

# The Safety Net

Eastern Virginia Medical School's Environmental Health and Safety Newsletter  
[https://myportal.evms.edu/research/safety/environmental\\_health\\_and\\_safety](https://myportal.evms.edu/research/safety/environmental_health_and_safety)

Summer 2018  
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**Special Interest  
Articles:**

- Stormwater
- "Black Mold" vs black mold
- Recycling Information

**Individual  
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## September is Campus Fire Safety Month!

Campus Fire Safety Month is a nationwide endeavor to raise fire and life safety awareness on university and college campuses. September is designated as "Campus Fire Safety Month." Unfortunately, August and September are routinely the worst time of year for fatal campus-housing related fires. Most college students have not been trained in fire safety since elementary school, and have no idea how fast a fire can spread.

The goal of the Fire Safety Month campaign is for students to realize they are not indestructible and understand that fires do happen in campus related settings. Hopefully students will take steps to protect themselves no matter where they live.

### PREPARATION

Remember to plan your escape route before a fire and to practice the procedure often. Keep your escape routes clear from clutter and choose a meeting place in advance. Keep an emergency escape ladder for second stories. Only use a fire extinguisher if you know how to do so safely and call 911 before using the fire extinguisher. Finally, sound the fire alarm on your way out of the building.

### PREVENTION

Take responsibility for prevention. Fires can be prevented by taking simple precautions.

Install smoke detectors and test them regularly. Do not overload electrical outlets. Replace cracked or frayed electrical cords. Clean work areas regularly. Extinguish candles when not needed. When cooking, never leave food unattended.

Remember property and valuables can be replaced, LIVES cannot. Protect yourself and those around you.



*Dorm Room Burn demonstration. The Center for Campus Fire Safety.*

# Stormwater

## *WHAT IS STORM WATER RUNOFF?*

One of the most significant, yet unrecognized groups of water contaminants is *storm water pollutants*. When it rains storm water runs over yards, streets, roads, highways, parking lots, parks and playgrounds, carrying with it everything in its path, including debris and pollutants.

Eventually the water will travel to a lake, river or stream, either over land or via storm drain. Storm drains are frequently located alongside streets and parking lots. Unlike sanitary sewers that divert water to a treatment plant directly from your home, storm drains lead directly to surrounding lakes, rivers or streams without any type of treatment. All the debris and pollutants that were picked up by the storm water runoff end up in you lakes, rivers or streams!



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## *WHERE DOES THE POLLUTION COME FROM?*

Most contaminants are made up of common items used by residents, businesses and visitors, such as fertilizers, car oil and greases, yard clippings, soil, and pet wastes. Below are some tips you can follow to help keep pollution from entering lakes, rivers and streams via storm water runoff.

## *TIPS TO KEEP OUR LAKES, RIVERS AND STREAMS CLEAN*

Never dump anything down a storm drain!

Use an oil pan when changing oil to keep fluids off the pavement. Check local body shops and quick lubes to find a place to appropriately dispose of used oil.

Bag pet waste and dispose of it in a trash can.

Leave grass clippings on your lawn as an alternate nutrient to fertilizer. If a fertilizer is necessary, choose a slow-release product and test your soil to find out how much fertilizer your lawn actually needs.

Wash your car on your lawn so excess water, chemicals and dirt are filtered through your lawn.

Keep household hazardous wastes such as harsh cleaners, paint, car fluids and batteries from entering lakes, rivers and streams by disposing at a household hazardous waste center. Try using environmentally-friendly alternatives or recipes with non-hazardous ingredients.

<b>Battery Recycling for 2018</b>	
Alkaline	143.6 lb.
Lead Acid	277.6 lb.
Ni-MH	2.4 lb.
Li-Ion	11.8 lb.
Other Non-rechargeable	24.0 lb.
<b>Total = 875.4 lb.!</b>	

Use a broom rather than a hose to clean up grass clippings and dirt.

Keep a trash bag in your car.....and use it!

## Fit Test Fee Schedule

Beginning **July 01, 2018** the respirator fit testing cost will be increased to **\$7.25** per person. This reflects the rising costs of materials, supplies, and equipment maintenance that are used for this service. EH&S is not funded for the supplies or other costs associated with performing this service, thus cost-recovery is necessary.

Be aware, EH&S will charge departments for “No Show” appointments and “Turn Away” tests. 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: the Respiratory Protection Blackboard training course **and** the Medical Questionnaire completed and cleared by Occupational Health.

## Virginia Sales Tax Holiday

Legislation in the 2015 General Assembly combined Virginia’s three sales tax holidays into one three-day holiday beginning on the first Friday in August at 12:01am and ending that Sunday at 11:59pm. This year, that weekend is **August 3-5, 2018**. During the sales tax holiday period, consumers can purchase qualifying school supplies, clothing, footwear, hurricane and emergency preparedness items and EnergyStar™ and WaterSense™ products without paying sales tax. Note that these prices refer to the item’s maximum price, not the total purchase price.

