

**THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Environmental Health and Safety**

Date: September 23, 2008  
To: Safety Council Minutes  
Subject: Minutes of Meeting – September 17, 2008

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Ms. Claver called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**II. WELCOME**

A. Ms. Claver welcomed members to the September meeting.

**III. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 16, 2008**

A. The minutes were approved as printed and distributed.

**IV. TOPIC OF THE MONTH**

A. Cliff Lutz, Assistant Director, University Police/Penn State Emergency Manager, gave a presentation on Emergency Management.

**V. ADMINISTRATIVE**

A. The Clean Indoor Act (PA Indoor Smoking) became effective September 11, 2008. Penn State has had a smoking policy since 1989 and is mostly in compliance. Minor issues are under review and once clarified, will be further evaluated for implementation.

B. Policy SY16 - REGULATIONS FOR BICYCLES / MOPEDS / SKATEBOARDS / SCOOTERS / IN-LINE SKATES / ROLLER SKATES / ELECTRIC PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICES is being rolled out. Some of the information available is as follows:

- The main corridor for riding bikes is Curtin, Shortlidge, and Pollock Road.
- There are no riding bicycles on sidewalks.
- Bicycles are not permitted in buildings at any time.

- An evaluation of where bike racks should be located is currently being conducted. If there are any specific areas that you would like bike racks, please contact EHS.
  - An option of having covered buildings for bicycles is being considered.
- C. EHS is in the process of interviewing for two new staff positions. These positions are to help enhance safety programs and to develop training to educate the community and provide tools to identify hazards.
- D. The structure of the Safety Council meetings will change. The meetings will provide hazard awareness training so you will know what hazards are and what to look for in finding these hazards. There will be quarterly fire safety and accident trend analysis reports.
- E. A “Lesson Learned” will be presented by the appropriate EHS Program Manager using standard format, including photos. These lessons learned will continue to give Council members ways to identify hazards.

## **VI. FIRE PREVENTION**

- A. Mr. Triebold provided an update on the Building Evacuation Plan project. Eighty-eight buildings at the University have completed evacuation plans, with the Office of Physical Plant Design Room completing the final floor plans for posting in buildings. In addition to the plans, residence halls also have posted evaluation plans.
- B. Mr. Triebold presented a "Lessons to Learn By" regarding a recent fire that occurred in a lab. The fire developed when water came in contact with an electrical cord connection. The resulting fire caused fire and smoke damage to the lab. The lessons learned include that electrical equipment should not be exposed to water, and that good housekeeping measures used by the lab occupants are always a good practice contributed to a limited fire spread.
- C. Steve reminded Council that “Lessons to Learn By” will be posted on the EHS website and that Safety Officers should use them to present safety messages to individuals within their respective areas. This month’s is attached to these minutes.

## **VII. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY**

- A. Mr. Linsenbigler reviewed PSU injury statistics for the first six months of calendar year 2008. A total of 878 injury reports were filed during this time

period, 48% of which led to some form of medical treatment. Thirty-six of the cases resulted in the employee missing seven or more days of work.

- B. Mr. Foard advised that “OSHA Basics” training is being presented at five of the Commonwealth Campuses. It is a basic training that will provide an overview and awareness of potential hazards and will focus on facility type issues. Additional sessions are planned, as will follow-up sessions be provided.
- C. He asked if Council members would be interested in this training being provided at University Park. Council members are interested and training will be scheduled and the information will be distributed.

### **VIII. MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. Mr. Joe Armstrong, PMA reviewed Worker’s Compensation figures.

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

- A. Ms. Claver adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

### **THE NEXT MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SAFETY COUNCIL WILL BE HELD OCTOBER 15, 2008 AT 9:30 A.M. AT THE HAZMAT BUILDING.**

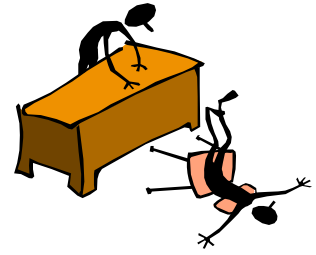
**Members Present:** E. Boeldt, J. Burns, R. Brouse, M. Reynolds for J. Burket, M. Claver, M. Dennis, E. Dobo, S. Foard, K. Frederick, D. Fronk, B. English for T. Griffiths, G. Henry, M. Herbert, L. Holland, B. Holden, Chris Hort, P. Janowiak, C. McGinley, C. Kanour, M. Linsenbigler, J. Lonjin, K. Lumley-Sapanski, J. Williams for P. Peworchik, R. Pruss, S. Koontz for C. Rickards, P. Stanton, D. Ault for R. Stoner, S. Triebold, L. White, D. Will, D. Rose for D. Witmer

**Areas Not Represented:** College of Communications, College of Engineering, College of Health & Human Development, Commonwealth Services, Office of Physical Plant, Huck Institute of the Life Sciences, Military, Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate School

**Guests:** Joe Armstrong, PMA  
Cliff Lutz, University Police

Respectfully submitted, Jill Snook  
Secretary, University Safety Council

JMS/jms  
Attachments



# LESSONS TO LEARN BY

## Lab Fire

### **What Happened?**

A fire ignited in an unoccupied lab causing fire and smoke damage to numerous materials in the lab, including a styrofoam shipping container, equipment replacement parts, lab equipment, and building surfaces.



### **What were the Causes and Contributing Factors?**

The fire originated near the floor by an incubator shaker unit which also had an autoclave located on top. Condensation from the lid of the autoclave dripped onto the incubator unit power cord connection causing an electrical failure (arcing) at the power cord connection which ignited the Styrofoam container.

### **What Corrective Action was Taken?**

Building occupants detected a burning odor and smoke and immediately activated the building fire alarm system. They immediately evacuated the building, and the fire was extinguished using a portable fire extinguisher located in the lab.

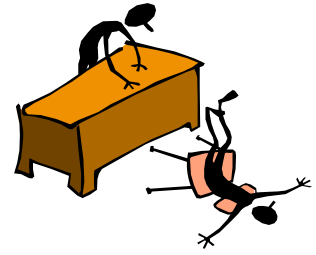
### **How Can Incidents Like This be Prevented?**

Be sure that electrical connections and appliances are not placed in areas where they can be exposed to water. Maintain good storage and housekeeping practices to reduce fire hazards.

Please see the following Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) Information Sheets for further information:

SY-09 Fire Extinguisher Provision: <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/SY09.html>

Emergency Evacuation Plan: <http://www.ehs.psu.edu/occhealth/fire.cfm>



# LESSONS TO LEARN BY

## *Non-Functioning Portable Fire Extinguisher*

### **What Happened?**

During a small fire within a University building an employee attempted to use a portable fire extinguisher that did not operate correctly. The employee then obtained another fire extinguisher and successfully extinguished the fire.

### **What Were the Causes and Contributing Factors?**

The inoperable fire extinguisher had been used briefly several days earlier and returned to its extinguisher cabinet for reuse before it was refilled and serviced. Insufficient pressure remained in the unit to extinguish the fire.

### **What Corrective Action was Taken?**

Ensure that individuals who use any fire extinguisher immediately remove it from service until it is refilled.

### **How Can Incidents Like This be Prevented?**

Immediately remove from service any fire extinguisher that has been used and contact the Fire Extinguisher Crew for servicing. At University Park contact the Work Control Center at 865-4731. At Non-University Park locations, contact the fire extinguisher vendor listed on the extinguisher inspection tag.

Please see the following Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) Information Sheets for further information:

SY09 Fire Extinguisher Provisions: <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/sy09.html>