December 2023

Florida International University | Department of Environmental Health & Safety | eh.s.fiu.edu

As this end of the fall semester approaches, EH&S would like to take a moment to wish you all a happy holiday season and a happy new year! It’s important to enjoy the last part of 2023, but let’s make sure we will do so safely. Whether you are celebrating at home or on the go,make sure you know the Laboratory Self Audit, upcoming emergency wash unit inspections, and ways to prepare for laboratory inspections throughout the year. Safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Highlights

- Heads Up For This Month
- Upcoming Emergency Wash Unit Inspections
- Be Prepared for Laboratory Safety Inspections

EH&S (Environmental Health and Safety) is currently reviewing the data collected during the 2023 Laboratory Self Audit (LSA) to identify areas of improvement and reduce systematic compliance gaps. To achieve this, EH&S conducts laboratory inspections periodically throughout the year. Staying organized and complying with all safety regulations is imperative to ensure a safe working and learning environment. Here are some tips to always be prepared.

Be Prepared for Laboratory Safety Inspections

1. First Aid kits had the highest failure point because they were either not present, restocked, or checked annually.
2. The next high failure point is not having an accurate chemical inventory reflected in EH&S’s Chemical Inventory System. If you do not have access to the system or need assistance in navigating the system, please get in touch with the Chemical Safety Officer, Margarita Holguin. PremierStreetSuite131@fiu.edu. EH&S must provide evidence that all hazards and chemicals are accurately inventoried and that the safety of personnel has access to this information.
3. Additional EH&S training records for all space occupants must be easily accessible in the space by everyone in the space. EH&S requires that these records are electronically or physically posted. If the records are electronic, everyone in the space must be able to furnish them upon request.
4. The LSA data shows that the top five failure points are:
   - Ensuring all space occupants have the EH&S safety trainings completed before commencing work in the space. The required trainings depend on the hazards found in the space and have different expiration dates (some must be conducted annually, while others every three years). Regardless of the level of interaction all space occupants must complete the required trainings based on the hazards found in the space. Check out the data reports published annually on the LSA webpage: https://lsa.fiu.edu/report/index.html.
   - Ensuring hazards and chemicals are stored in compatible containers and contained so as not to expose hazards to all space occupants.
   - Ensuring all hazards and chemicals are inventoried and labeled. All chemicals must be accurately inventoried and provide a precise list of chemicals per location. In the event of an emergency, it is crucial for the safety of emergency personnel to have access to this information.
   - Ensuring the EH&S Emergency Signage, placed outside the door, is updated annually to accurately reflect all hazards in the space. In the event of an emergency, emergency personnel to have access to this information.
   - Remember, your primary means of safety is reducing risk by eliminating potential splash and spill incidents.
5. The third-highest failure point is ensuring lab coats are worn when interacting with hazardous materials.
6. The fourth-highest failure point is ensuring lab coats are worn when interacting with hazardous materials.
7. The fifth-highest failure point is not having spill kits for all the hazards in the space, not annually checking the spill kits, or not replenishing/restocking spill kits on demand.

Be Prepared for Laboratory Safety Inspections

Upcoming Emergency Wash Unit Inspections

In the first quarter of 2024, EH&S will conduct the annual inspections of emergency wash units, including safety showers, eye washes, squeeze bottles, gravity eye washes, and more. They are designed to provide a means of washing or rinsing your eyes or body to wash or flush away hazardous substances that accidentally come into contact with the skin or eyes. Safety showers, eye washes, squeeze bottles, gravity eye washes, and more. They are designed to provide a means of washing or rinsing your eyes or body to wash or flush away hazardous substances that accidentally come into contact with the skin or eyes.

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