

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Facilities Management Vacuuming Safe Work Instructions	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Assistant Vice President Facilities Management	<i>Approval Date:</i> January 2010
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Facilities Management	<i>Revisions:</i>
Service: Environmental Services	Shop: Custodial	
Hazards Identified: Heavy lifting, slippery conditions, poor lifting techniques, uneven surfaces, over exertion		
Personal Protective Equipment Required: Safe footwear		
Training Required: Proper Lifting Techniques		

These safe work practices must be followed at all times and are to be reviewed annually.

1. Only properly trained employees are to operate vacuuming equipment.
2. The required PPE must be worn at all times.
3. Always use an electrical outlet on the side of the corridor, stairs or part of the room in which you are working.
4. Loop the power cord over your shoulder to keep it clear of your feet and eliminate the risk of tripping over the cord.
5. Never block corridors, stairways or doors with the vacuum especially if left unattended.
6. Never use a vacuum for cleaning up water unless it is designed for that purpose.
7. Stand in a neutral upright position.

8. Do not bend at the waist to move vacuum nozzle forward and backward use your arms or change positions.
9. Alternate the position of your hands as well as the grip of each hand to avoid constant repetitive motion with one muscle group.
10. Ensure that when your grip the vacuum wand your hand is level with your forearm.
11. Do not overreach, move your feet.
12. Keep elbows and arms close to your body to reduce movement and encourage a neutral posture.
13. Always switch the vacuum off before unplugging it.
14. Never pull on the power cord in an attempt to unplug the vacuum.
15. Use backpack vacuums for cleaning stairs or elevated areas.
16. Ensure that backpack vacuum harnesses are adjusted properly so that the weight is evenly distributed on your waist or shoulders.
17. Be careful about your balance when working on stairways or overhead with backpack vacuums.
18. Empty bags frequently.