New Director of EHS Announced

Jeff Campbell, Occupational Safety Officer and former Assistant Director of Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS), has been named the new face of EHS with the title change to Director effective June 1, 2012.

The Environmental Health & Safety Department is responsible for coordinating all aspects of environmental management, occupational health, safety on campus, and implementing safety regulations for the University.

As of last fall, EHS is located at 142 University Service Center, 49 Factory Street, Athens, Ohio 45701. Formerly located on the second floor of Hudson Health Center, EHS’s new location is located within Risk Management and Safety offices to better serve the community.

All EHS related questions, concerns, or reports can be directed to Jeff Campbell. You may reach Environmental Health & Safety by calling 740-593-1666 or emailing ehs@ohio.edu.

For more information about what EHS can do for you and the services offered, visit http://www.ohio.edu/riskandsafety/ehs/index.htm.

We are happy to handle any questions or concerns about recent changes or information regarding contact information for your specific concern.

Have a safe day!
Ohio BWC Reform to Improve Injured Worker Care

COLUMBUS - Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation Administrator/CEO Steve Buehrer joined several in announcing targeted reform aimed at helping injured workers achieve better outcomes by getting them healthy and back to work more quickly. “Governor John Kasich has asked us to find ways to make the system work better, and these reforms are reasonable steps to help address the most immediate problem of getting injured workers healthy and back to leading productive lives sooner,” said Buehrer. “The longer an injured worker goes without treatment, and the longer they remain off work, the less likely it is they will ever achieve total recovery.”

According to Buehrer, employees of BWC have spent the past year identifying areas for improvement, primarily related to improving declining return-to-work rates. Over the last five years, the number of injured workers with lost-time claims who’ve returned to work has dropped from 75 percent to below 69 percent.

Prior to seeking legislative reform, BWC initiated a number of reforms that could be done within the authority of the Bureau and its Board of Directors. These administrative reforms included pilot programs to better manage the claims process and more quickly identify candidates for vocational rehabilitation. Also, the bureau has enacted numerous changes, including a drug formulary and pharmacy lock-in program to better manage prescriptions, and created Destination: Excellence a program that provides incentives to employer to focus on safety programs as well as transitional work and vocational rehabilitation programs for injured workers.

Specific elements of the three bills include:

**Focusing on creating superior outcomes for injured workers:**

Too many injured workers are not achieving positive medical outcomes and are unable to return to work in a timely manner. The longer injured workers remain off the job, the less likely they are to have a positive health outcome and successful return to work. BWC, managed care organizations (MCOs), providers, the employer and the injured worker all have a role and each must be held more accountable for a quality outcome. Highlights of this bill include:

- Ensuring care sought in the first 45 days following an injury is paid for regardless of whether the claims is eventually allowed or denied. This will encourage injured workers to seek care-and doctors to provide it-without concern over the bill. If the claim is later denied, BWC will seek reimbursement from third-party payers such as the worker’s insurance company;
- Requiring MCOs to create provider networks focused on quality care and return-to-work, and require injured workers to use a network provider after 45 days;
- Encouraging workers to follow treatment protocol and move through the treatment process in a timely manner by tying certain benefits to their compliance with the treatment plan;
- Reward high-performing providers by easing payment processes and offering bonuses.

**Focusing primarily on under-performing providers:**

Providers are a critical part of creating positive outcomes for injured workers. Creating an environment that includes only the best providers will benefit all injured workers in Ohio. Highlights of this bill include:

- Protecting injured workers by codifying BWC’s authority to immediately decertify providers who present a clear danger to public health and safety;
- Requiring all provider decertification appeals be made in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas;
- Protecting the integrity of BWC fraud investigations by keeping investigation records confidential until the close of an investigation.

**Focusing on streamlining BWC processes:**

Workers’ Compensation costs are a factor in business location and growth decisions. Reducing bureaucracy and providing incentives that contain costs by rewarding businesses for focusing on safety and a quick return to work for injured workers will allow the focus to remain on the recovery of the injured worker, while giving companies more money to invest in growing their business. Highlights of this bill include:

- Saving employers money by codifying their access to rating and discount programs that focus on safety and getting injured employees back to work sooner, including the Destination: Excellence risk management program and BWC’s new Wellness Grant Program;
- Providing greater flexibility for state universities by allowing them to participate in self insurance;
- Saving money for schools and local governments with minimal claims by allowing them to participate in the One Claim Program;
- Eliminating the additional premium assessment for older claims where the worker is permanently and totally disabled;
- Reducing bureaucracy by removing some requirements related to printed materials and certified mail.
Everyone knows the tale of the boy that cried wolf. While not entirely applicable in the case of fires, nuisance fire alarms can not only reduce the sense of urgency among students in the case of an ACTUAL fire, but can also be costly and can create annoyance among other living residents.

