1. Organization and Management of UNR Safety Programs

Administrative Responsibilities

Final responsibility for maintenance of campus safety and environmental health standards rests with the President. The President has delegated to each dean, director, chairperson, and supervisor the responsibility for ensuring safe conditions and behaviors within their respective units. Supervisors must ensure that employees and students are aware of hazardous products, operations, or situations and that they understand how to avoid or limit risks. High levels of safety awareness and positive safety attitudes developed by supervisors will lead to good judgments among staff and students when specific rules are not established. Employees are also responsible for safe practices, for following safety programs, and for looking out for each other. Supervisors are expected and encouraged to request information and assistance from the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department when necessary. Policies developed by the numerous safety committees will be referenced, along with specific regulations which may exist, when supervisors define “good practice” in their areas of responsibility.

All faculty, staff and students must be vigilant in order to avoid unsafe acts which could jeopardize their own health and safety, or which could put others at risk. All persons are expected to learn and follow approved standards and procedures which apply to their activities and to check with their supervisors when they have any doubts concerning potential hazards or individual obligations to protect the environment.

Environmental Health and Safety Department

Through the Vice President for Research and Innovation, the President has delegated to the Director of the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department the responsibility and authority for assuring overall compliance with University safety standards and applicable safety regulations. The full time professional EH&S faculty and staff, with oversight guidance from the various safety committees, are qualified and authorized to assess, identify, analyze, and control new and existing hazardous conditions. In addition, EH&S will monitor and manage hazardous materials and situations. Faculty and staff remain current on regulatory requirements and on the latest professional practices which can be applied to effectively achieve compliance.
The EH&S program specifically manages radioactive materials and hazardous waste chemicals. It also assists with management of biological hazards, conducts industrial hygiene projects, audits compliance with workplace safety requirements, supports multiple aspects of laboratory safety and emergency preparedness, assists in identification, assessment, and potential mitigation of risks, and provides various forms of safety education and training to faculty, staff, and students. Overall, the Department helps to develop, communicate and uphold high University safety standards which, in the process, will also meet regulatory expectations. Progress reports related to tasks or information requests, along with reports of recent events and incidents are submitted to the specific safety committees.

BCN Risk Management

This office is responsible to manage and oversee the workers compensation and risk management programs for the University of Nevada, Reno in accordance the Nevada System of Higher Education Procedures and Guidelines Manual, Chapter 10 – Risk Management and Safety – Section 2. This includes investigating, adjusting, and settling workers’ compensation claims, monitoring the implementation of corrective action plans to prevent the recurrence of accidents leading to injuries and providing statistical reports of injury trends and costs.

2. Safety and Health Program

A. Policy

It is a goal of the University of Nevada, Reno, to ensure safe and healthy learning, research, work, entertainment, health care, and student living environments for faculty, staff, students and visitors. In support of this policy, the University gives high administrative priority, applies appropriate financial support, and provides professional expertise in the ongoing effort to eliminate or reduce facility and operational hazards that could threaten the health and safety of persons, property or the environment. Along with the highest quality of teaching, research and community service, safety of individuals and protection of the environment are core values of this institution.

B. Safety Inspections

EH&S Inspections of External Campus Infrastructure

The emergency health and safety program in EH&S perform exterior campus infrastructure inspections annually. These areas include building exteriors, sidewalks/walkways, parking lots and other common areas. The inspections focus on access to buildings, access to emergency infrastructure, and potentially unsafe conditions resulting from vandalism, landscaping issues, surface irregularities, etc. Unsatisfactory conditions are immediately reported to necessary personnel either through the work order system or direct communication.

EH&S Inspections of Laboratories
The laboratory safety section in the EH&S Department conducts environmental health and safety assessments of laboratories. Virtually all laboratories use hazardous chemicals and many also use biological agents. Safety assessments consider all hazards, to include chemicals and biological agents, and the corresponding waste streams, physical hazards, personal protective equipment, and facility safety equipment. Laboratory assessments are documented to indicate identified deficiencies, the basis of each deficiency, requested corrective actions, and corrective action due dates. Laboratory assessment reports are sent to the responsible laboratory supervisor, other laboratory personnel as requested by the supervisor, the responsible department chair, and the EH&S Director. Deficiencies are tracked until corrected. If deficiencies are not corrected by the assigned due date, the laboratory supervisor is notified, with increasing levels of administration also notified with each subsequent reminder. Laboratory radiation hazards are assessed separately by the radiation safety section in the EH&S Department to ensure accountability and security of radioactive materials, safe handling to minimize personnel exposure, and proper accumulation and disposal of radioactive waste.

