

The SAFETY BEAK



Department of
Occupational
Health and
Safety

Physical Therapy Students “Know Their Stuff!”

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Recently, a few students in the Physical Therapy department had an opportunity to test the success of their emergency response training. One of their classes involves working with people who have suffered a stroke. During a recent session, one of these individuals experienced a seizure. The students, who had been trained on how to summon medical assistance as well as care for the safety

of individuals during a seizure, sprang into action. They called 911 to get an ambulance enroute while other classmates carefully laid the individual down and moved objects a safe distance away from the area. The stu-



Physical Therapy students responded without hesitation.

dents then found it necessary to turn the person onto their side to prevent choking. This was all done with such efficiency that the professors, who were present, never needed to provide additional instruction or assistance.

Darcy Reisman, Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy stated, “I was not surprised that the students were able to implement what they had learned, but I was extremely

pleased with how efficiently and calmly they followed safety procedures. The poise they showed was that of someone with much more experience.”

Congratulations to the Physical Therapy Department for your exceptional instruction and to the students for your thorough and proficient response. This story has a happy ending; what would be the outcome of a similar test in your department?

Talking Turkey

Thanksgiving and the holiday season are just around the corner. Be sure that your holiday feast is memorable for the delicious meal and enjoyable company; not for a bad case of food poisoning.

Here are a few tips: thaw food in the refrigerator, not on the kitchen counter. Be sure that anything

that comes into contact with raw meat is thoroughly cleaned with hot, soapy water.

Wash your hands frequently, particularly before and after handling food. Cook everything, especially meats, to the proper temperature. At the end of the meal, place all leftovers in the refrigerator as soon

as possible - don't let them sit out until the end of the ballgame!

For more information, please visit http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/facts_basics.pdf and, most importantly, enjoy your holidays!



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Getting Better Every Day!

The DOHS is on a continuous improvement path! We are happy to announce the addition of our new Biosafety Specialist, Kathleen Schmidt, who started on November 1st. She now primarily manages the bloodborne pathogens program, infectious waste program, and the biosafety cabinet certifications. Kathleen was most recently employed at Astra Zeneca, adding to her already extensive background in biosafety, ergonomics and industrial hygiene.

She began her career as a medical technologist and has broad work experience in safety. Please join us in welcoming Kathleen!

There are other re-assignments

within the department. Leslie York-Hubbard is now focusing her energy on UD's storm water management program. She has established a relationship with the Water Resources

group and is taking our program to the next level.

Ann Woodall has capably stepped into the majority of the programs



*Kathleen Schmidt,
Biosafety Specialist*

which Donna Bowman was handling. She now supports the safety chairs as their main point of contact regarding the injury and illness program as well as maintaining the medical monitoring program. We are also enjoying the return of Marie Coffin to assist our support staff. Sharon Sperber recently left our department to pursue other opportunities so as we search for a new Occupational Health and Safety Specialist, Dave Levandoski is managing asbestos and lead issues on campus.

If you have any questions regarding who can assist you with your health and safety needs, please call the main extension at 831-8475.

Writing Pays Off (\$2,000 to be exact!)

You might not get a \$340 million jackpot, but can you use \$2K for school? Can you write an essay about a health, safety or environmental issue relevant to the University of Delaware? If you answered yes to these two questions, the Campus Safety Health and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA) offers a \$2,000

scholarship every year to a student who meets the following criteria:

- must be an undergraduate or graduate student
- must be enrolled in 12 credit hours per semester, trimester, or quarter
- must have one year of study remaining in your degree program.

The deadline for applications is March 31, 2006. Please visit <http://www.cshema.org/awards/scholarship.htm> for an application and specific instructions. The DOHS staff will be happy to review essays and provide guidance upon request. Please contact our office at 831-8475 for assistance.

Chemical Hygiene Committee: Highly Toxic Materials Approval Process

The University Chemical Hygiene Committee (CHC) has unanimously voted for and established a highly toxic chemical/carcinogenic materials approval process. This new commitment involves a defined process by which all highly toxic or carcinogenic materials must be reviewed and approved by the committee for use on campus.

In brief, the approval process to use highly toxic or carcinogenic materials includes the following:

Highly toxic or carcinogenic materials must be reviewed and approved by the committee.

- Submit a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) to DOHS
- DOHS will review and forward the JHA to the CHC for review.
- DOHS and the CHC will respond back to the Principal Investigator (PI)
- The PI will receive a conditional approval

Currently there are 440 known compounds that are included in this Highly Toxic Chemical Program and more may be forthcoming. The current list of compounds can be found at: <http://www.udel.edu/OHS/chpappendixQ.pdf>.

For more information concerning this process please contact Kevin Eichinger at 831-2103 or eich@udel.edu.

Mercury Reduction on Campus: Brown Lab Project

The Brown Laboratory north wing is currently in the early stages of a renovation project. Due to the age of the building and past practices in the field of chemical research, DOHS suspected there would be mercury contamination in the laboratories. Consequently, as each laboratory was decommissioned, it was inspected using a Jerome Mercury Vapor Analyzer in an attempt to detect the presence of mercury.

Mercury was found in eleven different laboratories thus far in the project. A special dedicated vacuum with a mercury filter was used to collect and remove all of the free mercury discovered. Hiding places for the sil-

ver liquid metal included the inside and underneath of lab benches, inside of lab hoods, and in sink traps. Currently we have accumulated three drums of mercury contaminated debris. Disposal costs for these drums will run around \$1200 each.