### *School Supplies, Clothing and Footwear:*

- School Supplies: \$20 or less per item
- Clothing and footwear: \$100 or less per item

### *Hurricane and Emergency Preparedness items:*

- Portable generators: \$1,000 or less per item
- Gas powered chainsaws: \$350 or less per item
- Chainsaw accessories: \$60 or less per item
- Other specified hurricane preparedness items with a sales price of \$60 or less per item

### *EnergyStar or WaterSense items:*

Qualifying items carrying either the EnergyStar™ or WaterSense™ label with a sales price of \$2,500 or less, purchased for noncommercial home or personal use.

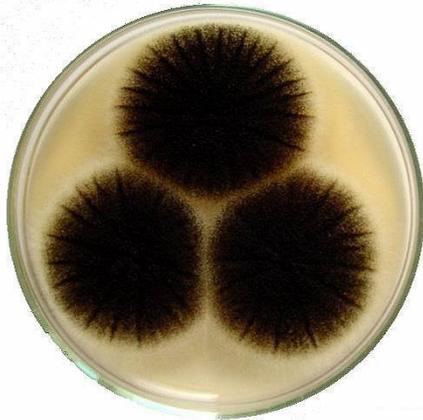
- Qualifying Energy Star™ items include dishwashers, clothes washers, air conditioners, ceiling fans, light bulbs, dehumidifiers, and refrigerators
- Qualifying WaterSense™ items include bathroom sink faucets, faucet accessories such as aerators and shower heads, toilets, urinals, and landscape irrigation controllers

For more information: <https://www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday>



## “Black Mold” vs black mold

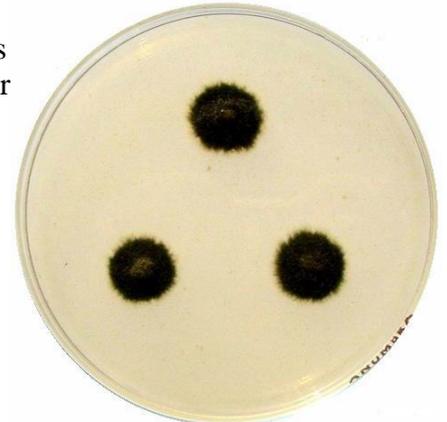
If you find a growth patch of mold that happens to be black in color, do not immediately jump to the conclusion that it is toxic. Many times, urgency comes into play when visual black mold is seen. This is because of the confusion with the common term “Black Mold,” which actually refers to all the molds that have the potential to produce toxins that cause sickness. The truth is – the color of the mold to the naked eye cannot tell you anything about whether it is toxic or not. With over 100,000 species, mold comes in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. In fact, toxic mold can come in many different colors (not just black) and black mold is not always toxic. It is virtually impossible to tell what type of mold you have without having it professionally tested by an expert.



*Aspergillus niger*

The most commonly found non-toxic indoor molds, that are black in color, are *Aspergillus* and *Cladosporium*. *Aspergillus* is found in air conditioning systems and on foods.

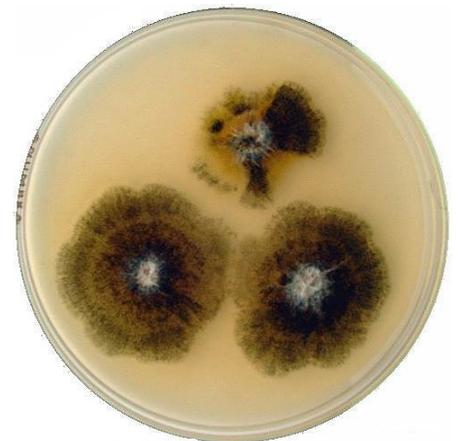
*Cladosporium* is pepper like and can grow on the back of toilets, on painted surfaces, and in fiberglass air ducts. Neither can cause any significant harm. However, they should be removed to prevent growth because both can cause allergy symptoms, such as red and watery eyes, rashes, and a sore throat.



*Cladosporium herbarum*

The most uncommon, but most infamous, black mold species is *Stachybotrys chartarum*. Growth of *S. chartarum* usually arises after a building has been stricken with water damage. Its presence will cause very poor indoor air quality as the mold releases spores as it feeds on wet organic building materials like drywall, carpet, and insulation. The spores from *S. chartarum* contain unforgiving mycotoxins that when inhaled or ingested, cause a range of unpleasant and even dangerous symptoms. Chronic coughing and sneezing, irritation to the eyes, mucus membranes of the nose and throat, rashes, chronic fatigue and persistent headaches can all be symptomatic of this “Black Mold” exposure. In severe cases of prolonged exposure, the health effects can be more dangerous. These symptoms can include nausea, vomiting, and bleeding in the lungs and nose.

