



Weill Cornell Medical College

EHS News

Spotting Electrical Hazards

Electrical hazards have the potential to cause fire and personal injury. It is important that everyone be aware of the electrical hazards and take precautions to keep themselves and their co-workers safe. The following are some common electrical hazards and safe work practices:

- **Overloaded Outlets:** Overloading circuits and extension cords can result in a fire. Avoid using several power strips on the same outlet and never plug one power strip into another to gain more outlet space.
- **Damaged or Defective Extension Cords:** Extension cords that have damaged insulation or exposed wires, can cause a short circuit and have the potential to electrocute. Routinely inspect cords and always replace damaged cords.
- **Electrical Cords Across Walkways and Work Areas:** Extension cords are only to be used on a temporary basis. Cords must not be run through walls or under doorways, and must be able to be visually inspected. When using extension cords, avoid running them across walkways which pose a tripping hazard and can cause damage to the cord insulation. When it is unavoidable to run a cord across a walkway, tape the cord down or purchase a cord runner.
- **Working on "Live Equipment":** Always disconnect electrical equipment and machinery before cleaning, adjusting, or servicing the equipment in any way, and always follow the manufacturers instructions. Never attempt electrical repairs on equipment yourself.



Working Safely with Machinery and Tools

Machine tools and equipment such as drills, grinders, buffers, mixers, and saws pose serious hazards to users if operated incorrectly. All users must be properly trained before operating this type of equipment. EHS is currently working with laboratories, clinics, shops, and other areas to inventory and develop safe work procedures. WCMC departments utilizing machine tools and equipment should contact EHS to review their specific installations and receive assistance in complying with all safety and regulatory requirements.

An EHS Update has been developed to provide guidance to users and supervisors of machine tools and equipment. The update is available on the EHS website:

<http://weill.cornell.edu/ehs/updates/PhysHaz.pdf>

Chemical Inventory Update

Thank you for the time and effort spent by students, faculty and staff in locations storing chemicals to ensure all chemical inventories were updated for 2010. This was the first year the streamlined submission process using ChemTracker was used to process all chemical inventories. WCMC EHS has submitted the various chemical inventory regulatory reports as part of the annual submission process, and they were all accepted. The inventory includes over 50,000 chemicals in 25 buildings for more than 200 chemical owners. The information is used by FDNY and others when responding to emergencies in our buildings. More information about ChemTracker is available online at:

<http://weill.cornell.edu/ehs/updates/ChemTracker.pdf>

Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC) is required to maintain an inventory of all hazardous chemicals and report annually on the types, quantities and storage/use locations at WCMC. Reporting must be made in compliance with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, NYC Fire Department, and US Environmental Protection Agency Community-Right-to-Know requirements as well as US Department of Homeland Security Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism regulations. The inventories provide government agencies with information to plan for potential chemical releases and be aware of hazards present during emergency response activities.

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection has greatly increased their inspection program and now visits our buildings on a regular basis to verify chemical inventories. These and any other EHS-related inspectors should always be accompanied by EHS. If you find an inspector in your area not with an EHS representative, please call 646-962-7233 immediately. The inspectors will look for chemicals in the area being inspected and compare them to that area's inventory. Thus far, we have not been issued any violations during these inspections. This is another example of the great effort put into the inventories by your staff.

Current newsletter available electronically at:
<http://weill.cornell.edu/ehs/news>

646-962-7233 (1-7233)
 ehs@med.cornell.edu

2010 – EHS Annual Report

Last year brought many exciting opportunities for EHS to work with the WCMC community to improve the overall health and safety of the College. We'd like to take this opportunity to share some of top achievements of 2010.

Do you have suggestions on areas where EHS can improve? Email EHS at ehs@med.cornell.edu.

Emergency Planning

- Implemented the Emergency Management Tool which is a web-based emergency planning tool. There are **100** completed department plans.
- Hosted a desktop emergency exercise drill in July attended by representatives from all WCMC departments.

Fire Safety

- Coordinated the annual and semi-annual inspection and testing of:
 - ❖ **13** fire alarm control panels
 - ❖ **16** fire suppression systems
 - ❖ **6,100** devices (e.g., smoke detectors)
- Developed a new inspection, testing and maintenance program for fire alarm systems to comply with the new NYC Fire Code and National Fire Protection Association Standards.
- Maintained an inventory of **1,160** Fire Extinguishers.
- Issued **517** permits to contractors welding or doing work that could affect the fire alarm.



Waste Disposal

- Implemented a Laboratory Cleanout Program to help laboratories dispose of **50,000** old/unused chemicals.
- Hazardous Waste: Received **762** collection requests to collect **7,045** containers (19.25 tons) within an average of **1.5** days of submittal.
- Biological (Sharps) Waste:
 - ❖ Labs: Received **1,184** collection requests to collect **9,699** sharps containers (94.5 tons).
 - ❖ Clinics: Collected **2,932** sharps containers (12.25 tons).
 - ❖ Reusable sharps containers (provided by EHS), saved **\$379,000** and prevented **37,900** lbs of plastic from going into landfills.
- Universal Waste:
 - ❖ Recycled **3,639** lbs of florescent lamps/bulbs
 - ❖ Recycled **164** computer monitors
 - ❖ Recycled **86** computer CPU's
- Recycled **10** mercury thermometers.



Customer Service

- Responded to over **501** calls requesting immediate assistance, some of which included: indoor air quality assessments, chemical spills, chemical hoods repairs, biological waste issues, and construction safety concerns.
- Replied to **2,068** emails to ehs@med.cornell.edu requesting general information and / or assistance.
- Investigated **161** employee and student accidents and provided accident prevention recommendations.

Construction Safety

- Performed **252** Construction Site inspections and ensured **100%** of construction safety issues were resolved.
- Reviewed **27** design drawings for new constructions projects at WCMC.
- Coordinated **18** pre-occupancy safety inspections of newly constructed / renovated spaces.

Laboratory Safety

- Coordinated **236** FDNY lab inspections for over **702** lab rooms and ensured **100%** resolution of violations.
- Provided **192** educational sessions on the [ChemTracker Chemical Inventory System](#). By the end of 2010, ChemTracker was utilized by **91** Principle Investigators, **503** users and contained **~50,000** chemicals.
- Performed **455** chemical hood surveys.
- Performed **264** safety shower surveys.
- Posted **123** Health and Safety Door Signs.
- Reviewed and approved **98** Research Safety Checklists.

EHS Safety Training Program

- Collaborated with NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) to include Bloodborne Pathogens Training in the NYP Annual Safety Training which greatly assists physicians and nurses in staying compliant with safety training requirements.
- Coordinated MRI Safety Training and clearance for **128** WCMC staff members.
- Provided over **50** small group trainings to Departments, Divisions, and units that were tailored to address the specific safety issues of each group.
- Provided over **76** regularly scheduled instructor-led safety trainings.

Biological Safety

- Reviewed **307** Biohazard and research Proposals.
- Conducted **104** risk assessments for research involving biological or chemical use with animals.
- Investigated and provided accident prevention assistance to **53** employees and students who had a needle stick injury.



General Safety and Administrative

- Performed **45** hazard assessments for WCMC support staff.
- Performed **74** mechanical equipment room safety audits.
- Received **62,406** visitors and a total of **1,288,524** hits to <http://weill.cornell.edu/ehs>.
- Distributed **557** Material Safety Data Sheets.