

EH&S Newsletter_April_2024 Written

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Don't Be A Fool, Be Safe!

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to April, the month on the cusp of Florida's rainy and summer season, where we celebrate Earth Day! Earth Day, celebrated annually on April 22nd, originated in 1970 as a unified effort to raise awareness about environmental issues and advocate for sustainable practices worldwide. Take the challenge of assessing your everyday practices and modifying or exchanging them for more sustainable practices. This newsletter briefly overviews the Emergency and Standard Procedures requirements, the Hotwork Permitting Process, and how to prepare for the upcoming fume hood certifications, including best practices.

HEADS UP FOR THIS MONTH

- Happy Earth Day! We celebrate the 54th Earthday since its inception.
- EH&S will be tabling at the Sustainability Fair on April 4th. Join us from 10 AM to 2 PM, get some goodies, and learn more about sustainable practices!
- April's Safety Shoutout goes to Maria Rojas, a laboratory manager in the Biology Department! Check out her EH&S' [Safety Shoutout feature](#).

Consider nominating someone or a group for EH&S' Safety Shoutout by emailing ehs@fiu.edu!

Emergency and Routine Procedures: Know the difference; it is Mandatory!

Established Emergency and Standard Procedures are required for operations that involve special hazardous materials. EH&S emphasizes the importance of being prepared and adopting a proactive approach to safeguarding the health and safety of the FIU community. It is imperative to understand the

differences between them and their requirements. Below are the requirements and descriptions of the necessary documents.

Requirements:

- All procedures must be established before starting operations, updated as necessary, and before introducing equipment, materials, or hazards.
- Regardless of their interaction level, every occupant in the space must receive, review, and acknowledge these procedures annually.
- EH&S strongly recommends a hands-on walkthrough of these procedures and implementing an annual acknowledgment form to ensure understanding.
- Everyone in the space must always have access to this information.
- The following Emergency Procedures must be physically displayed in the space: Emergency Spill Procedures, Emergency Incident/Injury Procedures, and Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Instructions for routine operations or for interacting with equipment, materials, and hazards. Their importance lies in ensuring consistency, quality control, compliance with regulations, and process streamlining, leading to increased productivity and reduced errors. Must be distributed to all space occupants (electronically or physically).

<https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/chemical/chemical-hygiene-plan.pdf#page=5>

Emergency Hazardous Spill Procedures: These instructions provide directions on the safe and effective response to minor accidental releases of hazardous materials. They outline steps for containment and cleanup to minimize risks to human health, the environment, and property. They should dictate how to identify a minor or significant spill and what to do in either scenario. The procedures must be displayed in the space and distributed to all occupants (electronically or physically). They are only applicable to spaces with special hazardous materials.

<https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/environmental-compliance/spill-response-procedure.pdf>

Emergency Incident/Injury Procedures: Protocols for the immediate response to accidents, injuries, or other emergencies. They outline steps for identifying if it is a minor or major incident, providing first aid, locating the nearest lifesaving equipment/ materials, contacting emergency services, and managing the situation until professional assistance arrives. Their importance lies in ensuring prompt and effective responses to mitigate harm and aid those affected. They must be displayed in the space and distributed to all space occupants (electronically or physically).

<https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/resources/emergency-incident-or-injury-procedures-template.docx>

Emergency Evacuation Procedures: Aimed at swiftly evacuating occupants during rapid on-set emergencies (e.g., fires, gas leaks, etc.). They provide specific steps for evacuation routes, assembly points, and, if possible, quick containment measures to minimize uncontained hazards. Their importance lies in safeguarding lives, removing individuals from danger, and protecting first responders from additional hazards if possible. Must be displayed in the space and distributed to all occupants (electronically or physically).

<https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/fire/evacuation-procedure/index.html>

Shutdown Procedures: Instructions for safely shutting down operations and equipment, securing hazards, and halting all activities when there is sufficient time (i.e., hurricane, scheduled maintenance, etc.). Their importance lies in ensuring the orderly and safe cessation of operations, minimizing damage to equipment and resources, and protecting personnel and the environment from potential hazards. Must be distributed to all space occupants (electronically or physically).

<https://ehs.fiu.edu/assets/docs/lab-safety/ehs-doc611.00-emergency-shutdown-guidelines-2020.12.21.pdf>

IMPORTANT! *It is not mandatory to adhere to a particular template when developing these procedures for your operations. EH&S does provide template guides to help you brainstorm ideas and consider various aspects of your operations. You can use the information provided as a reference, but it is essential to customize it to suit your specific circumstances.*

Hot Work and Permitting: What You Should Know

Hot work is any operation involving burning, welding, or similar operations capable of initiating fires or explosions; it includes operations with open flames or operations producing heat/sparks. There are many types of hot work, including but not limited to welding, cutting, grinding, brazing, gas-powered soldering, torch cutting, flame heating, metal casting, and the use of bunsen burners (excluding electric soldering).

At FIU, hot work is allowed, but only with a hot work permit or within a designated area (to designate the area, a permit must be submitted). Hot Work Permits can be issued per use or by project length, depending on circumstances. Before purchasing equipment and materials or beginning operations, contact the Fire Prevention Office through ehs@fiu.edu.

Remember, hot work safety is crucial to prevent fires and protect workers. Safety precautions and training are essential to minimize risks.

Before commencing hot work operations

- Contact the Fire Prevention Office through ehs@fiu.edu
- Complete the Hot Work Training found in develop.fiu.edu
- Fill out the Hotwork Permit Application (Must be submitted five work days before the start date) found here: <https://ehs.fiu.edu/safety-programs/fire/guidelines-permits/index.html>
- Submit the request by email to: ehs@fiu.edu
- Then, the Fire Prevention Office will conduct a site inspection to issue a Hot Work Permit.
- Upon approval, the Fire Prevention Office will discuss the conditions required to conduct the hot work with the requestor.

Upcoming Chemical Fume Hood Certifications

The 2024 Annual Chemical Fume Hood Certifications will occur in April and May.

To prepare for the certification, take the following precautions:

- Clear and clean the fume hood; limit the items, materials, and equipment within the fume hood.
- If operations cannot be stopped, place a notice on the fume hood, contact Facilities Management, and notify EH&S.
 - Please note that this can delay the certification of the unit.
- The certification process takes approximately 15 minutes. The certifications start at 8:00 AM and finish at 5:00 PM.

Contact the Department of Facilities Management or place a work order if:

- Your fume hood has not been certified within the past year
- Your fume hood fails the annual certification
- You have an issue with the fume hood alarm, sash, outlets, valves, etc.

Review EH&S's "Guidelines For The Safe Use Of" on the EH&S website for more information.

<https://ehs.fiu.edu> > Click on the "Safety Programs" Tabs > Select the Laboratory Link, and Open the "Fume Hood Use Guidelines" link.