Environmental Health and Safety Annual Report

FY 2016

“A healthy and safe campus is everyone’s responsibility. Each of us needs to be aware of potential hazards in our workplace. Be an active participant: read safety signs, attend training, join a safety committee and promote a positive safety culture on campus.”

—Chancellor J. Keith Motley
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Welcome

We are pleased to present the Environmental Health and Safety Annual Report for FY 2016 covering July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This was a productive year for the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) at the University of Massachusetts Boston thanks to the collective efforts of students, faculty and staff.

In particular, we developed a new Environmental Management System that allows us to take a more organized approach to setting priorities and establishing specific goals that we can carefully track. In April OEHS took over the receipt, delivery and tracking of all laboratory chemicals on campus. We also initiated an online safety training program that promises to offer over a dozen courses to the entire university community.

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) works to maintain a healthy and safe campus for the entire university community. We promote the protection of our beautiful environment so that we can all fully enjoy our unique waterfront campus.

We provide services in four areas: environmental protection, fire and life safety, laboratory safety and worker and campus safety. OEHS also provides a wide range of education and training programs.

We would like to thank all the departments and individuals who have supported OEHS in particular Ellen O’Connor, Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance and Darryl Mayers, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Contracts and Compliance.

Let’s all be safe out there!

Peter Schneider
Director, OEHS
An “EMS” is a systematic approach to environmental performance. Components include assigned responsibility, written policies, training, corrective action and senior management review.

Environmental Management Systems

**Developed Environmental Management Systems and promoted best practices**

Continued to implement a formal Environmental Management System (EMS) including completion of a 50-page EMS Manual, training, an outside audit and meetings of the Chancellor's EHS Steering Committee.

Continue to support the faculty-led Lab Safety, Biosafety, Radiation Safety Committees to improve effectiveness through Committee Charters, member terms and improved operating procedures.

Conducted face-to-face safety briefings for over 270 new employees during orientation and distributed an EMS flyer to each employee.

In collaboration with an EMS Working Group, goals and objectives were established for five specific areas:

- Soil Management
- Cooling Water
- Laboratory Wastewater
- Laboratory Chemical Management
- Laboratory Hazardous Waste

To learn more about the EMS program, check out the OEHS website www.ehs.umb.edu
Safety in Laboratories

Promoting a culture of safety especially in laboratories

In April OEHS took over the distribution and tracking of laboratory chemicals for all departments. In FY2016, OEHS accepted delivery of 1,000 packages and bar-coded and delivered 850 containers.

Waste management continues to be an important service to both research and teaching labs. In FY 2016 OEHS made 240 waste pickups in labs and shipped waste offsite for proper disposal. We also shipped 54 boxes of biological waste and 11 drums of broken laboratory glass offsite.

This year we evaluated our laser safety program and completed a detailed inventory of more than 20 lasers on campus and updated the state registration.

The lab coat program has become very popular and grown dramatically this year. More than 350 researchers were provided custom lab coats to promote safety and professional lab practice.

Inspecting and sampling are core activities of the program. In FY 2016 OEHS conducted more than 40 comprehensive IPad lab inspections to support self-inspection activities and 650 inspections of local waste areas and building wastewater systems.

OEHS successfully moved chemicals into University Hall and set up Chemistry teaching labs and art studios.

We continue to conduct face-to-face training with 20 classroom lab safety classes for 175 individuals.
OEHS is responsible for obtaining and maintaining over two dozen environmental permits and approvals involving virtually all construction and renovation activities as well as ongoing operations.

Environmental Protection

Protecting the environment and complying with all regulatory requirements

OEHS manages a wide variety of environmental programs including waste management, pollution prevention and storm water management. OEHS works with many environmental health and safety regulatory agencies particularly the US EPA, the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection and the Mass. Water Resource Authority.

Working closely with the Facilities Department, OEHS successfully led the negotiations with Mass Department of Environmental Protection regarding the management of soil containing asbestos.

Obtained environmental permits or approvals for the Bayside demolition project and the Fox Points Dock Upgrade. Supporting the wetlands appeal filed on Bayside parking lot development project. Initiated permit preparation for the new residential facility, parking garage and energy producing facility.

