

## Environmental Health & Safety

# Safety BEACON

[www.udel.edu/ehs](http://www.udel.edu/ehs)  
302-831-8475

### WEBPAGE UPDATES

## EHS SIMPLIFIES WASTE PICKUP REQUESTS AND ASKING QUESTIONS

In this day and age, it is not uncommon to have a smart phone and virtually endless information at the end of one's fingertips. One click can get you the latest celebrity drama, best restaurants in town, or how to contact your friendly Environmental Health and Safety department (EHS).

Near the top right of our website [udel.edu/ehs](http://udel.edu/ehs) there is a blue and gold text bubble link labeled "Questions? Ask EHS" (pictured on the right). This email link is for any questions, comments or concerns that you may have.

Directly below the "Ask EHS" link, we have a quick selection guide for Waste Pickup Requests. You can choose between Biological, Chemical, and Radioactive. Depending on what you need picked up select the corresponding pictogram.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our webpage updates, please contact our department at 302-831-8475.



Questions?



Ask EHS

Click this link on our webpage to ask questions.

### Waste Pickup Request



Biological



Chemical



Radioactive

Quick access to our waste pickups forms.

# INDOOR AIR QUALITY

## TIPS FOR MAINTAINING BELOW-GRADE SPACES IN YOUR HOUSE

Do you have a crawlspace or basement in your house? Many of us do and never give any thought to how they can affect the indoor air quality of our home. In fact, most homeowners never even enter their crawlspace on an annual basis.

Up to 30% of the air we breathe circulates from below-grade spaces. These spaces present their own challenges due to higher humidity levels and cooler temperatures. These challenges can become an issue during the warm and humid mid-Atlantic summers.

Here are some tips to maintain the air quality in your below-grade spaces:

- Seal up any vents in your crawlspace. This is just an opening for humid air to enter your house.
- Measure the humidity levels in your crawlspace and basements. Humidity levels above 60% can lead to a potential increase in certain types of mold.
- Install dehumidifiers in your crawlspaces and basements if humidity levels are getting too high. There are specific models made just for below-grade spaces.
- Make sure any items placed in your below-grade spaces are 6" off the floor slab and 18" from foundation walls.
- Don't install carpeting in basements
- Avoid having bare fiberglass exposed. Any dust present on the fiberglass can be a food source for mold and other microbial growth.
- Make sure gutters are cleaned regularly. Clogged gutters or improperly sized gutters can lead to water pooling along foundation walls and water intrusion in basements and crawlspaces.
- Avoid placing cardboard boxes directly on the floor slab. Keeping items off the ground can also help in the event of a flood or leak.



# GOT OLD BATTERIES?

## EHS RECYCLES BATTERIES FOR OUR CAMPUS

Batteries are great when you need a portable, convenient power source. Whether starting your car in the morning, keeping your flashlight lit during a power outage, or changing the television channel with your remote, we use batteries to power our everyday lives. But what happens when they run out of juice? Many of us may think that it is okay to throw them in the trash or recycling can but that is not the case.

That's where UD's EHS Department comes in! If your lab or department has used or dead batteries (Alkaline 9 Volt, AA, AAA, C, D, car batteries or lead acid batteries) that you'd like to dispose of, simply go to our website at [udel.edu/ehs](http://udel.edu/ehs) to schedule a chemical waste pick-up, and we'll come to you! It's easy, it's safe, it's free and it's good for the environment!

A few guidelines that apply to waste owned and generated by the University of Delaware:

- Batteries must also be **official UD** waste; we do **not** accept residential or off-campus batteries from home.
- To dispose of batteries around your house, the Delaware Solid Waste Authority sponsors special collection events several times each year at different locations around the state <http://www.dswa.com> or local collection sites like Home Depot/Lowes.
- Don't put used batteries in campus garbage or campus recycling.
- Batteries are NOT to be mailed to EHS through interdepartmental envelopes or cardboard boxes.
- Batteries contain heavy metals like acid, lead and nickel. Sometimes old or used batteries leak these contaminants, which can leak through paper and cardboard.
- Examples of acceptable containers: Laundry detergent containers, plastic bins, tupperware containers, gallon Ziploc bags (If you are unsure if your container is acceptable, please call us at 302-831-8475).

