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Summer is here, which also means Hurricane Season is here. Whether you are a Florida native or not, preparing for the summer and hurricanes is essential. Stay safe and have fun by staying hydrated, wearing UPF protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses, and using sunscreen and mosquito repellent to protect your skin. This newsletter covers upcoming events, summer safety, hurricane preparedness, and safety month!

Newsletter Highlights

- Heads Up For This Month
- Summer Safety
- Get Ahead During the Summer Slowdown
- Hurricane Preparedness

Heads Up For This Month:

- June is National Safety Month; check out the [EH&S website](#) for upcoming events and safety tips.
- This month's Safety Shoutout goes to the **Aquarius Team!** Check out the [Safety Shoutout](#) and consider nominating someone or a group by emailing ehs@fiu.edu!
- The [Laboratory Self Audit \(LSA\)](#) is an online self-inspection for the laboratory community to instill a safety culture. The LSA is set to open in August and close at the end of October (closing an entire month earlier this year). Be sure to keep a lookout for more information!

Summer Safety

In 2023, summer begins on June 21st and ends on September 22nd. Heat-related illnesses can pose significant risks to individuals as we see increases in temperatures and humidity. It is crucial to raise awareness about these conditions to ensure the health and safety of the university community. Here are five heat-related illnesses and some crucial tips for dealing with them.

- **Heat Rash:** Heat rash, also known as prickly heat, is characterized by small red bumps or blisters on the skin due to blocked sweat ducts. To alleviate symptoms, affected individuals should move to a cooler environment, keep the affected area dry, wear loose clothing, and use over-the-counter creams or ointments to soothe the skin.
- **Sunburn:** Sunburn occurs when the skin is overexposed to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation. If sunburned, individuals should move indoors or seek shade immediately. They should apply cool compresses to affected areas, use moisturizers or aloe vera gel, take over-the-counter pain relievers if needed, and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- **Heat Cramps:** Heat cramps result from dehydration and electrolyte imbalances due to excessive sweating. Individuals experiencing heat cramps should move to a cooler area, rest, and gently stretch the affected muscles. Rehydration with water or sports drinks containing electrolytes is essential. If symptoms persist or worsen, medical attention may be necessary.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** Heat exhaustion is characterized by heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and headache. Immediate actions include moving to a cooler area, loosening clothing, drinking cool fluids, and applying cool compresses. Resting in a comfortable position and seeking medical assistance if symptoms worsen or do not improve within 60 minutes is crucial.
- **Heat Stroke:** Heat stroke is a severe, life-threatening condition requiring immediate medical attention. Symptoms include high body temperature, confusion, loss of consciousness, seizures, and hot, dry skin. Call emergency services and take immediate steps to cool the person down, such as moving them to a shaded area, applying cool water or ice packs, and fanning their body until medical help arrives.

It is important to remember that prevention is vital in combating heat-related illnesses. Staying hydrated, wearing appropriate clothing, seeking shade, and avoiding excessive sun exposure are vital measures to protect oneself from these conditions.

Get Ahead During the Summer Slowdown

Take advantage of the summer slowdown by using this time to conduct laboratory inventory, establish and follow safety protocols, and update and document EH&S safety and on-the-job trainings.

Inventories:

- Review the chemicals in your space to ensure the chemicals, storage locations, volumes, and quantities are correct for the Chemical inventory.
 - Before restocking chemicals, consider switching some more hazardous chemicals with greener alternatives.
- Review the refrigerator and freezer inventories by ensuring the inventory is posted outside the refrigerator/freezer and all the samples within are labeled appropriately.
 - If you need to dispose of biohazardous materials, request a Biohazardous Waste Disposal, which can be set on a schedule or a one-time pick-up, found here: <https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=988549>
- Request a Hazardous Waste Pick-up Request here: <https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=1106186>
 - Also, consider a Hazardous Waste Pick-Up Request for both old/expired chemicals and unused/unexpired chemicals.



Administrative Controls:

- Check and restrict card swipe access or key access to your space.
- Conduct a visual inspection of the space, remove excessive clutter, and report any issues (like missing ceiling tiles, wall perforations, leaks, etc.) to the Department of Facilities Management.
- Ensure all space occupants have covered limbs and closed shoes, even in the summer!

Training Requirements:

- Ensure everyone in the space has received On-The-Job Training by the supervisor and completed all necessary EH&S Safety Training; review the EH&S [Laboratory Training Matrix](#) or the EH&S [General Training Matrix](#) to determine which training is required based on the hazards or operations of the space.
- Ensure the records of all the required EH&S Safety Training Certificates for all the occupants are kept in the space. The best practice is to have a training records binder with a divider for each space occupant or a digital copy with the same information. Either way, the training records must be easily furnished upon request.

Hurricane Preparedness

The FIU Department of Emergency Management covers hurricane preparedness essentials like preparing before, during, and after a hurricane and emergency preparedness kits. Check out their website here: <https://dem.fiu.edu/emergencies/hazardous-weather/hurricanes/>.

For additional resources, check out the [Miami-Dade County 2023 Hurricane Guide](#), which discusses preparing before a hurricane's landfall, being ready during a hurricane, cautionary measures after a hurricane, storm surge planning zone, and much more.

Hurricane Preparedness for the Laboratory Community

Preparedness includes thinking ahead to identify hazards and potential threats, mitigating them, and creating safeguards or administrative controls to limit hazardous situations and protect all space occupants.

All FIU laboratories must create, annually review, update as needed, post, and provide emergency procedures to all space occupants. Below are the four (4) basic emergency procedures required for each FIU laboratory:

- **Emergency Hazardous Spill Procedures:** these procedures should be specific to each space and its hazards. It should include details on how to contain the hazard, clean up the spill using the spill kits (including the locations of the spill kits), and how to report the minor spill to the supervisor.
- **Emergency Incident/Injury Procedures:** these mandatory procedures must include a detailed description of how to respond to an incident or injury, including seeking medical help, reporting to a supervisor, and workers' compensation procedures.
- **Emergency Evacuation Procedures:** these procedures are geared toward immediately securing hazards and stopping operations so that space occupants evacuate the space instantly while reducing additional hazardous conditions. This procedure should be straight to the point, minimal, and paired down to what is absolutely necessary.
- **Emergency Shutdown Procedures:** these procedures are for an impending threat (not imminent), more specifically, when there is time to shut down and not an imminent threat. The procedures should include securing hazards, shutting down equipment, and stopping all operations.

For more information, review EH&S's FIU Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines for Lab Areas found here: <https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/lab-safety/hurricane-preparedness-guidelines-lab.pdf>.



Visit the EH&S Laboratory Safety webpage for more information, found [here](#).

Reach out with any questions or concerns: ehs@fiu.edu.