



# Safety Talks

SPRING/SUMMER ISSUE 09



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We're also on the web:

[www.odu.edu/af/ehs](http://www.odu.edu/af/ehs)

## Radioactive Waste Disposal

The majority of radioactive waste generated on campus is composed of solid, liquid, and liquid scintillation vials. In each case the main waste stream is created in the laboratory where it was designated for radioactive usage per authorized approval of the Radiation Safety Committee.

Waste is segregated by radionuclide and type to facilitate disposal by effective measures. This means that long and short half life material needs to be kept in separate containers for solid and liquid forms of these radioisotopes. It is recommended that liquid waste be placed in a one gallon, wide mouth, poly bottle with a screw cap to reduce breaking and splashing during waste pickup and removal. Solid waste is recommended to be placed in appropriate containers lined with clear poly bags. Do not mix solid and liquid waste because of the different ways radioactive waste is managed.

All waste whether liquid or solid should be labeled properly. Each waste container must be labeled to indicate the radioisotope, activity, and date activity was identified on the radioactive waste request form (RSO-50).

To determine the solid waste subtract the difference of initial activity in the experiment and the liquid waste activity. Associated expenses with solid radioactive waste removal offsite have increased tremendously.

Mixed waste contains both a hazardous waste component and a radioactive component. Other nonhazardous options should be considered to reduce unnecessary disposal costs.

For questions or concerns regarding radioactive materials or laser safety, please contact:

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## Upcoming Events

**April 21, 2009**

**ODU Earth Day**

North Mall - Webb Center 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.

[www.odu.edu/af/ehs/about/earthday.shtml](http://www.odu.edu/af/ehs/about/earthday.shtml)

**June 2009**

**National Safety Month**

[www.nsc.com](http://www.nsc.com)

**June 2009**

**Home Safety Month**

[www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org)

## What's New

New Task Force Means Changes in Store for OSHA.

One of the goals for President Barack Obama's "White House Task Force on Working Families," which is being chaired by Vice President Joe Biden, will be restoring labor standards, including workplace safety.

This increased focus on workplace safety could mean significant changes in OSHA's regulations, policies and compliance enforcement efforts.

It's that time of year again! The birds are singing, the temperature is rising. People are wearing shorts and sandals. **WHAT!!! Shorts and sandals! Not in the lab, we hope.**

**EH&S wants to remind everyone to wear appropriate clothing and shoes while working in the lab. If you wear shorts or a short skirt or dress, wear a lab coat that goes below the knees. Sandals, however, must never be worn in the lab! Spilled chemicals, broken glass or dropped items can lead to a serious injury. Leave a pair of sneakers or other full covering shoes in your lab so you can comply with the recommended safe practices. A little forethought can prevent a lot of headaches, or foot aches in this case!**

## Spring Cleaning the Safe Way

Chores like re-organizing closets and tackling a thorough spring cleaning can put families at even greater risks for falls and poisonings – the two leading causes of home injury in America. The Home Safety Council urges families to keep safe practices in mind while cleaning up and cleaning out your home, garage and yard.

- Always keep stairs, steps, landings and all floors clear of toys and clutter.
- When cleaning walls and ceilings, use the opportunity to replace burned out light bulbs with bright lights over stairs and steps.
- Carry loads you can see over, and keep one hand free to hold banisters and railings.
- Safely tuck telephone and electrical cords out of walkways.
- Keep children away from anyone cleaning windows. Shut upper windows and promptly replace any removed window guards.
- When washing window blinds, check that cords are stored up high, out of a child's reach.
- If you need to climb, always use a ladder.
- When using a ladder, stand at or below the highest safe standing level. For a stepladder, the safe standing level is the second rung from the top, and for an extension ladder, it's the fourth rung from the top.
- Before using a ladder, make sure the rungs

are dry and the ladder is securely positioned on a flat surface.

- Follow product label safety recommendations, like wearing gloves and masks, when using harsh products.
- Do not mix household cleaning products together because their contents could react with dangerous results.
- Carefully read the labels on all products and medications and separate those that say "Caution," "Warning," "Danger" or "Poison." Lock these products up and out of sight and reach of young children.
- Empty buckets after use. Store them turned over or upside down.

Home Safety Council, article P005.



<http://www.homesafetycouncil.org>

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## Have You Checked Your Eyewash Lately?



According to ANSI standards, plumbed eyewash units should be tested weekly to ensure that they are operating properly. Here at ODU, the laboratory or area supervisor is responsible to ensure that this weekly test is performed. This helps to clear the line of any sediment build-up that could prevent fluid from being delivered to the head of the device and minimizes microbial contamination due to standing water.

Nozzles should be capped to protect from airborne contaminants. If you run your eyewash unit and find that the water flow to the nozzle heads needs to be adjusted (e.g., the flow is too low, or one nozzle gets no water while another gets too much), please contact Facilities Management to have the flow adjusted or problem fixed.

## How much material in a fume hood is too much?

You should keep the absolute minimum of material necessary to conduct your procedure in your fume hood. This will ensure that your fume hood can effectively capture and exhaust chemical fumes generated in the fume hood. While your hood may pass certification, this does not assure that it's protecting you from chemical fumes adequately because the hood's function can be disrupted by the way it is used.

Bottom line:

Do not use a fume hood for chemical storage and remove excess equipment while it is being used.

**EH&S  
FAQS**