

# University of Delaware

## Department of Occupational Health & Safety

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Occupational Health and Safety would like to recognize Custodial and Pest Control Services as the Department of the Month for June 2009 for the critical services they perform in minimizing the spread of disease on campus. This department includes Building Services (services the academic facilities), Residential and Conference Facilities (services the residence halls and conference centers), and Pest Control Services. This department's diligence and effectiveness at controlling disease was never more evident than during the recent outbreak of H1N1 influenza on campus. Even before the flu was detected on campus, the custodial staff had stepped up their practice of routinely disinfecting public areas and "touch points" on campus, which is vital to preventing the spread of diseases. Custodial staff receive regular training in disinfection procedures, including training to handle blood and other body fluid spills that take place on campus. During the week of the outbreak, all of the custodians were more than willing to do their part at the Public Health Clinic that was established at the Carpenter Sports Building. They also successfully maintained the cleanliness of Laurel Hall which experienced a large influx of students seeking medical evaluation. The custodians are also responsible for stocking the hand sanitizer stations that have been placed around campus to cut down on disease spread. The Pest Control team also plays an essential role in controlling the spread of disease on campus. They handle any manner of vermin that may try to invade our buildings, anything from insects to bats, all of which can carry diseases.

In addition to their responsibilities for keeping our buildings clean, Custodial Services plays a key role in many other areas of safety. It is not uncommon for our custodial technicians to bring safety issues to our attention. They often serve as our "eyes and ears" in all of our buildings on all the campuses. The custodians are also responsible for checking all of the fire extinguishers on a monthly basis in buildings on campus- no small feat considering there are over 4,000 extinguishers! Custodians also receive awareness training on asbestos and indoor air quality providing them the knowledge to recognize and report conditions that need to be addressed to assure our facilities are healthy for the University community. Our partnership is very important to the success of the safety program.

Thank you to all of the custodial technicians, pest control team, and supervisors who work so readily with OHS to ensure a safe, healthy campus environment for all of us!