



MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to share that this year CSHEMA recognized our Lab Safety Awareness Week efforts and selected UF for the 2025 Lab Safety Awareness Week Award for a Large School. This award is given for distinction of an institution's efforts in promotion of CSHEMA's Laboratory Safety Week. Last year, our Green Lab Certification Program was selected for the Innovation Award for Resources Enhancement for a Large School.



This newsletter covers various important topics including updates on hurricane lab preparation, new EPA regulations for dichloromethane (DCM) use in research labs, peroxide former safety reminder, firework safety precautions, eyewash station hot water concern, how to stay safe in the heat, first risk management summit update, and much more.

We also have a few safety reminders regarding safe use of state vehicles, how to reduce needlestick injuries, and proper containers for hazardous waste materials. In addition, EH&S Facility Support Services will be relocating to a newly renovated facility in the surge area in August.

Enjoy your summer break with your family and friends, and many thanks for all your efforts in keeping the UF community safe.

Regards,
Shailendra Singh

UF WINS 2025 CSHEMA AWARD

For the second year in a row, UF has been recognized by the Campus Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA). This year, we were awarded the Lab Safety Awareness Week Award for a Large School. We organized six safety events in various places around campus in February 2025. This national award recognizes our efforts to promote lab safety across campus through hands-on activities, outreach, and engagement. This is a



meaningful recognition as we continue building new safety programs and connecting with the UF community.

Many thanks to the Research Safety Team and our new ESCOs for their planning and dedication, and special thanks to Cindy Mercado for her leadership and coordination. Award recipients will be recognized at the CSHEMA Annual Conference this July in Seattle.

UPDATE ON DCM REGULATIONS

As a reminder, in April 2024, the EPA issued a final rule regulating methylene chloride (also known as dichloromethane or DCM) under the Toxic Substances Control Act. DCM users are impacted, and EH&S is tasked with ensuring compliance with this new rule.

EH&S has started exposure monitoring for the labs that will continue using and/or storing DCM. EH&S will oversee and pay for this initial monitoring, but all subsequent monitoring events will need to be funded by the laboratory or department.

Exposure monitoring must be conducted every 5 years and may be required as frequently as every 3 months for high exposure areas. Once we receive the initial exposure monitoring results, EH&S will notify the lab for monitoring frequency and help them establish an Exposure Control Plan as required by the EPA.

[LEARN MORE](#)

LEAVE THE FIREWORKS TO THE PROS

With the Fourth of July approaching, it's important to remember that fireworks can be dangerous. Each year, many injuries result from amateurs using professional-grade, homemade, or illegal fireworks, but even small firecrackers and sparklers can cause burns and other injuries.

The National Safety Council urges everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals. Fireworks that explode or leave the ground are not legal for consumer use in Florida, though some exemptions exist for sales.



If you choose to use consumer fireworks, make safety your top priority:

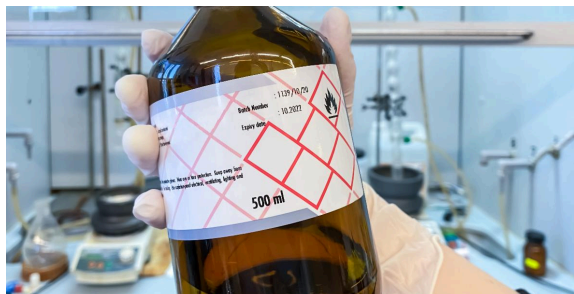
- Always wear protective eyewear
- Only light one device at a time and back away quickly
- Use outdoors, away from people, buildings, and flammable materials
- Keep a bucket of water nearby and soak used fireworks before disposal
- Never hold or relight malfunctioning fireworks

MORE TIPS

PEROXIDE FORMER SAFETY LESSON LEARNED

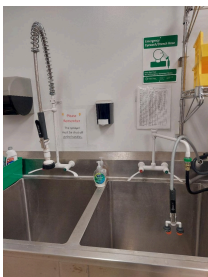
EH&S Lab Safety recently discovered a hazardous situation where an expired and crystallized peroxide-forming chemical was found in a research lab on campus. A full summary, including lessons learned and recommended safety actions, is available [here](#).

Proper dating, labeling, and disposal of peroxide formers is essential. Labs that fail to maintain their chemical inventories may be held responsible for the cost of emergency disposal. Please review this incident with your team and refer to the [EH&S website](#) for a list of common peroxide formers and safe handling guidance. Let's work together to prevent future incidents and keep our campus safe.



MORE INFO

PREVENT HOT WATER AT EYEWASH STATIONS



EH&S recently found an eyewash station delivering hot water due to heat transfer from nearby sinks. This can happen if both hot and cold handles are left on and flow is paused. To prevent this, post reminder signs near sprayer or janitor sinks, and turn off the hot water valve under sinks if using cold-only equipment.

These steps help prevent risks of scalding and keep eyewash stations safe.

EH&S RISK MANAGEMENT SUMMIT

UF EH&S hosted our first Risk Management Summit on May 20, 2025, bringing together departments from across campus to discuss enterprise-level risks, share best practices, and promote cross-functional collaboration.

