

The Safety Net

Eastern Virginia Medical School's Environmental Health and Safety Newsletter
https://myportal.evms.edu/research/safety/environmental_health_and_safety

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Special Interest Articles:

- Medical Waste
- Cold Storage Policy
- Fit Test Procedures

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Why Report Incidents, Injuries, and Near Misses?

Prompt medical treatment is the reason you are asked to report incidents, injuries and near misses, NOT to place blame for the incident. In order to keep a minor injury from becoming worse, proper medical care is very important. In addition to medical treatment, incidents need to be investigated and their causes determined in order to prevent the same injuries from happening to someone else. All injuries and incidents are important and need to be reported.

Once the incident is investigated, it may be classified as minor, serious or major, but all were accidents. If the cause is not found and corrected, the underlying conditions responsible for the incident are still there, waiting to wreak havoc and cause another injury, possibly with more severe consequences. Just because the accident was “minor” this time does not mean that the next time the same type of incident occurs the result could be much different resulting in a major injury or even a fatality.

Safety awareness increases when a near miss is reported. When an accident occurs, even if it does not result in an injury, it serves as a warning that uncontrolled hazards are present. These hazards must be identified and removed from the workplace.

The proper procedures for reporting injuries and incidents are:

- If injured, apply first aid
- Alert your supervisor as soon as possible
- Contact EVMS Occupational Health for related documentation and instructions
- Contact the EH&S Occupational Safety Officer so that an internal investigation can be initiated

Collection Device Back-up Power

In preparation for weather emergencies and unexpected power outages, EH&S has installed a back-up power unit for the Lewis Hall Minus80 Monitoring Collection Device. In the event of a power outage, monitoring and alarms notifications for the EVMS Main Campus (Lewis Hall, Lester Hall, Jones Institute) will continue for 60+ hours! If you have any questions about this back-up power supply, let us know.

It is crucial that all incidents and injuries, including near misses, be reported so that they can be investigated and the causes determined and eliminated. This will help additional injuries from occurring to our most valuable resource - YOU!

All About Medical Waste

Anyone who manages medical waste in a busy hospital, laboratory, veterinary practice, or dental office, knows that waste is dealt with a bit differently than a traditional office. Whereas most offices will have recycling, shredding, or regular waste paper receptacles, those with medical waste must adhere to strict laws of segregation and handling. Not all medical waste is handled the same, as it is categorized depending on the type of waste. There are four major types of common medical waste.

General Waste

General waste is the majority of waste in a medical facility and is not typically considered hazardous. This includes paper, plastic, and office waste. These can be disposed of in the regular trash and don't require any special handling. However, any materials containing HIPPA-covered information must be disposed of accordingly.

Infectious Medical Waste

Infectious waste is waste materials that can pose a risk of infection to humans, animals, and the overall environment. This includes blood-soaked bandages, sharps waste, surgical waste, human or animal tissues, cultures, and swabs. There are comprehensive rules for the management of infectious waste, including requirements for storage, transport, disposal, licensing, and processing.

Hazardous Medical Waste

Hazardous waste is *dangerous* waste but is not considered *infectious* to humans. Chemotherapy agents also fall into this category, as well as chemicals, such as solvents, mercury in thermometers, and lead in paint.

Radioactive Medical Waste

Radioactive waste is waste that contains radioactive material. In a medical setting, this includes radioactive therapies for tests such as thallium stress tests, and other nuclear medicine therapies to treat certain cancers. Nuclear medicine uses radiation to provide diagnostic information about the functioning of a person's specific organs, or to treat them.

Medical waste must be collected by a licensed medical waste hauler; it must be treated and rendered harmless before it can be recycled or thrown away. Unless specified otherwise, EVMS's medical waste vendor autoclaves medical waste and then landfills the treated material. If deemed required, arrangements can be made with the hauler to designate the waste as "Incinerate Only."



Fit Test Fee Changes

EH&S is not funded for the supplies or other costs associated with performing this service, thus cost-recovery is necessary. Beginning **July 01, 2019**, the respirator fit testing cost will be increased to **\$8.00** per person. This reflects the rising costs of materials, supplies and equipment maintenance that are used for this service.