Smoke detectors are sensitive to a number of items in addition to smoke from fire, including dusts and mists.

To prevent nuisance fire alarms:

1. **Do not smoke in your residence hall.**

2. **Do not spray aerosol products (air fresheners, hair spray, spray paint, perfume, mists, insect spray) or use candles, incense, powder, etc.) near smoke detectors or in large amounts.** Consider using solid, non-aerosol air fresheners and keep spray paint and dusty projects outdoors in a well ventilated area.

3. **Do not spray liquids on or near smoke detectors (cleaning products, water, steam)**

4. **Do not leave your microwave unattended.** Burned food can smoke and does set off smoke detectors. Follow reheating directions and food preparation recommended cooking times, especially popcorn, and stay close by. This is the number one cause of nuisance alarms. If the safe-T-sensor is not functioning, contact RMS immediately at (740) 593-1665.

5. **Do not use prohibited items** such as candles, toaster ovens, George Forman Grills, or space heaters in your room. These items can cause nuisance fire alarms or worse - start a fire.

Nuisance fire alarms and unnecessary fire department runs are dangerous, expensive, and disruptive for the fire department and create safety hazards for everyone.

Your life and the lives of others may depend on your smoke detector. Do not disable or cover it.

For more about cooking fires and fire prevention tips, visit NFPA.org @ http://www.nfpa.org/index.asp.
Foodborne illnesses peak during the warm summer months. *Why?* There are two reasons this spike occurs. First, there are the natural causes. Bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, water, and in the bodies of people and animals. These microorganisms grow faster in the warm summer months. Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 °F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid.

Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Second, outside activities increase. More people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides — thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities — are usually not available.

Fortunately, people seldom get sick from contaminated food because most people have a healthy immune system that protects them not only from harmful bacteria on food, but from other harmful organisms in the environment. At the same time, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), other government agencies, and food producers go to great lengths to keep food safe. And, of course, consumers can protect themselves at home with proper refrigeration and thorough cooking of perishable food.

By following these four simple steps, you can ensure safer food.

**Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often.** Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and handling pets. When eating away from home, find out if there’s a source of portable (safe drinking) water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning. Or pack clean, wet, disposable washcloths or moist towelettes and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

**Separate: Don’t Cross-Contaminate.** Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of foodborne illness. When packing the cooler chest for an outing, wrap raw meats securely; avoid raw meat juices from coming in contact with ready-to-eat food. Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that held the raw meat or poultry before using again for cooked food.

**Cook: Cook to Safe Temperatures.** Food safety experts agree that food is safely cooked when it is heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Take your food thermometer along. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside, so be sure that meats are cooked thoroughly. Check them with a food thermometer. Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three.

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Universal wastes are hazardous wastes that are generated by a wide variety of people that contain mercury, lead, cadmium, copper and other substances hazardous to human and environmental health. In general, universal waste may not be discarded in solid waste landfills. Examples of these wastes are batteries, fluorescent tubes, and some electronic devices. The best way to reduce the harmful effects of the wastes on human health and the environment is to reduce consumption. The next best thing is to make sure you DON’T throw them in the trash!

Types of universal wastes and what makes them hazardous

- **Batteries** -- Includes all batteries, AAA, AA, C, D, button cell, 9-volt, and all others, both rechargeable and single use -- Cadmium, Copper and (In older batteries) Mercury
- **Electronic Devices** -- Lead
- **Fluorescent Lamps** -- Mercury
- **Mercury wastes like thermometers and toys** -- Mercury

Other common items that can be recycled

- **Cell Phones** -- Antimony, Arsenic, Beryllium, Cadmium, Copper, Lead, Nickel, Zinc
- **Computers and Computer Monitors** -- Arsenic, Cadmium, Lead, PCBs
- **Non-empty Aerosol Cans** -- Propane, Butane, Pesticides

- **Televisions** -- Arsenic, Cadmium, Lead, PCBs

Where to Take these Wastes?

Join Oscar the Grouch’s “Not in My Trash Can” campaign by keeping universal wastes out of the trash. Earth911.org lists information on all facilities that collect and recycle universal wastes and household hazardous wastes.

**At Ohio University call Campus Recycling at 740-593-0231**

What about major appliances?