C. Safety Training

EH&S staff provides training courses on more than fifty safety topics on a regular basis. While the majority of these are provided as in-person workshops, EH&S has also developed online training for many topics via its Learning Management System (LMS). In addition to online courses, the LMS also houses all training records and materials, allowing individuals to access their own training history.

The general safety topics covered by EH&S training courses satisfy many local, state, and federal requirements. However, it is the responsibility of each department and each supervisor to identify training needs above and beyond the scope of these courses, and to ensure that employees receive the appropriate training before performing their work duties. Supplemental training provided by qualified departmental personnel, outside contractors, or a customized training program developed in concert with EH&S can all satisfy these needs.

A calendar of scheduled training events and available online courses can be found on the EH&S website. Workshops may also be scheduled for large and small groups by contacting the EH&S Training Manager or appropriate instructor. A list of available topics and training materials can be found online.

D. Accident Investigations

Procedures for responding to workplace accidents vary from simple administration of first aid to activation of emergency response procedures. Accident investigations are conducted for observed and reported accidents and specifically for each Notice of Injury (C 1) Report and each Claim for Compensation (C 4) Report that is received. Near-miss and vehicle accidents causing property damage only are also investigated. Corrective actions are
identified and follow up to ensure that the corrective actions have occurred is initiated periodically.

In conjunction with NSHE BCN Workers’ Compensation Office, accident investigation procedures have been developed and training for supervisors is provided. A variety of forms exist to facilitate record keeping associated with investigations. A summary of incidents and injury claims is provided by Workers’ Compensations to the University Safety Committee (i.e., Nevada Safety Committee) and EH&S for quarterly review. Laboratory incidents are also investigated and reports provided by laboratory personnel that include corrective actions are reviewed by the appropriate safety committee.

E. Safety Rules
University policies related to laboratory safety are posted in the University Administrative Manual and on the EH&S Department web site. Written laboratory safety plans are also posted on the EH&S web site. Procedures and guidance related to storage, use, and disposal of hazardous chemicals in laboratories are contained in the Chemical Hygiene Plan. Procedures and guidance on the storage, use, decontamination, and disposal of biological agents are contained in the Biosafety Manual, Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan, and Biohazardous Waste Operations Plan. Procedures and guidance on other safety topics pertinent to laboratories are also posted on the EH&S Department web site, to include the Ventilation Plan, Respiratory Protection Plan, as well as more general safety topics such as electrical safety. Supervisors are responsible to enforce adherence to safety policies and procedures and employees who fail to comply are subject to progressive disciplinary actions.

F. Emergency Response Plans
In an effort to facilitate and organize responses to potential workplace emergencies, the EH&S Department develops and maintains emergency response plans for each building on campus. These plans help protect employees and students from sustaining injury or bodily harm, as well as mitigate damage to property. Plans will be communicated, reviewed, and drilled annually to ensure they are effective and in compliance with the appropriate regulating authorities.

3. Safety Committees
The mission of the Nevada Safety Committee is to support the University of Nevada, Reno’s overall mission of excellence in teaching and learning, research and discovery, and outreach and public service by providing leadership and services to ensure a safety and healthy environment for all members of the University community. The Nevada Safety Committee promotes a safe and healthy campus environment by reviewing injury and illness statistics for improvement to safety programs, formulates safety procedures and policies where warranted, and assists EH&S and BCN Risk Management in communicating the importance of safety.
This deliberative body, which is representative of the University community, and which includes members who have particular expertise in certain safety areas, advise the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Vice President of Research and Innovation, the BCN Risk Manager, and the EH&S Director of safety issues. The committee also administratively coordinates the various safety-related efforts of the university environments, and guides and supports BCN Risk Management and EH&S. Through proactive assessment of potential health and safety issues, by responding to concerns raised by members of the campus community, and with respect to applicable regulatory requirements, this committee develops and recommends to the President and the Executive Vice President & Provost, policies and actions that will reduce sources and levels of risk. The committee maintains a procedures document that describes the manner in which members are selected, the purpose and duties of the committee, and the frequency of committee meetings per NAC 618.540(2).

In addition, the Laboratory Safety Committee, Institutional Biosafety Committee, Radiation Safety Committee, and the Nevada Emergency Planning committee are faculty and staff-driven committees that are administered by EH&S. Safety issues, policies, and procedures are authored by these committees on these topics. In addition, the Institutional Biosafety Committee and the Radiation Safety Committee evaluates material use protocols, as required by regulation and university policy. Safety committee minutes are made available to all employees to review via a password protected portal.

4. Training on Recognition of Hazards
   a. Identification and Control of Hazards
      Self-assessments performed within work and administrative units will be performed by supervisors and other employees following checklists appropriate for identifying sources of risk and needed safety improvements. Written assessment results will be used to guide corrective actions and to provide information to workers. Self-assessment checklists for laboratories, offices, or computer laboratories are located on the EH&S website for assistance in self-identification of needed safety improvements.