Be aware, EH&S will charge departments for "no show" appointments and "turn away" tests. OSHA requires men to be clean shaven in order to wear a respirator and all to be medically cleared before being fit tested. Therefore, students and employees will be turned away when arriving for their fit test appointment if (1) they arrive with facial hair and/or (2) if their prerequisites are not complete. Fit test prerequisites are the Respiratory Protection training course, located on the EVMS Blackboard site, **and** the Medical Questionnaire completed and cleared by Occupational Health.

We encourage you to plan for this increase in the upcoming budget cycle. If you have any questions about the EVMS Respiratory Protection Program, please contact Kristi Olivar at 446-7928.

Irradiation Service Fees

EVMS Environmental Health & Safety offers the capabilities and services of an orthovoltage x-ray beam for scientific research that requires irradiation. The radiation source consists of a 3,000-watt metal ceramic x-ray tube driven by a high frequency power supply and operated by a contemporary computer-based control. Dosimetry services can be provided to ensure accurate exposures. Calibration is directly traceable to NIST.

Dosimetry Services

- Electrometer (Fluke Biomedical F35040)
- Diagnostic X-Ray chamber (PTW Farmer tube #N30013, with optional build-up cap)

Fee Schedule

- Beam use is charged per exposure, per Gray, rounded up to the nearest whole Gray
- For single exposures lasting 45 minutes or longer, the per-hour rate will apply in 15-minute increments
- Calibration is charged per exposure event and does not include specialized phantom preparation

User Category	Per Gray	Per Hour	Calibration
EVMS Faculty	\$0.65	\$40.00	\$20.00
External Academic	\$0.95	\$80.00	\$40.00
External Non-Academic	\$1.25	\$120.00	\$60.00

EVMS Cold Storage Policy

EVMS has a new Cold Storage Policy; it was approved at the Board of Visitors meeting on December 11, 2018. The policy applies to all cold storage equipment, such as standard -20°C freezers, ultra-low temp (-80°C) freezers, refrigerators, top/bottom load combination units, and liquid nitrogen freezers.

The policy covers a variety of issues and requirements. Preventative Maintenance (PM) is now required for all cold storage equipment and will be checked during inspections. The policy also lists items that must be posted on the piece of equipment:

1. BioRAFT Equipment Information Page
2. EIN Label (from EH&S)
3. The unit’s Minus80 Alarm Notification Action List
4. The unit’s content inventory
5. Preventative Maintenance Label (i.e. the PM checklist)

New procedures are now in place for Emergency Freezer access. In the event of a -80°C freezer emergency, contact EH&S:

1. During normal business hours at 446-5798
2. Outside of normal business hours, contact the EH&S Freezer Pager at 757-415-0014

The complete policy can be found on the bottom of the Research Equipment MyPortal page, located here: <https://myportal.evms.edu/research/equipment/>

Battery Recycling for 2018	
Alkaline	416.0 lb.
Lead Acid	1185.2 lb.
Ni-MH	15.0 lb.
Ni-Cd	6.4 lb.
Li-Ion	27.0 lb.
Other Non-rechargeable	49.8 lb.
Total = 1699.4 lb.!	

Dosimeters: Late and Lost Charges



EH&S continues to use Landauer's Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) technology for accurate and dependable dosimetry services. When dosimeters are returned late or lost we incur late and lost dosimeter charges. *This has and could significantly impact our limited operating budget.*

The EVMS Radiation Safety Committee approved the following schedule for the recovery of late/lost fees:

- Up to 30 days late: \$10
- 30 – 60 days late: \$20
- 60 – 90 days late/lost: \$30

EH&S will continue to provide and manage radiation dosimetry for free and not increase the recovery charges for FY20.

Please be mindful of dosimeter change-out dates and return your dosimetry in a timely manner to avoid late fees. Also consider creating an area where the dosimeters may be stored when not in use. Coordinators may want to discuss adding funds to cover this potential charge with their department's budget manager.