This year we fully complied with two Consent Agreements, met all deadlines and managed contractor activities including the multi-year Salt Water Pump House Fish Study required by EPA. Fish counts are taken daily and the impact on aquatic life is being carefully monitored.
By the Numbers

OEHS issued more than 170 hot works permits up from 85 last year.

40 Fire Safety building Assessments were conducted with 277 action items corrected.

Fire Prevention and Life Safety

Continuing to Promote Fire Prevention and Life Safety

The fire prevention and life safety program continues to be very active. This year we issued twice as many hot works permits as last year. Fire Safety Building Assessments are conducted on a weekly basis and all findings are promptly addressed.

Fire drills and building evacuations are a top priority. In FY 2016 OEHS planned and conducted 27 building fire drills. For each drill we record the evacuation time and any barriers or issues that need attention. We coordinate the Fire Safety Volunteer Program which has now grown to 140 volunteers. We also completed and/or updated six Building Evacuation Plans. Each plan is developed in collaboration with building occupants and key departments on campus including the Department of Public Safety and the Office of Emergency Management and Business Continuity.

Our hands-on laser portable fire extinguisher training continues to be popular especially with students. In FY 2016 we conducted fire extinguisher training for 150 individuals on campus.

During the year OEHS issues periodic safety alerts which are posted on our website and throughout campus including on the shuttle buses.
By the Numbers

OEHS responded to over 80 indoor air quality complaints and conducted 28 IAQ investigations.

Protect Workers and Promote Campus Safety

OEHS uses a customer-oriented approach in working with the campus community especially with Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) complaints. This year we responded to numerous complaints and conducted over two dozen investigations involving water intrusion, mold, asbestos and IAQ concerns. In each case we worked with the Facilities Department and the building occupants to identify and correct problems.

It is important that employees have a properly arranged workstation in order to minimize injuries and increase productivity. This year OEHS conducted 24 ergonomic assessments for employees working with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion when appropriate and made recommendations for new chairs, keyboards or other ergonomic equipment.

Although there are very few asbestos abatement projects undertaken on campus, it is none the less an important health concern. OEHS managed 6 asbestos abatement projects in FY 2016. Each project is carefully managed to protect the workers and building occupants and meet all regulatory requirements.

OEHS investigates accidents and injuries to determine the root cause and future preventive measures. Last year we investigated 10 incidents and tracked corrective actions. These investigations also help determine the focus of future programs.

Drones or unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) are appearing on campuses throughout the U.S. and are being used for many purposes including teaching and research. Our harbor campus is directly below the Logan Airport flight path which raises unique safety issue. OEHS has been working with other colleges and universities to develop policies that will support teaching and research in a safe and compliant manner.
We are dedicated to promoting best practices that support teaching and research.

Education and Training

**Building an online safety training programs**

Joined the Online Training Association which has three customized online courses (Lab Safety, Radiation Safety and Laser Safety) developed specifically by and for higher education. There are also 10 general safety courses that will be available to the entire university community.

OEHS is piloting the online program with the Physics Department to refine the Learning Management System with a fall 2016 campus-wide launch date.

Emergency Response

OEHS is available 24/7 if you have a safety or environmental incident including oil or gas spills, lab incidents or injuries on campus.

Looking Ahead

**Next year we have some exciting plans:**

- Finalize a university EHS Management Policy that clarifies roles and responsibilities
- Expand the Management System to incorporate health and safety issues as well as environmental issues.
- Launch the online safety program university-wide offering more than a dozen course to students, faculty and staff including lab safety, fire safety and distracted drivers.
- Launch a new Incident Alert system that provides all key departments with prompt notice when an incident occurs on campus.
- Launch the on-line chemical management system providing researchers and faculty with access to their inventories.
OEHS Staff and Resources

Staff

Peter Schneider, Director
Zehra Schneider Graham, Deputy Director
John Dembrowsky, Associate Director
Lalitha Adusumilli, Assistant Director
John Meyer, Hazardous Material Technician
Debra Gursha, Fire Safety Officer
Mohammad Gandhi, EHS Technician
Kathy Evelyn, Office Manager

OEHS Website

The OEHS website is a rich source of information on many topics and includes information on building Evacuation Plans, a Guide to Lab Drain Disposal, soil management references, Fire Safety Tip Sheets and Laboratory Safety Fact Sheets. We also have a section inviting comments and suggestions. Check it out at: www.ehs.umb.edu