

Quarterly Laboratory Safety Update

In This Quarterly Slick:

We talk about CHANGE!

- Changes to the process for obtaining free PPE
- Changes to the Lab Safety Review (Inspection) Program
- You **can** change the Lab Safety Culture
- Changes to the Fall Field Safety Training and a reminder that Heat Illness should not be underestimated.
- Lab Hacks - a solution to the foggy glasses when worn with a mask.

Need training? Click [here](#) for details on upcoming courses.

[Office of Research COVID-19 Safety Training](#)

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Free PPE is by an Appointment Only

As the Research Ramp-Up process slowly brings staff, postdocs and graduate students back to campus we receive more and more questions regarding the free Personal Protective Equipment Program, sponsored by EH&S. Yes, we will continue to supply the research laboratories with free lab coats and safety eye wear. The type of lab coat each researcher receives depends on the Hazard Assessment for the lab. The Principal Investigator of each group should certify a Lab Hazard Assessment online using a platform called [Assessment](#) (or LHAT). Every lab members should review the assessment for their lab and take a short PPE training. This will enable them to print a voucher for free personal protective equipment. Sure enough the Corona virus prompted changes in the PPE distribution procedure as well. To achieve an effective physical distancing an appointment for picking up lab coats and safety eyewear is required. Schedule your appointment using this [Google Calendar link](#). Once you select your desired day and time, please provide the following information within the *Description* section of the Google Calendar appointment slot:

Size	of	lab	coat	(XS,	S,M,	L,	XL)
Male	or		Female	style		lab	coat
PI		and		Lab			name

For your scheduled appointment, please go to the **backside** of the *Graduate Storeroom* in the Dept. of Chemistry & Biochemistry (**Bldg. 557**) next to the dry ice/liquid nitrogen cage. For your safety the PPE distribution will be in outdoor settings. Please contact [Adrian Shelor](#) or [Trever Bellefeuille](#) with questions regarding this process. You may also contact [Chandra McCarthy](#) if you need any assistance regarding PPE distribution or [laundry service](#).

How Will COVID-19 Impact Research Safety and The Lab Safety Inspection Process?

At the beginning of 2019, EH&S introduced changes to the Lab Safety Inspection Program that involved in-person meetings between the lab safety specialist and supervisors or members of lab groups. EH&S representatives arranged meetings with lab groups to conduct physical space inspections and review administrative controls (e.g. training records, Standard Operating Procedures, Chemical Hygiene Plans, etc.). Upon submitting an inspection report, a 30 day follow-up was conducted to validate corrections and/or re-address questions, concerns and/or issues. This was an opportunity to provide on the spot training when necessary and allowing for corrections to issues to be made onsite. However, since the COVID-related ramp down of research activity in mid March 2020, safety inspections have been put on pause. As we

prepare to adapt to the changes ahead, EH&S has taken a different perspective to current policies.

With Corona virus sweeping our counties and impacting our campuses, the way we do research

safety will undoubtedly change. As our campus moves into the ramp up of research in the coming months, EH&S will be developing new safety policies to include face coverings, sanitation and social distancing in the lab. This will directly affect how inspections are conducted. Here's a peek at what this will look like:

- Inspections will be scheduled by building or department and announced to department safety representatives (DSRs)
- Administrative controls will be reviewed separately from the physical space inspection via electronic communication
- Inspection reports will be submitted to lab groups through [UC Inspect](#)
- Corrections will be accounted for on the honor system (inspectors trust supervisors to ensure corrections made) and questions concerns addressed by phone, email or similar
- Targeted training will be conducted via zoom or other electronic means

We hope is that these changes in the process will be temporary

Want a Change? Be the Change!