### A few examples of acceptable containers for used batteries



- The lid must be able to completely shut or be duct taped closed.
- Overflowing containers will not be accepted.
- Please note: containers will not be returned unless you request this in the comments section when you submit the waste pick up form.
- All containers must be clearly labeled used batteries with the department's name on the container.
- If you requested to have your container returned but EHS decides the container is at the end of its usage life, you will be notified by our department that your container will not be returned.

If you have any questions about our battery disposal program please call EHS at 302-831-8475.

## EHS FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOL IS NOW ONLINE



So many fire codes, which ones apply to me?

The Fire Safety Team at EHS works hard to put eyes on all 466 University buildings in an effort to keep our campuses free from fire. With a staff of three full-time employees, and three part-time miscellaneous wage employees, the Fire Protection Team is actively involved with plan reviews and inspections of new construction and renovations; Fire Prevention/Extinguisher Training of Residence Life RA's, Graduate Assistants and undergraduate lab students; and conducting fire drills throughout the year at residence halls, public assembly, and academic buildings. Major events throughout the year including but not limited to, Commencement, concerts at BCC, Coast Day, and football games are reviewed for fire code compliance. All of the functions of our group involve the knowledge and use of applicable fire codes in the State of Delaware. The recently installed Campus Fire Safety Plan protocol is found [here](#) on the EHS Web Page, provides quick and easy access to the typical code applications at UD without the hassle of looking items up at the national, state or city level.

### EVP Policy 7-6 Replacement

For many years, the University Policy 7-6 was published to standardize the campus population when it came to fires and other emergency responses. The Campus Fire Safety Plan adopts the EVP Policy 7-6 in the areas of fire reaction to include, but not limited to, reporting all fires large or small to UDPD at 9-1-1 or 302-831-2222; to sound the fire alarm with the manual fire alarm pull station; to immediately evacuate the building at the nearest exit when a fire alarm is sounded, gathering away from the building at a distance not less than 200 feet; and guidance for occupants with disabilities to include taking refuge on upper floors in designated areas or stairwell landings. Along with proper fire reaction procedures, the plan covers other areas including fire extinguishers, basic fire code compliance, fire drills, prohibited items, tent permits and open flame/hot-work permits.

### Basic Code Compliance

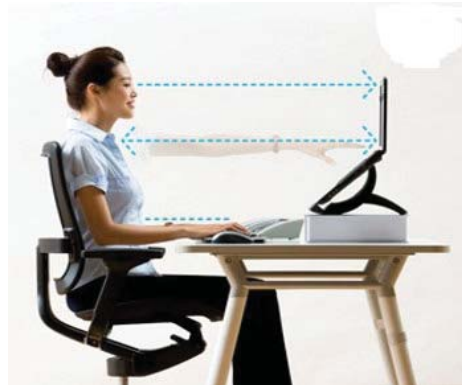
During our building fire safety assessments and when contacted with a complaint of a code violation on campus, the EHS Fire Safety Team evaluates the occupant/users management of exits, egress corridors and stairwells to assure a clear path to safety is maintained.

Excessive storage and housekeeping practices and maintaining 18" clearance of sprinklers from storage are a few of the common code violations observed. Instead of using code references of the national, state and municipal authorities, the Campus Fire Safety Plan has the code language already built in and provides interested parties the ability to see the code reference at the local/campus level. Within the Campus Fire Safety Plan are links to the fire drill frequency for the various use groups on campus, and guidance regarding with electrical safety and purchases of goods with UL listings. Open flame permits and Hot Work Permit guidance links are included as are the Space Heater Policy, Tent Permit guidance and information regarding Authorized Cooking areas.

The Campus Fire Safety Plan is a living document that is subject to change over time. As national, state and municipal codes and standards are modified with a 3-year cycle, the EHS Fire Safety Team will ensure that the UD plan is refreshed and accurate. It is our goal to assure the buildings we live and work in are of the highest standard in regards to fire and life safety; any suggestions or comments are welcomed by emailing [fire-safe@udel.edu](mailto:fire-safe@udel.edu). Be Safe!

