



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY Newsletter

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

It's time to celebrate again! UF was ranked the No. 1 public university in the nation in the Wall Street Journal's "2024 Best College in the U.S." earlier this week. The Wall Street Journal has been publishing the U.S. College ranking since 2016, based on a comprehensive evaluation of over 1,000 colleges and universities. This achievement acknowledges the university's positive impact on the UF community and reinforces UF leadership in research, innovation, education, and much more.



Recently, the Office of Business Affairs and General Counsel approved and published a new university-wide [EH&S policy](#) to establish health and safety guidelines for all educational, research, and other activities occurring at the University of Florida. This policy endorses the University's safety culture as a top priority and applies to all University faculty, staff, students, contractors, vendors, volunteers, visitors, and guests on or within the University campuses.

Similar to last year, we are also going to celebrate safety events throughout the month of October. Please check the information below for more details. Additionally, this issue covers a wide range of health and safety topics including drone footage after Hurricane Idalia, goats being caught on campus and rehomed, a new AED tracking system, EH&S Fire and Building Codes recognition, the new Chemical Hygiene Plan (CHP) Training, fire extinguisher basics, the updated 15-Passenger Van Training system, and finally, friendly safety reminders.

I would like to thank everyone for preparing the campus for Hurricane Idalia and ensuring that the UF campuses were ready to handle the impact. The EH&S team appreciates your continuous support and efforts in keeping the UF community safe.

Regards,  
Shailendra Singh

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## OCTOBER IS SAFETY MONTH



Did you know that Biosafety Awareness Month, Fire Prevention Week, and National Chemistry Week are all observed in the month of October? To celebrate, Environmental Health & Safety will be hosting a series of events throughout the month of October to raise awareness and promote a strong safety culture at UF. We invite you to stop by our tabling events to meet EH&S staff, learn more about our safety initiatives, and grab some giveaways. Click on the picture above, or scan the QR code, to download a printable schedule.

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## EH&S DRONE FOOTAGE AFTER HURRICANE IDALIA

In the wake of Hurricane Idalia, UF IFAS's Nature Coast Biological Station in Cedar Key was heavily impacted by storm surge flooding and wind damage. IFAS had reached out to EH&S to assist with surveying Cedar Key and Live Oak IFAS locations with our drone to assess the damage. The use of drones can quickly assess the extent of damage to infrastructure, homes, and natural resources. Aerial images and videos captured by drones provide invaluable data for decision-makers, enabling them to prioritize search and rescue efforts, allocate needed resources, survey damages more effectively, and significantly contribute to expedited insurance claims.

John Rouse, Drone Coordinator with EH&S, has traveled throughout the State of Florida and visited all the UF sites to capture images of UF-owned facilities in case a major storm comes through like Hurricane Idalia. In the post-storm recovery efforts, John is also able to return to the affected areas and record images and videos of the damaged facilities. In doing so, his efforts help support pre- and post-documentation when applying for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster recovery aid once a county is declared.

In the world of weather reporting, Jim Cantore from the Weather Channel is a well-known and respected figure. His passion for meteorology and dedication to covering severe weather events has made him a household name. Jim Cantore and a team from the Weather Channel had ridden out the major storm in

an IFAS facility at Cedar Key. They were able to capture and broadcast the storm surge event as it unfolded. The next day, EH&S's John Rouse and Julie Ramsey, with the assistance of UFPD Lt. Scott Summers, while conducting post-storm drone efforts, had the privilege of sharing an exciting encounter with none other than Jim Cantore.



L-R: UFPD Lt. Scott Summers; Julie Ramsey, EH&S; Jim Cantore, *Weather Channel*; John Rouse, EH&S

## HURRICANE UPDATES

# WOULD THE REAL GOAT STEP FORWARD?

Recently, EH&S Pest Management successfully apprehended and relocated two wild goats. The goats had been spotted on campus for several weeks. Despite everyone's best efforts, the nimble duo was able to escape capture and set up residence on top of Dickinson Hall.

A social media frenzy of the two goats was entertaining to watch as they had over 35,000 views. Unfortunately, at times they were "Baaaad," and for both the goats and everyone's safety, they had to be caught and rehomed. Pest management was able to erect a makeshift pen and lure them into it with a watermelon. Who would have ever guessed they had such a sweet tooth? With the help of IFAS, they were happily relocated to a family farm that hopefully grows watermelons.



## CONTACT PEST MANAGEMENT

## COR: A NEW AED TRACKING SYSTEM

EH&S is proud to introduce "COR," a new in-house developed, Automated External Defibrillators (AED) tracking system to further enhance the well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. With the help of our Business Affairs Technical Service (BATS) Team; COR, will be launched in October 2023. This new system replaces an old 3rd party system and now will allow us to collaboratively track, maintain, and ensure all our AEDs are operational throughout the UF campus and State.