Changing the Safety Culture in Academia has been an inspiration for many safety professionals in the last decade. Change is difficult. We see, however, the early fruits of this focused effort. Labs are more complaint than ever and a positive work relationship between researchers and their assigned safety specialists has been established. We all have been told that culture starts with management and it is most effective when applied

top-down. To this we answer: ***Don't underestimate the power of our students!*** We have seen what they are capable of when they care. Motivated graduate students from the department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology (EEMB) already made a big move towards positive Field Safety Culture within their department. Now the department is implementing specialized training and is working on further steps towards better planning and response to field emergencies. In addition, the Field Research Safety program on campus is guided and advised by a group of amazing and inspirational graduate students representing departments with field research activities. Thanks to their valuable input the program is growing steadily and is taking the role of a support center for scientists involved in field operations. It is now time to take action towards changing the culture in the lab. Interested but don't know where to start? Here are three possibilities for taking the first step:

1. Join the Science of Safety Journal Club

A group of graduate students and safety professionals across the country are starting a Journal Club focused on research related to professional safety issues that would be relevant for Laboratory Safety Teams. [They invite you to join the Journal Club!](#)

Examples of topics to explore include:

- safety culture
- accident investigations
- working within complex organizations
- effective communication
- team development

This Journal Club will start on Tuesday, September 1 at 3 PM ET via Zoom, and will be held weekly at that day/time henceforth.

The paper/website/podcast which will be discussed will be sent out a week prior so you can decide if you would like to join us for that week's session. They also enthusiastically encourage you to

claim a spot in the weekly line up to share research and/or resources that you feel would be useful for the group to discuss! With questions contact Jessica A. Martin NSF Graduate Research Fellow, University of Connecticut at jessica.a.martin@uconn.edu

2. Join a Workshop

The American Chemical Society is sponsoring periodic workshops to help educate graduate students and other interested academic lab workers about lab safety culture and opportunities for promoting safety in their schools. Read full article [here](#). The upcoming workshop taking place on November 12, 2020 is unfortunately fully booked. If you are interested in joining future workshops, please email membership@dchas.org. For details please click [here](#).

These workshops are designed also by Jessica Martin, University of Connecticut, who is starting the Journal Club mentioned above.

3. Become a Lab Safety Representative

By taking on this role for your lab you can directly impact the micro-culture of your team and stir it in a direction that promotes positive and safe behaviors. You will serve as liaison between your lab and EH&S. If Interested talk to your supervisor and contact hector.acuna@ucsb.edu

Remember!

Whatever step you take, it will make a difference one way or another. The effort will be noted. And you can add a line to your resume.

Sign Up for the Science of Safety Journal Club

Online Field Safety Training This Fall

The picture above looks so surreal, don't you think? A classroom, packed with people and no one is wearing a mask! At the same time this is something so natural to us, humans. We are a social species after all. The old normal, life as we knew it before COVID-19 is something most of us by now are looking forward to. Not yet thought. At least not this fall. Since no in-person classes are allowed we are taking the Field Safety Training online. We are offering 1 hour of Field Trip Planning and 1.5 hours of Basic First Aid Class. The class is scheduled for late September as part of the orientation process for EEMB graduate students. We welcome, however, anyone who is interested. With questions, please email nelly.traitcheva@ucsb.edu.

Don't Underestimate the Heat!

Lab Hacks

No More Fogged Glasses

You are from the few researchers allowed in the lab during Phase 3 of the Research Ramp-up. Congratulations and good luck with your experiments! You must wear a mask at all times. You also need to protect your eyes with safety glasses, which before you know it fog. There is a huge risk associated with working without safety glasses. Instead on giving up on them here are few tips that we hear help the problem:

1. Adjust/seal your mask well. When putting on your mask, make sure to pinch the top of the mask to fit the shape of your nose. If your mask allows it, tighten the sides as well for a good fit.
2. Use medical or athletic tape to close the gap between the bridge of your nose and the top of your mask. If you don't have tape, try an adhesive bandage or double sided tape
3. You can also place an additional piece of cellophane or masking tape over the mask as well.
4. Place a folded tissue between your mouth and the mask. The tissue will absorb the warm, moist air, preventing it from reaching your glasses. Also, make sure the top of your mask is tight and the bottom looser (not too loose), to help direct your exhaled breath away from your eyes.
5. Try to apply an anti-fog spray.

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