

**UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON**  
**MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SECTION: Safety**

**Number: 06.02.03**

**AREA: Safety Administration**

<p><b>SUBJECT: Environmental Health and Safety</b></p>
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**I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this document is to inform the University of Houston faculty, staff, students, contractors and visitors of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) department's programs and policies. This document applies to all University of Houston employees, students, contractors and visitors to the University of Houston.

**II. POLICY STATEMENT**

The university is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all employees, students and visitors. It is the university's policy to comply with all environmental health and safety-related regulations that govern the university's operations, teaching and research, and to protect the safety of the university's faculty, staff, students, and visitors. The Environmental Health and Safety department (EHS) develops safety-related policies and programs to accomplish this objective.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Laboratory: Any space owned or leased by the university that supports research and/or teaching activities within the University location or otherwise designated by the Facilities Space Use Code or by EHS for hazard identification or control purposes. This space is equipped for scientific experiments, research, or teaching.
- B. Shop: Any space owned or leased by the university that supports building systems maintenance (non-moveable) activities, building equipment maintenance (moveable) or supports fleet maintenance, campus postal functions, campus printing functions or IT functions, etc.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Environmental Health and Safety
  - a. Monitor federal and state rules and regulations/ local ordinances to evaluate their effect on university programs.
  - b. Consult with university colleges, departments, laboratories and shops on safe work practices.
  - c. Provide technical assistance to all employees and students to promote a safe working environment.
  - d. Provide training to employees and students on potential workplace hazards.
  - e. Develop policies, programs and initiatives to address workplace hazards.
  - f. Investigate accidents, incidents and near misses and develop corrective actions.
  - g. Conduct inspection and audits of all locations and workplace activities.

- h. Suspend, restrict or close unsafe operations and those deemed Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH).
  - i. Enforce non-compliance with EHS safety policies according to department established policies.
  - j. Act as a central point of contact and coordination with regulatory bodies where EHS holds registrations, licenses, permits, or certificates on behalf of the University.
- B. EHS SAFETY & COMPLIANCE COMMITTEES
- EHS Safety & Compliance Committees listed below and those that may be established in the future will act as internal consultants, maintaining oversight regarding safety policies, and provide guidance and advisory to university senior management and EHS department, consistent with the charter/bylaws on environmental health and safety matters to promote health, safety and compliance with applicable regulations. All members of these committees are appointed by the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer.
- a. Biological Safety - Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
  - b. Chemical Safety - Chemical Safety Committee (CSC)
  - c. Radioactive Materials, X-ray and Laser Safety - Radiation Safety Committee (RSC)
- C. College Deans, Department Chairs, Research Center Directors, Administrative Heads
- a. Establish, promote, and maintain safety culture within their area of oversight
  - b. Ensure prompt registration of assigned/ reassigned laboratory and shop spaces
  - c. Assist laboratory Principal Investigators and Shop Supervisors implement environmental health and safety programs in their areas
  - d. Ensure employees are aware of university EHS policies
  - e. Ensure the college or department comply with applicable EHS rules, policies, guidelines, etc.
  - f. Ensure that environmental hazard clean up where damages are not covered by insurance (i.e., not caused by some external force like a hurricane), the department will be responsible for the greater of 10% of the uninsured cost or \$25,000; and
  - g. Ensure the department will be responsible for 100% of the cost if EHS determines that the spill is the fault of the department due to some sort of divergence from one of the rules (improper laboratory check in and check out, failure to report potentially dangerous items, and/or not conducting space inventories).
- D. Laboratory Principal Investigators and Shop Supervisors
- a. Maintain safe working conditions for those being supervised
  - b. Prompt registration of laboratory and shop spaces with EHS
  - c. Prompt registration of Visiting Researchers and Minors in University Laboratories
  - d. Maintain knowledge of environmental health and safety policies and guidelines
  - e. Ensure department is responsible for the proper handling, storage and use of hazardous materials and contents in the laboratory and/or other spaces;
  - f. Promptly report unsafe conditions in the work area to EHS
  - g. Ensure employees receive appropriate and timely safety training

- h. Provide personal protective equipment to workers in their laboratory or shop
  - i. Provide job-specific training to their workers and retain training records
  - j. Monitor their areas for compliance with all [EHS policies](#)
- E. Faculty, Staff, Students and Visitors
- a. Comply with applicable local, state and federal EHS and university policies and regulations.
  - b. Promptly report unsafe conditions in their workplace to supervisors.
  - c. Promptly report accidents, incidents, near misses as a result of exposure to hazardous materials, spill or accidental environmental release of hazardous materials to EHS
- F. Contractors and Subcontractors
- a. Comply with health and safety rules established by EHS. It is also the responsibility of the college or department engaging the contractor to ensure they follow EHS rules.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

EHS programs address various safety needs on campus that ensure compliance with various regulatory agencies and proper use of safety protocols. Below is a list of the various EHS programs.