      On a periodic basis, depending on risk and other factors, EH&S personnel will perform work site inspections which may be more extensive than self-assessments. Specific compliance items will be noted along with recognition of possible opportunities to improve work safety practices. Area employees will be interviewed to determine that training requirements are met, and that employees comprehend recommended safety behaviors and methods. On these occasions, EH&S inspectors will solicit employee recommendations for safety improvements and invite reporting of employee safety concerns.

   b. Hazard Communications
      The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that employers “provide employees with effective information and training on hazardous chemicals in their
work area at the time of their initial assignment, and whenever a new chemical hazard the employees have not previously been trained about is introduced into their work area” (29 CFR 1910.1200). EH&S provides general hazard communication training to laboratory workers during the mandatory Laboratory Safety Training course. Hazard communication training in compliance with the most recent OSHA standard is available online for all non-laboratory workers who are exposed to hazardous materials.

While the Laboratory Safety Training and Online Hazard Communication Training for Non-Laboratory Workers courses cover the general requirements of the standard, it is the responsibility of individual departments and supervisors to identify and convey specific chemical hazards and to make chemical-specific information available through proper labels and Safety Data Sheets.

c. Safety Data Sheets
An inventory of chemicals stored in campus workplaces is maintained by the EH&S Department. All chemicals that are received at the campus Central Receiving facility are inventoried by EH&S personnel when they arrive. Additionally, laboratories and other workplaces are physically inventoried on a routine basis. Chemical inventories of campus work places can be accessed by responsible supervisors and the EH&S Department provides chemical inventory information and reports to supervisors upon request. Safety Data Sheets that are received with incoming chemicals are electronically entered into a searchable database that is maintained by the EH&S Department and which can be accessed by all university personnel. The EH&S Department also provides training and assistance on accessing Safety Data Sheets from manufacturer or vendor web sites or through direct request to the manufacturer or vendor. Access is via: http://www.unr.edu/ehs/sds-data

d. Laboratory Door Cards and Knox Boxes
EH&S personnel maintain lab door cards; i.e., emergency information placards, for all lab areas where chemicals, biological and/or radiological materials are used. Lab door cards contain the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 704 diamond a.k.a. the “fire diamond” to indicate level of health, flammability and reactivity hazard. The levels are calculated based upon the type and amount of material contained in the lab. Emergency contact information for personnel during business and non-business hours is also provided to quickly aid responders in an emergency. In addition, this information is provided in Knox Boxes found outside selected buildings and is available for firefighter response. They include building maps, emergency contact information for each lab, hazard class summaries, and NFPA 704 hazard summaries.

5. Ergonomic Equipment
   a. Ergonomic Assessments
   Ergonomic assessments are offered to new employees through the New Employee Orientation meetings. All other employees are periodically offered an evaluation and can
individually request an evaluation of their work station from BCN Risk Management personnel. Ergonomic assessment evaluations are handled both internally and by an external contractor. Limited funds for external ergonomic assessments are identified annually through Workers’ Compensation savings. These funds are allocated from the EH&S Department specifically for these purposes.

b. **Ergonomic Furniture Procurement**

Replacement of furniture, keyboards, or other equipment recommended through an ergonomic assessment must be funded by the employee’s department. BCN Risk Management has identified equipment that can be purchased at a reduced cost.

6. **Workplace Violence**

Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. Workplace violence can affect or involve employees, visitors, contractors, and other non-Federal employees. Police Services should be called immediately if there are any acts of workplace violence. If it is an immediate emergency, the employee should dial 911. To report an incident after the fact, contact Police Services at 784-4013. The University Administrative Manual Policy 2,040: University Workplace Violence Prevention Policy located at the following hyperlink fully describes the program: [http://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/2000–2999–personnel/general–personnel–policies/2040–university–workplace–violence–prevention–policy](http://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/2000–2999–personnel/general–personnel–policies/2040–university–workplace–violence–prevention–policy)

7. **Indoor Air Quality Investigations**

Indoor air quality concerns can range from unpleasant odors, to conditions that cannot be detected but which result in an uncomfortable or unhealthful condition in the workplace. These incidents can be reported to EH&S via the main number at 327-5040. Incidents are generally referred to the EH&S Industrial Hygienist or another EH&S staff member for immediate investigation. The EH&S Department maintains a variety of direct-reading and accumulative sampling equipment to use in these investigations. The EH&S department tracks these concerns via our incident reporting system and follows them to ensure resolution of each complaint. On an as-needed basis other campus units (e.g. Facilities Maintenance) are brought in to assist with resolution of an air quality concern.