



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY Environmental Health and Safety GUARDIAN

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When it Rains.....

The azaleas have bloomed, the students have left and returned from spring break, and the mercury is starting to rise. These are the signs that summer is on its way.

Normally, Tallahassee summers are very wet, and therefore, one needs to prepare for the potential for flash floods. As was witnessed by the drowning accident near Degraff Hall not too long ago, flash floods can easily sweep vehicles and people away. Flood waters can be very deceiving. Two feet of water can displace 3,000 pounds, more than enough to move a stalled vehicle. As little as three inches of moving water is enough to knock an adult off his or her feet.

If you live in an area that is prone to flooding, establish an emergency plan including an evacuation plan with multiple contingency routes. Have the following supplies on hand:

- Flashlight and batteries
- Portable, battery-operated radio and batteries
- First aid kit
- Non-perishable emergency food and water
- Non-electric can opener
- Prescription medications
- Cash
- Sturdy shoes



After the flood, you need to be just as careful. Many dangers lie in the receding flood waters and aftermath.

- After drowning, electrocution is the number two killer in floods. Keep away from downed power lines. Many appliances such as televisions, maintain an electrical charge even when unplugged. Do not turn on any appliances until they have been thoroughly dried, cleaned, and inspected.
- Check your house for gas leaks. Do not use candles or smoke in a house until you have done so.
- Animals may have taken refuge in your home during the flood. Check your home thoroughly to ensure you don't have any unwanted guests.

For more information about flash flood safety, visit FEMA's web site at: www.fema.gov/library/flood.htm.

Silencing Fire Alarms

For those of you who once lived in Kellum Hall as undergraduates, you know how frequent fire alarms were during finals week. Even though a majority of the alarms were from students needing a study break, each one required a response from qualified and trained personnel. The Police and EHS fire technicians response team and the City of Tallahassee Fire Department are classified as First Responders to fire alarms.

Once the alarm occurs, the University Police and fire technicians are generally the first to arrive. Not too far away is the City of Tallahassee Fire Department dodging through Tallahassee traffic. If the University response team determines the cause of the alarm to be a “nuisance” alarm, the police will advise the Fire Department. At that point, the Fire Department may make the decision to downsize the number of responding vehicles. Meanwhile, the building occupants patiently wait outside in the elements for the “all clear”.

While most alarms on campus are from mischievous acts or equipment failure, it is the Fire Chief or Incident Commander’s decision alone to silence the alarm.

As always, when an alarm occurs, it is every person’s responsibility to quickly evacuate the building and allow the trained professionals the opportunity to investigate the situation.

Time Change = Battery Change

On Sunday, April 7th, Daylight Savings Time begins. Use this annual event as a reminder to check the batteries in your household smoke detector. Fire is the second leading cause of unintentional deaths in the home. A recent study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission concluded that nearly 20 percent of the homes in America had inoperable smoke detectors, most of which were due to dead batteries.



EHS Training Corner

Look to this area for information on training EHS offers. This quarter, we would like to highlight the following training:

Radiation Safety Training



Anyone working with or around radioactive materials or radiation producing devices should attend this course.

It is offered at least once a semester. Sessions are typically scheduled to last two hours per week for three weeks.

Topics covered include:

- Licensing and Regulatory Matters
- Principles of Ionizing Radiation
- Principles of Radiation Physics
- Radiation Dosimetry
- Biological Effects of Radiation
- Laboratory Radiation Safety & Emergency Procedures
- Radiation Detection Instrumentation

Asbestos Awareness Training

Anyone in the Facilities O&M or Building Services Departments that may work with or around Asbestos-Containing Building Materials (ACBM) should attend this course on an annual basis to learn of the multiple locations of potential asbestos health hazards that exist at FSU.

This training is a requirement of OSHA's Hazard Communication Program and the Asbestos Standard.

Topics covered include:

- Asbestos identification and uses
- How to prevent exposure
- Warning signs and notifications
- Health hazard data
- Reporting real or potential emergencies

For more information on these classes or on other classes EHS offers, feel free to visit our web site at www.safety.fsu.edu/training.html.

Insurance Coverage for Property in Leased Space

As Florida State University grows, many departments have found their old accommodations too cramped to fit all their employees and the “stuff” that has amassed over the years. Many departments are turning towards leased space as a solution to their space needs. While this is an excellent option for some departments, it brings up some concerns that you may have overlooked.

The University insures its property as contents of a building rather than property of a department. So, although your department may have purchased some equipment, if it is in a non-university owned location, it may not be insured.

University policy states the following:

If a department leases property, it is the department's responsibility to notify the Coordinator of Insurance and Risk to add contents housed in the leased space to the insurance schedule.

To add the contents housed in leased property, it is necessary to provide the Coordinator of Insurance and Risk certain information. It is not necessary to create an itemized list of property for insurance purposes, simply a gross figure. When coverage needs are calculated, an additional 25% is added to cover any items under \$1,000.

To ensure that your property is insured adequately, or for further information, please contact the Coordinator of Insurance and Risk at 644-7683.

Product Recalls

The Square D Company has recently issued a safety notice regarding some of their 60 and 100 Ampere F-Series Switches. If you have any in your possession, please contact Fran Harley at 644-7687 for more information.

Also, the Roto Zip Tool Corporation is voluntarily recalling about 1.9 million handheld saws. The handles on these saws can separate from the body, causing the operator to be cut. The models being recalled are the Revolution™, Rebel™, and Solaris™.

For more information about recalled products, visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website at www.cpsc.gov.

Electronics Recycling

The Leon County Solid Waste Department has recently begun a program to recycle electronic equipment. It's estimated that 10 million pounds of electronics reach the municipal waste system each year. While most of us wouldn't throw a lead-acid car battery in the trash because we know it's hazardous waste, we might not be aware that a television or computer monitor can contain anywhere from 4-8 pounds of lead. In addition to lead, electronics contain mercury, PCB's, and cadmium. Do your part by recycling your old electronics.

The Leon County Solid Waste Facility is open to the public on Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 414-9346.

IN THE NEWS...

Anthrax and Computers

A project using “spare computer processor time” to help find a cure for Anthrax has concluded. The project, designed by British researchers, has compiled a list of 300,000 drugs with the potential for combating Anthrax infection by working not against the pathogen, but against the toxin created by Anthrax itself. The project utilized more than a million home computers whose owners downloaded the screensaver software from the project’s website. Other similar projects are ongoing, looking for anything from cancer cures to alien life.

Hexavalent Chromium

Two groups, Public Citizen and the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union filed an appeal in the U.S. Court of Appeals to require OSHA to lower the limits of exposure for hexavalent chromium from 100 ug/m³ to 0.5 ug/m³. Approximately 1 million chrome and stainless steel workers are exposed to the lung-cancer causing chemical each year.

HISTORY REVISITED...

- 1666: Isaac Newton discovers that white light is composed of all the colors of the spectrum.
- 1670: Robert Boyle produces hydrogen by reacting metals with acid.
- 1786: Luigi Galvani demonstrates that nerves conduct electricity.
- 1809: Charles Darwin is born.
- 1863: National Academy of Sciences is founded.
- 1968: First human heart transplant performed.
- 1988: Apple Computer introduces the CD-ROM drive to its computer line, priced at a reasonable \$1,199.
- 1997: Dolly the sheep is cloned.

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