

Safety Beacon

Department of Environmental Health and Safety

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www.udel.edu/ehs (302)831-8475

Spring Cleaning



Spring is the perfect time to clean out your basement, garage and even your laboratory areas of unwanted chemicals, cleaners, paints, automotive fluids and other miscellaneous materials that require special disposal considerations. For disposal of household chemical items, the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) hosts several household hazardous waste collection events throughout the state each year.

Visit DSWA's household hazardous waste website at: http://www.dswa.com/programs_haz.asp to learn more about their program and what household hazardous waste can be brought to the events, as well as the dates, times and locations of the events.

All University of Delaware chemical waste and unwanted chemicals must be managed through the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. Information about scheduling a chemical pick up can be found at http://www.udel.edu/ehs/waste/chemical_waste-pick-up.html

Keltron: How UD Transmits Fire Signals

UD Fire Protection took a big step forward in the modernization of how the fire alarm signals travel from your office, lab, work center, or residence hall room to the University Police Dispatch Center. Keltron is a red box situated next to the fire alarm panel at the property. At the time a fire alarm activation occurs in the building, the Keltron Box acts as the link to the Campus Intranet and sends a signal to UDPD Dispatch where the event appears on a large monitor. The information sent includes the building address and other critical information.



Fire alarm signals were previously transmitted via telephone lines which were recently abandoned with the campus telephone upgrade to Voice over IP (VOIP). Similar to the Keltron Intranet signal, telephone service is now internet-based in lieu of copper wiring. Although this state-of-the art equipment is highly reliable, it will stop transmitting fire alarm signals in the event of a network outage. Please keep in mind that it's important to follow-up any fire alarm incident in your building with a 9-1-1 call from a campus administrative line or 302-831-2222/2224 from a cellular phone to report the emergency.

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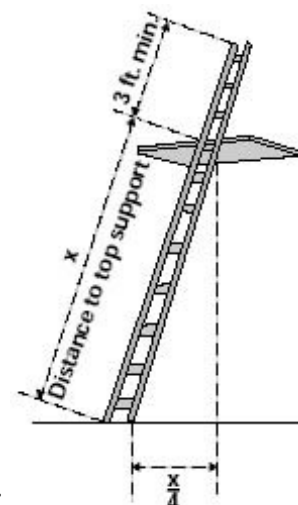
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Ladder Safety

One usually doesn't think of ladders as complicated machines that require special training to use. Still, falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination and extension) are one of the leading causes of fatalities and injuries on and off the job. Here are some points to consider before the next time you climb up a ladder:

- Read and follow all labels/markings on the ladder.
- Select the right style and size ladder for the job.
- Avoid electrical hazards! – Look for overhead power lines before handling a ladder. Avoid using a metal ladder near power lines or exposed energized electrical equipment.
- Always inspect the ladder prior to using it. If the ladder is damaged, it must be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded. Ladders must be free of any slippery material on the rungs, steps or feet.
- Always maintain a 3-point (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) contact on the ladder when climbing. Keep your body near the middle of the step and always face the ladder while climbing (see diagram).
- Always keep your hands free while climbing- either keep the tools you will need secure in a safety belt or hoist them up after you are safely in position.
- Only use appropriate accessories (ladder levelers, jacks or hooks) for their designed purposes.
- Do not use a step ladder as a single ladder or in a partially closed position.
- Do not use the top step or rung of a ladder as a step unless it was designed for that purpose.
- Use a ladder only on a stable and level surface, unless it has been secured at the top or bottom to prevent shifting.
- Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- Do not move or shift a ladder while a person or equipment is on the ladder.
- An extension or straight ladder used to access an elevated surface must extend at least 3 feet above the point of support (see diagram). Do not stand on the three top rungs of a straight, single or extension ladder.
- The proper angle for setting up a ladder is to place its base a quarter of the working length of the ladder from the wall or other vertical surface (see diagram).
- The area around the ladder should be barricaded to keep traffic away from the ladder.
- Be sure that all locks on an extension ladder are properly engaged.
- Do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder. Be aware of the ladder's load rating and of the weight it is supporting, including the weight of any tools or equipment.



WELCOME!



Please welcome Kyle Kokoszka to EHS as a Fire Protection Intern. Kyle comes to the department as a Del-Tech Fire Protection Engineering student and volunteer fire fighter with Middletown Volunteer Fire Department. In this position, Kyle is working on the improvement of EHS Emergency Response by creating detailed emergency pre-plans for laboratories and other locations where fixed gas detection equipment is installed. He is taking on the role of “Quality Assurance Inspector” for our dining and commercial cooking locations for hood and duct cleanings. He is also active with semi-annual residence hall and public assembly fire/life-safety surveys and conducting fire drills. Having Kyle onboard has greatly enhanced the overall campus fire safety program. Please introduce yourself if you see him in your area.

Danger Explainers Better Than Edict Issuers

A recent study of children and their mothers published in the *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* gives some insight on how to better ingrain safe habits in employees.

Sometimes supervisors and workers view workplace dangers differently. Although more simplistic, the study noted that children and parents rarely had the same idea of what constitutes an unsafe activity. When a child is denied a seemingly fun activity with an authoritarian, “No, that’s not safe,” there’s a high chance of conflict. But according to the study, explaining why something is dangerous gets better results.

Research showed 63 mothers and their eight- and 10-year-olds photos of children engaged in various dicey endeavors, like chopping wood with an axe or riding a skateboard. After the mother and child then tried to agree on how unsafe each situation was, the moms were much better able to convince the child of the danger when they first focused on the reasons that made the situation dangerous, like a wobbly ladder. Next they pointed out possible consequences: if you climb the ladder you could lose your balance and fall.

While this might sound obvious to adults, the study does demonstrate that offering reasonable explanations allows children to become more skilled at assessing similar situations on their own. In the adult working world, we can find analogous situations: a task-oriented worker may be too focused on completing a job to recognize hidden dangers. Rather than just spelling out safety rules for a job, if a supervisor takes time to review the reasons for safety rules the worker will not only accept the rules but will be more likely to recognize safety hazardous in other jobs.

Mark Your Calendars for Safety

EHS will host its annual thank you gathering for Safety Committee Chairs and Chemical Hygiene Officers on **May 20th at 2pm**. The annual Bernie Alexander award recognizing efforts to improve fire safety on campus will also be presented at that time. Details about the gathering will be issued in the near future but meanwhile please save the date. Hope to see you there!