- A. BIOLOGICAL SAFETY PROGRAM provides guidance for work with biological agents and toxins, human and animal samples, etc.
- B. BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS INFECTION CONTROL PROGRAM provides guidance to all employees, students and volunteers with potential for exposure to bloodborne pathogens, researchers conducting research with bloodborne pathogens, health care workers and trainees who conduct health care related activities with potential for exposure to bloodborne pathogens.
- C. CHEMICAL SAFETY PROGRAM provides guidance on safe use and storage of hazardous chemicals in university laboratories and shop locations.
- D. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM involves petroleum, spill prevention, storm water, environmental and permitting efforts which minimize environmental impacts from our daily operations through the implementation of an environmental protection program. As part of this program, all activities that may generate controlled or uncontrolled emissions such as air emissions, runoff, or other releases must be conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures detailed in the appropriate safety manual or plan.
- E. HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM increases employee awareness of hazardous chemicals used in the workplace so that they can recognize known or potential hazards and take proactive measures to minimize harm to themselves, others, and the environment.
- F. LABORATORY SAFETY PROGRAM provides guidance and safety oversight of laboratory activities through laboratory registration with EHS prior to start of laboratory activities and deregistration prior to ending laboratory activities in assigned spaces
- G. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY PROGRAM involves occupational safety, shop safety, asbestos, indoor air quality, ergonomics, respiratory protection, hearing protection, confined space, industrial hygiene, etc. regardless of the location.

- H. RADIATION SAFETY PROGRAM provides guidance with activities involving radioactive materials, radioactive waste, x-ray machines and ionizing radiation producing devices, laser safety.
- I. REGULATED WASTE PROGRAM involves the generation and disposal of hazardous wastes, biomedical waste, regulated medical waste, used oil, universal waste, and other wastes that are regulated on an institutional or site-specific basis as well as spill response and prevention.
- J. EHS SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM involves mandatory/ required safety trainings for all categories of employees, students and visitors.

Read more about EHS programs at [www.uh.edu/ehs](http://www.uh.edu/ehs).

## VI. PROCEDURES

EHS Safety manuals, policies, procedures and forms are hosted and continually updated on the Environmental Health and Safety website at [www.uh.edu/ehs](http://www.uh.edu/ehs). The list below will assist in the registration of various activities and personnel.

- A. Registration/Approval of Select Activities/Personnel
  - a. Biological Agent, Recombinant/ Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules
  - b. University Controlled Chemicals
  - c. Radioactive Materials
  - d. X-ray Machines and Ionizing radiation producing devices
  - e. Class 3b & 4 Lasers
  - f. Research & Instructional Laboratories and personnel
  - g. Shops
  - h. Visiting Researchers in University Laboratories
  - i. Minors in University Research Laboratories
  - j. Accumulation and Generation of Regulated Waste

## VII. ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS/NEAR MISSES

Accident, Incident and Near Miss reporting is required by various federal, state and local agencies. Promptly report accidents, incidents, near misses, as a result of exposure to hazardous materials, spill or accidental environmental release of hazardous materials, to EHS utilizing this [form](#). All other accidents/ incidents or injury reporting should be directed to the Office of Risk Management.

## VIII. SAFETY TRAINING

Each EHS safety program has required safety training that must be completed prior any activities in laboratories or shops. Below is a list of the most common EHS safety trainings with their requirements. Other EHS safety trainings can be found at [www.uh.edu/ehs](http://www.uh.edu/ehs) under the Common Resources tab.

- a. Hazardous Communications (HAZCOM) - Annual requirement all employees

- b. Bloodborne Pathogens Training - Annual requirement for applicable employees
- c. General Laboratory Safety Orientation - Requirement for every faculty, staff, student and visitor working in the laboratory.
- d. Regulated waste generator training requirement for all employees that participate in the generation or accumulation of regulated waste.

IX. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Assistant Vice President for Campus Safety

Review: Every five years

X. APPROVAL

*/Raymond Bartlett/*

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

*/Renu Khator/*

President

Date of President's Approval: December 9, 2021