If you have any questions about radiation dosimetry or this change, please contact EH&S.

Fit Test Scheduling Procedures

It is that time of year for EH&S to once again begin *Annual Faculty and Staff Fit Testing*. 2019 Respirator Training and Fit Testing are required for employees in the following departments: Police and Public Safety, Maintenance, Ghent Family Medicine, Portsmouth Family Medicine, General Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease, and Pulmonary. If your position is in one of these specialties, please visit [Blackboard](#) to start the *TB/Respirator Training for Faculty and Staff Course*. Please note that dispatchers and administrative or other non-clinical personnel are generally exempt from this requirement unless directed by a supervisor to comply. Once in the course you will simply follow the outlined steps by clicking the links one-by-one and following the directions. Here is a quick overview of what needs to be completed:

Step 1. The *Medical Questionnaire* form needs to be filled out and submitted electronically. This should be done early enough that Occupational Health can evaluate and clear you for testing. If a nurse has follow up questions for you, one will contact you directly. Please be aware that Medical Questionnaires do expire after 2 months and will need to be completed again if a Fit Test is not done within that time frame.

Step 2. Review the *Training Modules and Complete the Quiz*. A score of 80% or above is required for completion.

Step 3. *Wait for a Clearance Email* that will approve you to schedule a Fit Test. Your assigned fit tester will be copied on this letter; coordinate with them on a time and date for your test. You should not try to schedule a test date until you receive this email.



The deadline for completion is March 1, 2019. If you have completed this compliance after November 1, 2018, or if you have any questions, you may contact the Office of General Counsel, 446-7250 or OGC@evms.edu. EH&S is also available to help with concerns and special accommodations, 446-5798 or EHS@evms.edu.

Ask the S.O.B.

Q: Dear S.O.B.,

I see folks tossing all kinds of recyclables into the green recycling cans, even though there is a sign that says “Tip Rack Boxes Only” on the lid. Is it ok to put materials in the can for recycling, other than tip rack boxes?

- *Ikant Reed*

A: Dear Reed,

While EH&S has accepted all types of plastics in the past, the green recycling cans are for **tip boxes only**. EH&S cannot accept other plastic items for recycling at this time. Other materials placed in these collection containers will be discarded. Please spread the word to peers (and anyone else who uses the cans) to follow the posted signs.



Safety Office Boy to the rescue!

If you have questions or need assistance with the process, please contact EH&S at x5798 or ehs@evms.edu.

Notes from the Office

EH&S Training Courses

Course	Date/Time	Location
Chemical Hygiene Plan	January 24, 2019 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM February 28, 2019 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM March 21, 2019 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM	2162 Lewis Hall
Radiation Safety in the Laboratory	Contact EH&S	
Biosafety in the Laboratory Biological Materials Shipping Autoclave Safety Training OHSP Training	Available on BioRAFT	https://evms.bioraft.com/
HAZCOM Bloodborne Pathogens Biological Safety in the Clinical Laboratory	Available on Blackboard	http://evms.blackboard.com/

Morgue List

Looking for a chemical? Check out our [Morgue List](#)! Items on the list are offered and free to all research labs. Phone, come by, or look on the EH&S [Chemical Safety](#) web page to see what chemicals we have available!



Regulated Medical Waste



PUT THESE IN THE RED BAG

Bloody Gloves

Bloody Plastic Tubing

Visibly Contaminated PPE

Bloody Goggles

Bloody Bandages

Bloody Clothes
& Other Items

Closed Disposable
Sharps Containers



SPECIAL HANDLING AND MARKING
MAY BE REQUIRED FOR:

Certain Pathological Waste*

Trace-Chemotherapy



DON'T PUT THESE IN THE RED BAG



Medication*



Batteries of
Any Type



Garbage



Hazardous and
Chemical Waste



Loose
Sharps



Compressed
Gas Cylinders



Fluorescein



Fixatives and
Preservatives



Cauterizers



Radioactive
Waste

Order more red bags, liners, sharps containers and waste supplies at MyStericycle.com.

*Please check with your local state regulations.