The COR site is intuitive and easy to use, making it accessible to all UF departments with AEDs in buildings across campus, including off-site (IFAS) locations. The system also collects data on AEDs, which is also helpful for running reports. This data allows us to continually improve our emergency preparedness and response efforts. COR is another demonstration of our dedication to creating a secure and supportive environment for all.

To start using COR, all you need to do is log into the new site (link to come). The site will guide you on how to add, view, edit, and maintain your AEDs and provide essential information. Additional Information will be available soon to familiarize the UF community with this new AED tracking system. We believe this new AED tracking system will provide peace of mind to all members of the University of Florida community.

### [AED PROCEDURES](#)

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## EH&S's FIRE & BUILDING CODES RECEIVE RECOGNITION

Recently, the EH&S Building Code Enforcement group was recognized for their proven commitment to helping the University achieve its goal after completing the two biggest construction projects on campus - The Honors Village and Malachowski Hall.

The Honors Village buildings 1 and 3, along with the courtyard, were completed just in the nick of time to welcome over 600 new students to our Flagship University. The EH&S team worked countless hours outside of the traditional work operation hours, to ensure the buildings were going to be safely occupied and the students would have the experience they expected. VP Curtis Reynolds volunteered to host a luncheon for PD&C and EH&S, as a token of gratitude for everyone's hard work in meeting the expected deadline. It has been stated that without everyone's dedication and commitment from EH&S, the project would not have been finished on time.



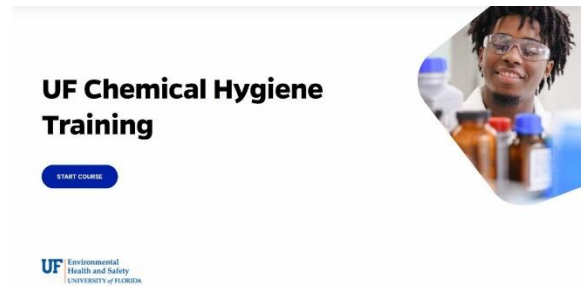
Malachowski Hall is another spectacular facility where construction is winding down. The EH&S Building Code Enforcement group has been collaborating closely with the contractor to ensure all inspections are

complete and that the commissioning of all the life safety systems is properly certified. After almost three years and dozens of delays caused by supply chain issues, the building is slated for its opening soon. EH&S is extremely proud to have been an integral part of the success of these monumental buildings.

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## NEW CHEMICAL HYGIENE PLAN TRAINING

As previously announced, the Chemical Hygiene Plan training was temporarily suspended until an updated version could be made available to lab users. It is our pleasure to announce that the new Chemical Hygiene Plan training (EHS861) will be released this month. This new training is a major overhaul of the old training and is more comprehensive and engaging than its predecessor. It is a new one-time training, and therefore, **required for all persons entering and working in laboratories.**



The training is approximately 60 minutes in length and will comply with the requirements set forth by the OSHA Laboratory Standard. Please note that this training is required by OSHA, and the University of Florida, for **ALL** Laboratory Personnel. Therefore, EH&S is asking all laboratory personnel to complete the training within the next six months.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at EH&S a 352-392-1591.

[myTraining](#)

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## FIRE EXTINGUISHER BASICS

The safety of yourself and others is always the first priority. In the event of a fire, your focus should be on evacuating to a safe place and activating the closest fire alarm pull station on the way out. If the fire is still in the early ignition stage (typically no larger than a small waste basket) and you know how to use a fire extinguisher properly, you may decide to attempt to extinguish the fire before evacuating.

The following information on the 5 different classes of fire should be considered when selecting the proper fire extinguisher. It is vital to know what type of extinguisher you are using. Using the wrong type of extinguisher for the wrong type of fire can be life-threatening.

### Classification of Fires

**Class A Fires-** Common combustibles such as paper, wood, cardboard, and most plastics.

**Class B Fires-** Flammable liquids and gases such as gasoline, kerosene, grease, and oil.

**Class C Fires-** Fires involve electrical equipment, such as appliances, wiring, circuit breakers, and outlets.

**Class D Fires-** Fires that involve combustible metals that produce their own oxygen. magnesium, titanium, and sodium.

**Class K Fires-** Cooking media such as oils, fats, and grease.

- 1) Once you have selected the appropriate fire extinguisher, approach the fire, utilizing the P.A.S.S. method, beginning about 10 feet away.
- 2) Always pay attention to your surroundings and never let the fire get between you and an exit.

For more information, or to take a fire extinguisher class, please reach out to EH&S for scheduling at 352-392-1591.



