

## **University Environmental Health and Safety Committee Report Submitted by Indranil Dutta, July 2016**

The university's policies on health and safety are pivotal in providing a safe working environment for all stakeholders. The Environmental Health and Safety Committee plays a key role in the creation of these policies and associated programs. Each stakeholder group in the university is responsible for ensuring that health and safety policies are being addressed adequately. Supervisors and managers must ensure compliance with appropriate policies, guidelines and regulations and should provide staff with adequate training and the necessary tools to perform their jobs safely.

Items that were brought to the Committee in the October 2015 to May 2016 time frame are as under -

- Environmental Health and Safety Expo 2015
  - The factors that contributed to the success of the expo were discussed. It was suggested that the expo be repeated each year with a different theme and be located in different areas of the four campuses.
  
- Training on shipping chemical and biological hazardous waste
  - Transportation of dangerous good (TDG) training for staff in various department was discussed.
  - Canada has changed the requirements for this training and hence training is deferred until more information is available.
  
- Needle stick injuries in Dentistry
  - A concern was raised with regards to the increase in the number of needle stick injuries in Dentistry. A new nurse was to start a new procedure (new trays for instruments, alternative syringes, recapping process, etc.) to see if the number of injuries decreased.

- Flammable and Combustible liquid handling procedures
  - A draft document was being worked on for these procedures. This has been deferred currently.
  
- Director's Report(s)
  - Highlights and updates included<sup>1</sup>  
Fire Safety Program, Safety Showers at the LSC, Electronic EHS Management System (EHS Assistant), Online Training, EH&S Policies and Procedures, Respirator Fit Testing, EH&S Expo, Fire at the Agricultural Campus, Flam Resistant Clothing, Radiation Safety Training and Fire Extinguisher Simulator, Biohazard event at Tupper, Radiological Use Audit, EHS Shared Position in Faculty of Engineering, AEDs, Truro AC Campus Safety Program, University Hazardous Waste Disposal Contract and Chemical Safety Program.
  
- Security Report(s)
  - Highlights included
    - CIR presentation to different groups on campus, partnership with HR promoting security initiatives, use of social media.
    - Medical First Response<sup>2</sup> - Security Services began to look at anaphylactic reactions. With assistance from Health Services and Legal Counsel, officers are being trained on the use of an Epi pen and will be carrying on vehicles. Training and response will be monitored by Health Services.
    - Security incidents on the four campuses were reviewed for 2015 and the first quarter of 2016.
    - Incidents relating to false alarms are be investigated further.
    - Planning for large scale events were discussed along with community engagement initiatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> List from minutes of meeting circulated.

<sup>2</sup> Text from minutes of meeting circulated.

- Nominations for the annual safety award - 2015
  - Three nominations were received
    - FM Security Services Team for the DalSAFE Mobile App,
    - Architecture & Planning for the Faculty Workplace Safety Framework initiative
    - The Dalhousie Snow Removal Teams in Halifax and Truro for keeping both campuses safe

The safety award was received by Architecture and Planning.

- EHS Committee terms, EHS Policy
  - The final copy of the committee terms was circulated.
  - The EHS policy has to be reviewed by the committee annually.
  - For the current year, the policy has been reviewed and sent to the president for signature.
- New co-chair – Employee group
  - Mark Obrovac volunteered to be the co-chair. In his absence Victor Kellner will be the co-chair.
- Accident Incident Summaries.
  - The accident incident summaries were reviewed in each session. Follow up on certain incidents were discussed.
  - A review of Facilities Management (FM) showed that the most dangerous of jobs were carpenters and electricians. Custodial staff reported the most number of incidents. Management in FM are also encouraging staff to report 'near-misses'. FM were also looking at electronic tracking of current incidents.

- Department of Labour compliance order
  - An incident on the Truro campus which resulted in a fine for Dalhousie was discussed. The fine would be appealed as a contractor, and not Dalhousie, was responsible for the infraction.
- New Hazardous material signage<sup>3</sup>
  - The new EHS system (EHS Assistant) will produce signage for Radiation, Biological, Chemical and Asbestos Management systems.
  - The current red and yellow codes that have lost their meaning over the years will be phased out and there will also be new symbols added to signage.

---

<sup>3</sup> Text from minutes of meeting circulated.