

The Safety Net

Eastern Virginia Medical School's Environmental Health and Safety Newsletter
https://myportal.evms.edu/research/safety/environmental_health_and_safety

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Special Interest Articles:

- **Fit Test Fee Increase**
- **Gloves in Common Areas**
- **Household Habits for Clean Water**

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Report Incidents, Injuries, and Near Misses

Prompt medical treatment is the reason you are asked to report incidents, injuries and near misses, NOT to place blame for the incident. In order to keep a minor injury from becoming worse, proper medical care is very important. In addition to medical treatment, incidents need to be investigated and their causes determined in order to prevent the same injuries from happening to someone else. All injuries and incidents are important and need to be reported.

Once the incident is investigated, it may be classified as minor, serious or major, but all were accidents. If the cause is not found and corrected, the underlying conditions responsible for the incident are still there, waiting to wreak havoc and cause another injury, possibly with more severe consequences. Just because the accident was “minor” this time does not mean that the next time the same type of incident occurs the result could be much different resulting in a major injury or even a fatality.

Safety awareness increases when a near miss is reported. When an accident occurs, even if it does not result in an injury, it serves as a warning that uncontrolled hazards are present. These hazards must be identified and removed from the workplace.

The proper procedures for reporting injuries and incidents are:

- If injured, apply first aid.
- Alert your supervisor as soon as possible.



- Contact **PMA Care 24 Nurse Call Service at 1.833.411.0153** for instructions. Service is available 24/7/365.

It is crucial that all incidents and injuries, including near misses, be reported so that they can be investigated and the causes determined and eliminated. This will help additional injuries from occurring to our most valuable resource - YOU!

Gloves in Common Areas

Recently there has been an increasing amount of concern regarding employees wearing gloves in common areas, most notably within hallways, stairwells and elevators. Gloves are meant to be a *temporary* shield against hazardous chemical and biological materials. It is important they be removed once the intended tasks are complete and *not* worn outside of the laboratory or clinical room. Potential chemical or biological contamination may not always be visible on the gloves. In addition, when you are seen wearing gloves in the hallway or other public spaces, the general perception is that you have been handling something that is potentially harmful and are spreading that material on everything you touch.

Below are a few guidelines to eliminate the practice of wearing gloves in common areas.

1. *Around the Laboratory*

Remove and dispose of gloves before answering the phone, using computers, touching doorknobs, or exiting the lab.

2. *Transporting Samples Through the Hallways*

A secondary container must be used. Wear gloves to put the material into the container, remove the gloves, and then transport it safely without the risk of contamination of common areas. Never use a gloved hand to operate doors.

3. *Walking between Laboratories*

Before exiting the laboratory, remove your gloves and wash your hands. Bring a fresh pair with you. Don new gloves after reaching your destination.



By following these guidelines you can contribute to a safer workplace!

Fit Test Fee Changes

EH&S is not funded for the supplies or other costs associated with performing this service, thus cost-recovery is necessary. Beginning **April 01, 2024**, the respirator fit testing cost will be increased to **\$10.00** per person. This reflects the rising costs of materials, supplies and equipment maintenance that are used for this service.

Be aware, EH&S will charge departments for “no show” appointments and “turn away” tests. OSHA requires men to be clean shaven in order to wear a respirator and all to be medically cleared before being fit tested. Therefore, students and employees will be turned away when arriving for their fit test appointment if (1) they arrive with facial hair and/or (2) if their prerequisites are not complete. Fit test prerequisites are the Respiratory Protection training course located on the [BioRAFT](#) site **and** the [Medical Questionnaire](#) completed and cleared by Occupational Health.

We encourage you to plan for this increase in the upcoming budget cycle. If you have any questions about the EVMS Respiratory Protection Program, please contact Kristi Olivar at 446-7928.

Household Habits for Clean Water

Storm water is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas and bare soil, and through sloped lawns. As it flows the runoff collects and transports soil, pet manure, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, leaves, litter, and other potential pollutants. Here are some healthy habits for clean water from the U.S. EPA:

- Before beginning an outdoor project, locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other materials.
- Use hazardous substances like paint, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible, and follow the directions on the label. Clean up spills immediately, and dispose of the waste safely. Store substances properly to avoid leaks and spills.
- Purchase and use nontoxic, biodegradable, recycled, and recyclable products whenever possible.
- Clean paint brushes in the sink, not outdoors. Properly dispose of excess paints.
- Follow any instructions for use and storage provided on product labels carefully to prevent any accidents at home.
- Be sure to read product labels for disposal directions to reduce the risk of products exploding, igniting, leaking, mixing with other chemicals, or posing other hazards on the way to a disposal facility.
- Never store hazardous products in food containers; keep them in their original containers and never remove labels. Corroding containers, however, require special handling. Call your local hazardous materials official or fire department for instructions.
- When leftovers remain, never mix household waste with other products. Incompatible products might react, ignite, or explode.
- Consider reducing your purchase of products that contain hazardous ingredients and use alternative products or methods instead. These can include the following:

Hazardous Waste Source Reduction around the Home	
Drain Cleaner	Use a plunger or plumber's snake.
Glass Cleaner	Mix one tablespoon of vinegar or lemon juice in one quart of water. Spray on and use newspaper to dry.
Furniture Polish	Mix one teaspoon of lemon juice in one pint of mineral or vegetable oil and wipe furniture.
Rug Deodorizer	Liberally sprinkle carpets with baking soda. Wait at least 15 minutes and vacuum. Repeat if necessary.
Silver Polish	Boil two to three inches of water in a shallow pan with one teaspoon of salt, one teaspoon of baking soda and a sheet of aluminum foil. Totally submerge silver and boil for two to three more minutes. Wipe away tarnish and repeat if necessary.
Mothballs	Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mints or white peppercorns.

*<https://www.epa.gov/hw/household-hazardous-waste-hhw>

Ask the S.O.B.

Q: Dear S.O.B.,

I've been told that I have to be fit tested for an N95 respirator. I am really, really busy. Can I just drop in and get the test done?

-Bizy Bodie

A: Dear Bizy,

Sorry, no. You must make an appointment for a fit test. Keep in mind, before you have your fit test you must:

- Complete Respiratory Protection training on [BioRAFT](#)
- Complete and submit the OSHA Medical Questionnaire:
http://www.evms.edu/about_evms/administrative_offices/occupational_health/osha_medical_questionnaire/
- Be given a clearance for fit testing from EVMS Occupational Health
- Schedule a respirator fit test: <https://evmsfittest.as.me/>



Safety Office Boy to the rescue!

If you have questions regarding respiratory fit testing, contact [EH&S](#). If you have a question for the S.O.B., send an email to finlayba@evms.edu.

Notes from the Office

EH&S Training Courses

Course	Date/Time	Location
Chemical Hygiene Plan	January 18, 2024 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Lewis Hall 2162
	February 15, 2024 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Lewis Hall 2162
	March 21, 2024 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Lewis Hall 2162
Radiation Safety in the Laboratory	Contact EH&S	
Biosafety in the Laboratory Biological Materials Shipping Autoclave Safety Training OHSP Training Respiratory Protection	Available on BioRAFT	https://evms.bioraft.com/
HAZCOM Bloodborne Pathogens Biological Materials Shipping (Clinical)	Available on Blackboard	http://evms.blackboard.com/