[Fire Extinguishers](#)

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## 15-PASSENGER VAN UPDATED TRAINING

The safety of our university community is our top priority, and we recognize that transportation plays a crucial role in our day-to-day activities. With that said, EH&S is excited to announce that in August 2023, we launched a new 15-passenger van training program. As 15-passenger vans have become a popular mode of transportation for various university-related trips, it is imperative to acknowledge the unique challenges associated with driving larger vehicles. Our updated 15-passenger van training program has been carefully designed to address the specific challenges posed by these larger vehicles. Here are some key features of the training:

**Specialized Curriculum:** Our new curriculum is tailored to the unique characteristics of 15-passenger vans. It covers topics such as proper loading and weight distribution, safe turning, and braking techniques, and how to handle challenging road conditions.

**Risk Awareness:** A significant portion of the training focuses on raising awareness about the potential risks associated with 15-passenger vans. By understanding these risks, drivers will be better equipped to avoid potential hazards.

**Online Submissions:** Our new process is now completely online. An applicant may take the training and the assessment online through myTraining and receive a certificate. The registration system is also now online and allows the applicant to attach all required documents to their registration. We encourage everyone in our university community to actively participate in creating a safe transportation environment. This includes reporting any concerns related to the vehicle, driver behavior, or road safety hazards.

**Where to go:** [12 & 15 Passenger Van Policy » UF | EHS \(ufl.edu\)](#). Located at the bottom of that page are the requirements and the links.



[MyTraining](#)

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## SAFETY REMINDERS

### Are you closing, vacating, relocating, transferring, or renovating a laboratory?

Notification to EH&S is required **thirty days (30) in advance**. Please [report lab closeout](#).

### Are you planning to purchase lab equipment?

Lab appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, 3D printers, heaters, and microwaves need prior approval from EH&S before being purchased. Please use the [Equipment Purchasing Approval Form](#) to submit requests.

### Are you generating hazardous waste?

Do not fill liquid waste containers completely to the top. **Overfilling can be hazardous to University students, employees, visitors, facilities, and the environment.** Please leave a small amount of head space to allow for expansion of the liquid due to temperature changes (especially during transport).

- 20 L x 15 °C temp increase = as much as 400 mL volume increase for common solvents.
  - Best Practices – Leave a 5% void in cans and carboys.
  - Best Practices – Only fill 4 L bottles to shoulder.
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## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



[CONTACT](#)

### **Celia Rodas**

Program Assistant -Radiation Safety & Radiological Services  
Research Services and Safety

We are thrilled to welcome Celia Rodas to the team! Celia is the program assistant for Radiation Safety and Radiological Services. She works with both UF and UF Health Shands departments to keep track of badge coordinators, as well as swiftly completing badge orders. Additionally, she manages the source database, tracking compliance with quarterly reports, and canceling badges when necessary.

Celia likes to spend her free time with her two furry children. She also enjoys baking, shopping, and spending time with friends and family. On rainy days, she likes to visit the beach and read a book.



[CONTACT](#)

### **Jeffery Berrier**

Hazardous Materials Technician  
Research Services and Safety

EH&S extends a warm welcome to Jeffery Berrier, the new Hazardous Waste Technician. His job is to collect hazardous and chemical waste from around campus to ensure it is disposed of properly. Previously, he was a lab technician and lab manager working with cancer research at the McKnight Brain Institute (MBI-UF).

When he is not at work, Jeff enjoys spending time with his kids and girlfriend at the beach. He also competes in the NHRA/Summit bracket racing series (drag racing) with his 2021 Dodge Charger. He also enjoys riding his Indian motorcycle.



[CONTACT](#)

### **Kylie Gempler**

Instructional Designer II & Training Coordinator  
Occupational Safety & Risk Management

EH&S is turning the spotlight on Kylie Gempler, our new Instructional Designer and Training Coordinator.

Her job responsibilities consist of creating, maintaining, and documenting required compliance training for EH&S, and collaborating with subject matter experts in developing learner content. She has a B.A. in English and Writing from Southern Oregon University, and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

She loves spending time in nature, reading 18th-century literature, and traveling the world.

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## Promotions

Artiom Chacon- *EH&S Coordinator III to Associate Director of Research Services*

Christopher Overend- *Biosafety Coordinator II to Assistant Biosafety Officer (Biosafety Coordinator III)*

Erin Brewer- *Insurance and Risk Specialist to Risk Coordinator*

Gary Heil- *Biosafety Coordinator III to Biosafety Officer*

Seth Mullins- *Hazardous Materials Technician to Hazardous Materials Specialist I*

## New Hires

Celia Rodas- *Radiation Program Assistant*

Christina Delgado -*Codes Program Assistant*

Dylan Miller- *EH&S Coordinator I*

Jeffery Berrier- *Hazardous Materials Technician*

Kylie Gempler- *Instructional Designer*

Nicholas Cavallaro- *EH&S Coordinator I*

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