Some major appliances contain mercury and other ozone depleting chemicals that are dangerous for human and environmental health. These appliances include the following items.

- washing machine
- clothes dryer
- hot water heater
- dehumidifier
- conventional oven or microwave oven
- stove
- refrigerator or freezer
- air-conditioner
- trash compactor
- residential furnace

Foodborne Illnesses (cont)

For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F as measured with a food thermometer. Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 °F as measured with a food thermometer. Cook meat and poultry completely at the picnic site. Partial cooking of food ahead of time allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point that subsequent cooking cannot destroy them.

**Chill: Refrigerate Promptly.**

Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep cold food cold! Cold refrigerated perishable food like luncheon meats, cooked meats, chicken, and potato or pasta salads should be kept in an insulated cooler packed with several inches of ice, ice packs, or containers of frozen water.

Consider packing canned beverages in one cooler and perishable food in another cooler because the beverage cooler will probably be opened frequently. Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car, and place in the shade or shelter, out of the sun, whenever possible. Preserve the cold temperature of the cooler by replenishing the ice as soon as it starts melting. If a cooler chest is not an option, consider taking fruits, vegetables, hard cheeses, canned or dried meats, dried cereal, bread, peanut butter, crackers, and a bottle

(Continued on page 6)
Foodborne Illnesses (continued)

of refreshing beverage.

**Take-out food:** If you don’t plan to eat take-out food within 2 hours of purchase, plan ahead and chill the food in your refrigerator before packing for your outing.

**Leftovers?**

Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat. Above 90 °F, food should not be left out over 1 hour. Play it safe; put leftover perishables back on ice once you finish eating so they do not spoil or become unsafe to eat. ■

**If you have any doubts, throw it out.**

**Information was provided by United States Department of Agriculture Food and Safety Inspection Service.**

For more information, please visit http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/foodborne_illness_peaks_in_summer/index.asp

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Ohio University LABORATORY SAFETY RULES

Summer is a good time to refresh our knowledge of some of the good basic safety practices. Please read the following list of Ohio University’s general laboratory safety rules:

- Your personal safety is as important as the research results. Think safety – Work safely.
- No horseplay; act in a professional manner.
- Always wear approved safety glasses, in compliance with Ohio state law.
- No sandals or open-toed shoes in the laboratory.
- Long hair and loose clothing must be restrained.
- No eating, drinking, chewing gum, and smoking in the laboratory.
- Never pipette by mouth. Never taste any chemicals.
- Do not store food, drinks or any personal items in a lab chemical refrigerator.
- Visitors must follow safety regulations; if necessary visitors must be escorted.
- Do not perform any unauthorized experiments.
- Clean up after yourself. When you are finished for the day, return the area to a clean condition.
- Do not wear personal protective equipment (gloves, etc.) outside of the lab.
FDA has notified health care professionals and warned consumers not to use skin creams, beauty and antiseptic soaps or lotions that might contain the toxic metal mercury. These products, found in at least seven states, claim to be skin lighteners and anti-aging treatments that remove age spots, freckles, blemishes and wrinkles. Adolescents may use them to treat acne. They are manufactured abroad and sold illegally in the United States—often in shops in Latino, Asian, African or Middle Eastern neighborhoods, and online—or brought to the U.S. from other countries. FDA and state health officials have found more than 35 products containing unacceptable levels of mercury.

**Risk:** Mercury poisoning can cause damage to the kidneys and the nervous system, and interfere with brain development in unborn children and very young children.

**Recommendations**

- Check the label of any skin lightening, anti-aging, or other skin product. If there is no label or no ingredients listed, do not use the product.
- Do not use—or immediately stop using—products that list these ingredients: mercurous chloride, calomel, mercuric, mercurio or mercury.
- Thoroughly wash hands and any other body parts that have come in contact with the product.
- Contact a health care professional or medical clinic for advice.

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**What Causes Indoor Air Problems?**

Indoor pollution sources that release gases or particles into the air are the primary cause of indoor air quality problems in homes. Inadequate ventilation can increase indoor pollutant levels by not bringing in enough outdoor air to dilute emissions from indoor sources and by not carrying indoor air pollutants out of the home. High temperature and humidity levels can also increase concentrations of some pollutants.

**Pollutant Sources**

There are many sources of indoor air pollution in any home. These include combustion sources such as oil, gas, kerosene, coal, wood, and tobacco products; building materials and furnishings as diverse as deteriorated, asbestos-containing insulation, wet or damp carpet, and cabinetry or furniture made of certain pressed wood products; products for household cleaning and maintenance, personal care, or hobbies; central heating and cooling systems and humidification devices; and outdoor sources such as radon, pesticides, and outdoor air pollution.