But don’t worry, *S. chartarum* is not common! Therefore, if you happen to come across a patch of mold or smell a musty like mold smell, don’t get worried, just drop EHS an email or a quick call. We will be happy to come to your location and inspect. Many times, we take an air sample or swab the area, so that the specific mold species can be identified. Once the results come back from the analytical laboratory we can advise you with remediation methods. We are here to help; contact us!



*Stachybotrys chartarum*

### Resources:

CDC Mold Basics - <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm>

CDC *Stachybotrys* Facts - <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/stachy.htm>

NIH Mold - <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/mold/index.cfm>

# Recycling

Recycling is the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and developed into new products.

The first step of recycling is to determine which products are recyclable. Here is a basic list of items that can be recycled.

- Paper
- Batteries
- Plastics
- Glass
- Used Oil



Paper makes up nearly 30 percent of municipal solid waste generated each year, which is more than any other material. Americans recycle about 65 percent of paper. The recovered paper is used to make new paper products, saving trees and other natural resources.

Batteries are used in most electronics, in cars, and almost all power tools. According to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), Americans purchase 3 billion dry-cell batteries every year. In addition, each year over 2 billion batteries are disposed into solid waste facilities in the U.S. This constitutes 88% of the mercury and 54% of the cadmium deposited into the U.S. solid waste landfills, which represents a potential long-term threat to soils, groundwater, and drinking water supplies.

Batteries contain heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and nickel, which can contaminate the environment when batteries are improperly disposed of.

Recycling 1 ton of plastics saves 7.4 cubic meters of landfill space. However, it's not only important to understand what is placed in recycling containers, but an understanding of the recycling codes is paramount. Below is a list of recycling symbols and numbers, and the corresponding containers.

- #1 Plastic - PET - used in plastic bottles and highly recyclable.
- #2 Plastic - HDPE - used to package milk, cleaning products, etc. and highly recyclable.
- #3 Plastic - PVC - durable and highly weather resistant, often used on construction sites, not easily recyclable.
- #4 Plastic - LDPE - used to make plastic bags, which are recyclable at bag drops, such as at the grocery store.
- #5 Plastic - PP - used in food tubs and containers for yogurt, butter, etc.
- #6 Plastic - PS - used in take-out food container packaging, packing peanuts and foam blocks. Do not place #6 plastics in your blue bin.
- #7 Plastic - Other - used for all other types of plastic.

Glass, especially glass food and beverage containers can be recycled multiple times. Americans generate approximately 12 million tons of glass, and 26 percent of which is recovered for recycling. One of the main benefits for recycling glass is that it is typically cheaper than using raw material to produce new glass.

Used oil recycling keeps the water supply clean. It takes 42 gallons of crude oil to produce 2.5 quarts of new motor oil. Likewise, it only takes 1 gallon of used oil to produce 2.5 quarts of new motor oil.

EH&S can help with your campus-related recycling needs. Give us a call!

## Ask the S.O.B.

**Q:** Dear S.O.B.,

I know I was given a Fit Test Card after my fit test a few months ago. But now I need it and can't find it. What are *you* going to do about it?

*-Medi Discipulus*

**A:** Dear Medi,

I believe you would like to know what *you* can do about it, not *me*. If you are a student, you will need to contact your compliance coordinator, as all fit test records are forwarded to your student compliance department. If you are Faculty or Staff and find yourself in need of a replacement fit test card, please call 446-7928 for information on your respirator make, model, and size.

If you need a new complete fit test, you will be instructed on the prerequisites and steps to secure a fit test appointment. Please remember, you must be medically cleared and complete training before any respirator fit testing can take place.

If you have a question for the S.O.B., send an email to [finlayba@evms.edu](mailto:finlayba@evms.edu).



Safety Office Boy to the rescue!

## Notes from the Office

### ***EH&S Training Courses***

Course	Date/Time	Location
Chemical Hygiene Plan	August 10, 2018 1:00 - 3:30 PM September 20, 2018 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM	155 Andrews Hall
Biosafety in the Laboratory Biological Materials Shipping Autoclave Safety Training OHSP Training	Available on BioRAFT	<a href="https://evms.bioraft.com/">https://evms.bioraft.com/</a>
Schedule a Respirator Fit Test		<a href="https://evmsfittest.acuityscheduling.com">https://evmsfittest.acuityscheduling.com</a>

### ***Morgue List***

We've added many new items to our [Morgue List](#). Phone, come by, or look on the EH&S [Chemical Safety](#) web page to see what chemicals we have available!