The Chemical Hygiene Committee supports the idea of minimizing the use of mercury in research labs due to the chemical's toxicity. Inhalation of sufficient mercury vapor over a long period of time may lead to liver, kidney and central nervous system damage. As mercury was once used in the tanning of leather, it is responsible for the phrase "mad as a hatter." Hat makers in the nineteenth century were exposed to high levels of mercury va-

por while at work and consequently experienced a high incidence of nervous disorders.

With your help by discontinuing the use of mercury containing thermometers and thermostats wherever possible, and using more environmentally friendly techniques in research, we hope to never find these amounts of mercury in our buildings again.



A Jerome Mercury Vapor Analyzer at work.

B E P Q W O W R B E D A R N I T H Y U
 B R U N S F A L L H A Z A R D T F O P
 A B O U P L R A P E Y T M F A L M D L
 E R R C O F I T H E N E R L U E N O R
 C B G C I L C P U R K E Y A R T A W O
 H R A E H A H A S I L I C M C E G O O
 K E N A A M C L I A S C A E T L O B D
 C I O I N I N G B I N T H R D D O G I
 E R P S O T C E R I D D U E O N B G E
 S N H G T O N L N E D L F T U S A E S
 M O O N M E X M C K O C O A T Y F L L
 U O S I U T U R K E Y S P R L E L O N
 R K P A R L T C O R S I M D R L O W I
 C I H H E N A R L T C R A E M A S S K
 U E A S F M F M O O L R E N Y G X G O
 R P T W A H U D D I R E C T O R Y D O
 Y S E I Z U R E I S X N S S E A C M J
 Z L Q I L S A S A K A G O G F J N D H

Safety Word Search

This word search features key words from articles featured in this issue and important topics in winter/holiday safety. Have fun searching and always keep safety a priority!

WORD LIST

- Fall Hazard
- Flame Retardant
- Mercury
- Organophosphate
- Seizure
- Slips and Falls
- Turkey

Climb Safely Through the Holidays



Holidays are filled with gift giving, festive gatherings, good food and celebratory decorations. We may also find ourselves a bit more vulnerable to one of the leading causes of injuries at home: slips and falls.

Knowing a few basic ladder safety techniques may help to keep everyone safe for the holidays. First, if you are using the ladder outdoors you need to make sure the area is free of power

lines and doors. The ladder should always be placed on level ground using the 4-1 rule for extension ladders. This means for every 4 feet of extension, the ladder should be moved away from the supporting structure 1 foot. You should always be facing the ladder when climbing and never overextend yourself past the safe standing level, which is the fourth and second rung from the top for extension and step ladders, respectively.

Any ladders that are missing rungs or have visible degradation to their structure should not be used. Finally, always use the buddy system; one person holding the ladder for additional stability while the other does the climbing. DOHS has a ladder safety video as well as other educational videos. Please visit our website for more information at <http://www.udel.edu/OHS/safetvedu.html>. Safe climbing and happy holidays!

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**Check out our
web page!
www.udel.edu/ohs**



Lessons Learned: Organophosphate Exposure

In August, a very serious incident occurred on campus involving one of our researchers while he was working in a lab alone. He was synthesizing an organophosphate, which is an extremely toxic material commonly used in pest control applications. An exothermic reaction unexpectedly occurred, sending the material splattering out of the fume hood.

The researcher was wearing a lab coat and safety glasses; however, some material reached his face, entered his mouth and was ingested. He flushed the affected area with water and went home without informing anyone of the incident. He later sought medical attention when he began to experience symptoms indicative of with organophosphate expo-

sure. Fortunately, he has experienced a full recovery according to the physician's report.

It is important that all faculty, staff and students working in a lab with extremely toxic materials understand that all procedures must be reviewed and approved by the Chemical Hygiene Committee (CHC).

This researcher was synthesizing a much larger quantity of the material than his professor had authorized, was not working with a

“buddy”, and did not take appropriate actions following a known exposure. This may have been prevented if he had been provided a written job hazard analysis outlining official, authorized parameters as approved by the University CHC. There are 440 known compounds that are included in this Highly Toxic Chemical Program and there may be more forthcoming. The current list of compounds can be found at:

<http://www.udel.edu/OHS/chpappendixQ.pdf>. For additional questions please contact Kevin Eichinger at 831-2103 or eich@udel.edu.

Training Schedule for upcoming DOHS Courses—

for additional information and upcoming courses please see our website!

* Note: All trainings take place in GSB 130 unless otherwise specified.

November 9, 2005	Computer Workstation Ergonomics	12:00-1:00p.m.	William Fendt
November 10, 2005	Fire Extinguisher Training Form	10:00-11:00a.m.	Bernie Alexander
November 10, 2005	Storm Water Quality Training Form	1:30-2:30p.m.	Leslie York-Hubbard
November 11, 2005	Fork Lift Training	8:30-11:00a.m.	Robin Elliott
November 11, 2005	Initial Radiation Safety Training (Part 2)	1:00-2:30p.m.	William Fendt
November 14, 2005	Reactive Chemical Safety Training	9:00-10:00a.m.	Kevin Eichinger
November 14, 2005	Toxic Chemical Safety Training	10:00-11:00a.m.	Kevin Eichinger
November 16, 2005	Environmental Programs at the University of Delaware	9:00-10:00a.m.	Dave Levandoski
November 18, 2005	Chemical Waste Training	10:00-11:00a.m.	Murray Tate
November 18, 2005	Corrosive Chemical Safety Training	1:30-2:30p.m.	Kevin Eichinger
November 18, 2005	Hydrofluoric Acid Safety Training	2:30-3:30p.m.	Kevin Eichinger
November 21, 2005	Radiation Safety Refresher Training	3:30-4:30p.m.	William Fendt