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CUSP (CU I&E) Submission: Laboratory Registration Program [1]

The Laboratory Registration Program was implemented as a process whereby Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) (Ron Honn and Cynthia Norton) could collect a variety of information about lab type environments on campus. These lab type environments include traditional research and teaching labs in biology, chemistry, physics, and engineering. It also includes photo labs, art studios, shops, theatre works, etc. Any area where there are chemical or physical hazards on campus. Principal Investigators or departmental lab managers were provided with an electronic registration form to complete as well as an electronic chemical inventory form. The departmental lab managers were able to complete one registration form for all academic labs within their department if the hazards present in the various labs were fundamentally the same. Otherwise they could group labs together on registration forms (e.g. chemistry lab, biology lab, anatomy & physiology lab). Once completed, the forms were submitted electronically to EHS. The information on the registration form was then reviewed, clarified as needed and transferred to an access database. From the database, various reports can be generated:

• A list of emergency contacts including home/cell #s is provided to police/dispatch operations. This information is useful in the event of power outage or system failure, allowing appropriate individuals to be notified so research is not lost or compromised.
• It provides emergency contact information that is readily available to emergency responders in case an emergency requires that we contact a person knowledgeable of the operations in the laboratory.
• It provides EHS with accurate information regarding the operations of the lab so that we can ensure that UCCS is providing a safe work/learning environment for our faculty, staff and students.
• It provides a listing of individuals (faculty, staff, student and volunteers) working in the labs. This list can then be utilized to establish and track training requirements for these individuals.
• Based upon the hazards identified on the form, EHS may recommend that the laboratory needs to establish additional safety protocols such as a Laser Safety Plan, noise, etc.EHS will review the registration form with the PI in an effort to verify that appropriate engineering controls, standard operating procedures, personal protective equipment and emergency equipment are in place to provide a safe work environment for the individuals working in the specified Laboratory.On an annual basis, EHS will send out a verification copy to the PI or departmental lab managers, who can then update any changes (particularly personnel and chemicals) and/or verify that nothing has changed. This will assist in having accurate, up-to-date information.

HOW DOES THIS IMPACT THE UNIVERSITY?

Historically PIs and lab managers were asked for the same information from multiple sources

(i.e. EHS and Police dispatch) or to meet various compliance related issues (i.e. CS Fire Department reports, CDPHE reports, etc.). Now the PIs/lab managers only have to complete the form one time. They are provided with a completed form and inventory annually to verify/update. This saves time for PIs and lab managers.In the event of an emergency, it provides a one-stop source for information on lab operations and hazards present.It has provided an identification and tracking mechanism for personnel involved in lab operations. Because we now have a baseline for who needs trained, we have been able to pursue individuals to ensure that they have received the proper training. Trained individuals are less likely to act in a way which may endanger themselves or their fellow workers or damage property.We have increased our compliance with federal, state, city and local regulations by having accurate up-to-date information.

It has helped EHS to focus its attention on those areas which pose the most risk for the university.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The program was rolled out in April 2012. Originally we identified 152 labs which required registration. Since that time 11 additional labs have been identified bringing the total number of labs to 163. As of April 15, 2013, 145 (89%) of the 163 labs have completed registrations. Efforts are under way to complete the remaining 18 lab registrations. Feedback from the PIs and lab managers has been generally positive. Re-certification/validation of the registrations will occur during May – June 2013.By utilizing the personnel lists provided with the registrations, we have trained 164 individuals in lab safety. This compares to a previous high of 84 in 2009 (2010-67, 2011-57). This is directly attributable to the fact that we knew who needed to be trained and could chase them if necessary.Our compliance rate with the requirement for a chemical inventory is lower at only 80%. Currently, 61 inventories are in place, 70 spaces are either vacant or do not require inventories and 32 locations needs to submit inventories. The majority of places needing to submit inventories coincide with those locations which need to complete registrations.The entire registration and inventory process has been used as an educational tool to increase the knowledge of personnel working in labs about the hazards and precautions required to safety work in a laboratory environment.

Submitted by Cynthia Norton and Ron Honn, Environmental, Health and Safety, University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Groups audience:
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