The relative importance of any single source depends on how much of a given pollutant it emits and how hazardous those emissions are. In some cases, factors such as how old the source is and whether it is properly maintained are significant. For example, an improperly adjusted gas stove can emit significantly more carbon monoxide than one that is properly adjusted.

Some sources, such as building materials, furnishings, and household products like air fresheners, release pollutants more or less continuously. Other sources, related to activities carried out in the home, release pollutants intermittently. These include smoking, the use of unvented or malfunctioning stoves, furnaces, or space heaters, the use of solvents in cleaning and hobby activities, the use of paint strippers in redecorating activities, and the use of cleaning products and pesticides in housekeeping. High pollutant concentrations can remain in the air for long periods after some of these activities.

**Amount of Ventilation**

If too little outdoor air enters a home, pollutants can accumulate to levels that can pose health and comfort problems. Unless they are built with special mechanical means of ventilation, homes that are designed and constructed to minimize the amount of outdoor air that can “leak” into and out of the home may have higher pollutant levels.
Radioactive Materials Purchases

We are having some issues with requisitions to purchase radioactive materials going through Bobcat Buy.

1. The shipping address must always be to:
   Alan Watts, 179 University Service Center, 49 Factory Street.

2. In the comments section note the:
   a. Isotope
   b. Chemical Form
   c. Activity
   d. Project Number
   e. Authorized User Name

Fall injuries in the workplace

Falls are a persistent hazard found in all occupational settings. A fall can occur during the simple acts of walking or climbing a ladder to change a light fixture or as a result of a complex series of events affecting an ironworker 80 feet above the ground. According to the 2009 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 605 workers were killed and an estimated 212,760 workers were seriously injured by falls to the same or lower level.

The highest frequency of fall-related fatalities was experienced by the construction industry, while the highest counts of nonfatal fall injuries continue to be associated with the health services and the wholesale and retail industries. Healthcare support, building cleaning and maintenance, transportation and material moving, and construction and extraction occupations are particularly at risk of fall injuries.

Circumstances associated with fall incidents in the work environment frequently involve slippery, cluttered, or unstable walking/working surfaces; unprotected edges; floor holes and wall openings; unsafely positioned ladders; and misused fall protection.

Fall injuries constitute a considerable financial burden: workers’ compensation and medical costs associated with occupational fall incidents have been estimated at approximately $70 billion annually in the United States [NSC 2002]. Many countries are facing the same challenges as the United States on fall injury in the workplace.

Successful reduction of fall injury and fatality rates requires continued concerted efforts of regulators and industry leaders, professional associations and labor unions, employers and employees, safety professionals and researchers in enhancing the work environment, implementing new effective fall prevention and protection technologies, and improving the work safety culture through continuous education of the workforce.

The following list is recognized design and construction failures that are contributing factors in stair fall accidents [Rosen 1983]:

• 1, 2, or 3 winders
• Open risers
• Single steps
• Doors opening onto a stairway
• Low headroom
• Lack of intermediate landings
• Irregular riser heights,
• Tread depths of 10 inches or less
• Widths of stairs 60 to 66 inches
• Absence of nosing projections
• High door thresholds
• Excessive riser heights
• Low riser heights 6 inches or less
• Improperly elevated handrails
• Synthetic tread coverings
• Improper cross sectional shape of handrail
• Open railings
• Handrails, which are not continuous
• Poor lighting
• Unmarked brick, terrazzo, waxed treads, and smooth marble surfaces
• Loose attachment of carpet or pad
• Walls or posts intruding into stairwell spaces

Reference:
Indoor Air Problems
(continued)

than other homes. However, because some weather conditions can drastically reduce the amount of outdoor air that enters a home, pollutants can build up even in homes that are normally considered “leaky.”

Relative Humidity

Elevated relative humidity at a surface – 70 percent or higher - can lead to problems with mold, corrosion, decay and other moisture related deterioration. When relative humidity reaches 100 percent, condensation can occur on surfaces leading to a whole host of additional problems. An elevated relative humidity in carpet and within fabrics can lead to dust mite infestation and mildew (mildew is mold growing on fabrics). Low relative humidity can lead to discomfort, shrinkage of wood floors and wood furniture, cracking of paint on wood trim and static electricity discharges. The key is not to be too low and not to be too high. High enough to be comfortable, but low enough to avoid moisture problems associated with mold, corrosion, decay, and condensation.