



To: Business Board

From: Angela Hildyard  
Vice-President, HR & Equity

Date: October 23, 2012

**Re: Framework for Monitoring Compliance with EHS policies and regulations**

---

As requested I am pleased to provide a brief summary of the ways in which the University, through Environmental Health & Safety, monitors and reports on compliance with relevant federal and provincial regulations as well as U of T health and safety policies

#### Governance

1. The HR and Equity Annual Report includes a section dedicated to health and safety activities at the University. This report is presented to the University community by the President's designate, the VP of HR and Equity. In addition to the annual report, the VP of HR and Equity presents a quarterly health and safety and regulatory development compliance report to the Business Board.
2. The University of Toronto Health and Safety Policy has been established and is approved annually by the Business Board.
3. Each chair, director or manager signs an annual accountability statement to document that they have taken reasonable precautions to ensure their workplace is safe.

#### Implementation

1. The University supports 26 Joint Health and Safety committees who address workplace safety issues, inspection reports and safety incident follow up.
2. The Office of EHS designs programs and procedures to comply with regulations. Safety orientation programs for new staff and supervisors are available on line.
3. High hazard research activities are controlled to prevent accidental exposure to dangerous substances. Permit systems which control incoming materials, usage and disposal are offered by the Office of EHS, for the following substances: biological substances, x-ray hazards, radioisotopes, and lasers. EHS has developed programs for these hazards which include:
  - i. Review of research protocols for safe handling of substances
  - ii. Specialized training to educate researchers on the hazards involved (over 4,000 trained annually)

- iii. Inspections of lab practices to ensure proper handling, (over 1250 inspections annually)
- iv. Pickup of waste materials and oversight of its disposal of the waste materials
4. Expert University committees (on biohazards, radioisotopes, asbestos and lasers) meet regularly to consult and advise on appropriate procedures.
5. The Senior Management Health and Safety committee, which includes representation from the expert committees as well as senior chairs and administrative staff from relevant academic departments, advises the VP of HR and Equity on EHS issues.
6. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission periodically audits radioisotopes practices.
7. Ministry of Labour conducts inspections upon “worker” request, as part of targeted prevention, campaigns, and following critical injuries.

#### Safety Training for Students engaged in laboratory coursework and research.

Each department has evolved its own approach to providing a safety program for its students. Programs contain relevant elements from the list below:

- General and specific safety orientation for new students
- Design of teaching activities to minimize exposure to hazards
- First year students are generally not exposed to safety hazards. These are introduced in the second year.
- Safety and lab preparation quizzes are given to second year students; students are required to pass a safety test before gaining access to the lab
- Hands on training and mandatory safety rules are provided at the outset of the term
- Safety rules are enforced by lab safety coordinators. Those who do not follow procedures face disciplinary measures.
- For some activities, mandatory training is provided by EHS.
- Wearing personal protective equipment (goggles, gloves, etc.) is enforced
- Some activities require that students receive special EHS high risk training (e.g. biosafety, blood borne, x-ray, radiation, laser)
- Emergency contact information is posted within the lab space
- Safety videos are shown to students. Videos are either purchased or created within the department.
- Students are given instructions regarding the handling of waste

#### Students engaged in Fieldwork (North America and Abroad)

Annual training is provided by Safety Abroad Office. The Office of EHS participates in this training and provides guidance for those preparing their off-campus activity.

Safety planning for off-campus activities is encouraged. Researchers complete special on-line risk assessments. Completed assessments are forwarded to the Office of EHS which provides feedback, coaching, information bulletins and training. Departmental chairs receive and oversee activity plans

written to address risk. Specialized Wilderness First Aid is offered annually to those who are engaged in off-campus activities.

### Students in Co-op Placements

Students are generally placed in large organizations which provide safety orientation training and Employers are asked to confirm that U of T students receive appropriate safety training. Students are also offered University of Toronto on-line WHMIS and safety orientation prior to engaging in the work placement.

Higher risk activity placements which could expose students to hazards (e.g. biosafety, radiation safety, x-ray and laser) require that students receive special U of T EHS training.