personal favorite "Chemical Waste" do not give enough information to be classified and managed per EPA protocol. Second, a vacated lab that isn't properly cleaned may have contaminated areas such as lab bench surfaces, sinks, drains, hoods, and other equipment. Finally, attempting to handle improperly labeled hazard-

ous material or work in potentially contaminated areas involves a safety and health risk to those involved.

Several years ago EHS began to develop a Lab Exit Policy in an effort to prevent this type of scenario from continuing. The draft policy was commented on by various interested parties and a final version was adopted as Wright Way Policy 6015 in October 2006. The intent of the policy is to prevent potentially hazardous situations from occurring when a Principal Investigator vacates his/her lab space. The policy accomplishes this by delineating responsibilities for Principal Investigators (PI), Departmental Chairs or Directors, EHS, and in some cases Lab Animal Resources. In short, the policy establishes procedures for notification to EHS in a timely fashion so that a management plan can be developed with the PI or department to properly dispose of existing hazardous material, clean any decontaminated surfaces or equipment, and certify that the process is complete. Contingencies have also been developed in the event the policy is not followed, including the requirement of the department to hire an environmental

cleanup firm. EHS employs one FTE and a student employee to manage the university's chemical waste program. With other environmental compliance responsibilities and no real dedicated storage space to move chemicals in to until they are properly identified, EHS does not have the capabilities to handle large lab cleanouts in short periods of time.

With the pending lab moves associated with the science lab renovation projects over the next several years it will become very important for PI's and departments to become aware and begin implementing this policy. The policy was designed to fairly distribute responsibilities amongst all parties involved and, when followed, will create a process that saves the university time, money, and most importantly will protect faculty, staff, students, and contractors which, when all is said and done, should be the priority of everyone involved.

EHS looks forward to working with PI's and departments to enhance the process of vacating labs. The policy can be viewed in its entirety by visiting the EHS website at [www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/](http://www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/)



## WSU Hosts ASSE Meeting: Student Chapter To Begin!

Wright State has a strong interest in promoting worker health and safety. We accomplish this both by our own university practices as overseen by our Department of Environmental Health & Safety and through our education of students who take courses in occupational safety and health through the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences. In furtherance of this joint interest, these two departments will be hosting:

**American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) chapter meeting,  
Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

**11:30 am to 1:00 pm**

**Student Union's Hearth Lounge,  
(located directly behind "The  
Wright Cup" Café)**

This is the first ASSE chapter meeting to be held at WSU and the topic will

be "Animal, Biological, and Radiological Safety in Research at WSU".

The local Kitty Hawk Chapter consists of many active professionals in the field of environmental health and safety representing business, services, and agencies throughout the Miami Valley. The goal of the monthly meeting is to provide informative sessions on interesting topics in the field of environmental health and safety. For upcoming events, or to learn more, please go to: <http://kittyhawk.asse.org/>.

In addition, the Kitty Hawk Chapter is actively working to start a student chapter here at WSU. Students benefit from the \$100K in scholarships awarded annually, national conferences and awards, mentoring from

seasoned professionals, ASSE student leadership positions, and the ASSE professional affiliation.

As an added incentive, the chapter will pay for the student's first year membership. Yes, that is correct, membership is free!! Student ASSE membership applications can be found at: <http://www.asse.org/Studentapp05.pdf>.

If you have questions, or would like more information about the student chapter, please contact Joe Whitlock, EHS Office, at 937.775.4131. For those wishing to attend the January 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, please note that reservations are required, if possible, by January 29<sup>th</sup> to guarantee lunch. Also, please indicate special diet requirements when making reservations.



## Pandemic Flu Planning

One of the higher profile news stories in 2006 was avian influenza, or the bird flu. Television, radio, newspapers, the Internet, the scientific community, and even a made-for-TV drama added to the growing awareness and concern about the spread of avian influenza among birds and the potential threat to humans.

Will this bird flu become the next global outbreak of a highly infectious human virus? No one knows. The world experienced three pandemics during the last century and the Influenza Pandemic of 1918 resulted in an estimated 20 million deaths world wide.

History teaches us that, at some point, another pandemic will occur. The federal government has a pandemic flu plan as do the

State of Ohio and surrounding combined health districts. Communities, health services organizations, educational institutions, and businesses across the country are engaged in planning that will enable them to protect and care for individuals, anticipate and respond to community needs, and deliver essential services.

**Wright State University has formed a planning task force and is beginning to consider how we will prepare for, respond to, and recover from a pandemic flu.** Leaders and decision makers representing health, operations, financial, administration, and academics at Wright State have recently met to discuss the development of a comprehensive pandemic influenza response plan. Virtually every department at the

Dayton and Lake Campuses will have some level of involvement. Watch for updates from the Pandemic Influenza Planning Task Force in the coming weeks. For more information about the Task Force, contact Keith Ralston, AVP for Budget Planning and Resource Analysis and Chair of the Task Force.

A limited number of DVDs from the Ohio Department of Health "Prepare Your Family for an Emergency" discusses how you can plan for the pandemic flu and other emergencies. Feel free to stop by the Environmental Health and Safety Office and pick up a copy while they last.

To learn more about the pandemic flu in general, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov).

## Wright State University

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We're on the Web!

<http://www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/>



### Meet the Staff

***Pictured:***

***Left to right, standing:*** Kim Morris, Terri Thompson, Helen Kay Dean, Greg Merkle, Ron Hamilton

***Left to right, sitting:*** Tom Dyer, Steve Farrell, Joe Whitlock



<b>Steve Farrell</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>X 3118</b>	Administration, Occupational Safety & Health, Environmental Compliance
<b>Joe Whitlock</b>	Manager, Occupational Safety & Health	X 4131	Occupational Safety & Health Program Management, Administration and Training
<b>Helen Kay Dean</b>	Health & Safety Technical Services Coordinator	X 3680	Occupational Health Program Liaison, Administrative, Budgeting, Departmental Web Page, Departmental Newsletter, Purchasing
<b>C. Tom Dyer</b>	Environmental Compliance Specialist	X 3788	Hazardous & Infectious Waste, Free Chemical Program, Drinking Water Analysis, Environmental Compliance
<b>Ron Hamilton</b>	Industrial Hygienist	X 3810	OSHA Support Services, Asbestos, Contractor Safety & Health
<b>Greg Merkle</b>	Sr. Industrial Hygienist	X2217	Biosafety, OSHA Laboratories, Fire / Life Safety
<b>Kimberly Morris</b>	Interim Radiation Safety Officer	X 2623	Radiation Safety, Laboratory Compliance
<b>Terri Thompson</b>	Sr. Industrial Hygienist	X 2797	Chemical Hygiene Officer, OSHA Laboratories, HAZWOPER training

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