Attendees participated in interactive sessions covering current and emerging risks, learned about new reporting tools, and explored the principles of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM). The summit emphasized the importance of a unified approach to risk and kicked off plans for ongoing workshops and a collaborative risk network. If you are interested in learning more, contact [UF Risk Management](#).



CONTACT RISK MANAGEMENT

STAYING SAFE IN THE HEAT

As temperatures climb, so do the risks of heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Whether working outdoors or enjoying time in the sun, follow these tips to stay safe:

- **Hydrate regularly.** Drink water often, even if you're not thirsty. Avoid alcohol and sugary drinks.
- **Dress smart.** Wear light, loose-fitting clothing and apply SPF 30+ sunscreen every two hours.
- **Take breaks.** Rest in the shade or indoors, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- **Know the signs.** Watch for symptoms of heat exhaustion (dizziness, nausea, heavy sweating) and heat stroke (confusion, high body temp, red skin).
- **Check on others.** Look out for children, pets, and vulnerable individuals. Never leave anyone in a hot car.

To learn more, visit UF's [Heat Stress Policy](#) or contact EH&S for training and guidance.

HEAT STRESS POLICY

HURRICANE LAB PREP

In preparation for the upcoming hurricane season, EH&S Research Services would like to remind all laboratory users to be prepared to shut down their labs as needed. To assist with this process, we have put together a checklist of common items that should be addressed prior to any weather-related emergency shutdown.

Please take a moment to review the [Hurricane Checklist for Laboratories](#). This document can be printed or downloaded and used as a handy guide to prep labs when an imminent hurricane impact is announced.



HURRICANE CHECKLIST

EH&S FACILITY SUPPORT SERVICES IS MOVING

The EH&S Facility Support Services will be relocating to the newly renovated facility in the Surge Area. EH&S acquired the old Nuclear Field Building 0554 and has completed a complete renovation of the building.

The new location will house the building code enforcement, fire safety, fire equipment, pest control, and dive safety teams. Moving is scheduled for the first week of August 2025.



FACILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM SUCCESS

EH&S recently conducted a three-hour training session for 64 high school students as part of the CPET Summer Science Training Program (SSTP). Students were trained on lab safety, bio safety, and waste management practices. They also participated in a hands-on fire extinguisher training program.

Just days later, a small kitchen fire broke out in one of the residence halls. Thanks to the training, students responded quickly and confidently, using a fire extinguisher to put out the fire before it could spread. No injuries were reported, and the situation was resolved safely. This real-world outcome highlights the value of practical training and preparation.

If interested in enrolling in a fire extinguisher training session, please contact Dan Hickey at daniel.hickey@ehs.ufl.edu.



LEARN MORE

SAFETY REMINDERS

Only UF staff, faculty or official UF volunteers are insured to drive State Vehicles. Students are not permitted to drive State Vehicles, Golfcarts, All-Terrain Vehicles or Farm Equipment. The insurance that UF obtains through the State Risk Management Trust Fund does not cover students.

Needlestick injuries can expose you to serious health risks. Always wear gloves and goggles when handling blood or tissue and dispose of needles in a sharps container right after use. Use safety-engineered devices like retractable needles and avoid recapping whenever possible. Never pass needles hand to hand. Instead, use a tray to transfer them safely.

Need hazardous waste containers? UF's Hazardous Materials Management team offers a variety of containers for liquid and solid waste, whether for cleaning out a lab or handling routine waste streams. Call Hazardous Waste at 352-392-8400 to request labels and containers.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



CONTACT MARISOL

Marisol Alvarez Builla

EH&S Coordinator II: Occupational Medicine
Program Coordinator
Occupational Safety & Risk Management

EH&S is excited to spotlight Marisol Alvarez Builla, who serves as the Occupational Medicine Program Coordinator and oversees the university-wide OCCMED Program. Marisol brings over 20 years of clinical healthcare experience to the team. She is a proud UF alum with a B.S. in Health Education & Behavior and will complete her M.S. in the same field in December 2025.

Outside of work, Marisol enjoys running, kickboxing, Tae Kwon Do, reading, cooking, baking, and spending time with her husband and kids.



**CONTACT
GABRIELLA**

Gabriella Chester

EH&S Coordinator I
Research Safety and Services

EH&S is pleased to welcome Gabriella Chester as an EH&S Coordinator I in Research Safety and Services where she conducts lab safety surveys and provides ongoing support to UF laboratories to ensure a safe and compliant research environment. Gabriella holds a B.S. in Biochemistry from UF and previously worked as a Quality Control Scientist for a pharmaceutical manufacturing company.

Outside of work, Gabriella enjoys playing video games, tending to her flower garden, traveling, and exploring new cuisines.

New Hires

Marisol Alvarez Builla - *Occupational Medicine Cdr.*

Gabriella Chester - *Environmental Health & Safety Cdr. I*

Promotions

Anna Gioseffi - *Environmental Safety and Compliance Officer*

Daniel Nunez - *Environmental Health & Safety Cdr. II*

Anniversary Milestones

Cheryl Lynn Thacker - *25 years*

Melissa Crowder - *20 years*

Eric Victor - *20 years*

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#UFSafetyCulture



ehs.ufl.edu

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