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## LAPTOPS AND ERGONOMICS



Laptops provide lightweight, portable convenience in and out of the classroom, office, etc. While having the laptop handy no matter the location, there are some drawbacks associated with it. The compact design poses an issue for users – when the monitor is at the right height, the keyboard is too high; when keyboard is at correct height, the monitor is too low, leading to awkward postures. This is where proper ergonomics come into play. During short term use, tilt the screen at a more open angle in order to view it with the least amount of neck deviation as possible. For longer term use, there are a couple helpful options. One would be to use a laptop riser along with an external keyboard and mouse to obtain the proper neutral position. An additional option would be to use the laptop as a docking station, using a standard monitor along with the external mouse and keyboard. With both short- and long-term usage, it is important to remember proper posture and breaks. Ensure proper posture by sitting fully into the seat and keep a neutral, natural position; this helps to avoid the negative effects that poor posture can have on your body, such as inhibited blood flow, muscle stress, and compressed spine. Taking routine breaks helps reduce eye strain/fatigue, along with avoiding static positions for extended time periods. When carrying the laptop, try to avoid loading down your bag with unnecessary weight. If using a backpack, it should weigh less than 15% of your body weight, with heaviest items closest to your body while wearing it, and both straps should be utilized. If using a ‘messenger’ or briefcase style bags, alternate hands/shoulders frequently.

If you'd like additional information and/or have questions, please contact Ann Woodall at 302-831-7026.

**ABSA**  
INTERNATIONAL

**OCTOBER 2019**

**Biosafety and Biosecurity Month**



<https://absa.org/event/2019-biosafety-month/>

#biosafety\_biosecuritymonth

## **Beyond the Lab: Increasing the Visibility of Biosafety and Biosecurity**

Biosafety should be applied to all your research and biological education! Think about how you can make your work safe. Your partners in Environmental Health and Safety and the Biosafety Program are here to help you improve your research and prepare our students for their future careers!

UD EHS: 302-831-8475

dehsafety@udel.edu



**ABSA**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
*The Association for Biosafety and Biosecurity*

# FALL PROTECTION

## A TOP PRIORITY ON CAMPUS

It may come as a surprise that the third leading cause of unintentional injury-related death is falls. In 2015, nearly 33,381 people died in falls at home and at work – and for working adults, depending on the industry, falls can be the leading cause of death.

### Hazards in the Workplace

In 2014, 660 workers died in falls from a higher level, and 49,210 were injured badly enough to require days off of work. A worker doesn't have to fall from a high level to suffer fatal injuries. Half of all fatal falls in 2014 occurred from less than 20 feet high. Construction workers are most at risk for fatal falls from a height– more than seven times the rate of other industries – but falls can happen anywhere, even at a “desk job” or at home when decorating for the holidays or clearing debris from rain gutters.

National Safety Council data for 2014 includes falls from height and falls on the same level, by industry:

- Construction: 22,330 injuries, 359 deaths
- Manufacturing: 23,290 injuries, 49 deaths
- Transportation and Warehousing: 23,780 injuries, 43 deaths
- Education and health services: 51,150 injuries, 21 deaths

### Falls are 100% Preventable

- Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely. A ladder may not be the best equipment for the job.
- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed.
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment.
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job.
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment.
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather.
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended.
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open.
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder.
- Place the ladder on a solid, even surface and never lean it against an unstable surface.
- A straight or extension ladder should be 1 foot away from the surface it rests on for every 4 feet of height and extend at least 3 feet over the top edge.
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support.
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top.
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom.
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before each use.

Around campus, always use handrails when ascending or descending stairs and be aware of trip and fall hazards and report them to the FixIt Customer Service Center at (302) 831-1141. Millions of people are treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries every year. A fall can end in death or disability in a split second, but with a few simple precautions, you'll be sure to stay safe at work and at home.

If you have any questions or would like more information about our Fall Protection Program please contact UD's Safety Officer, John Verdi at 302-831-3081.



# CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY MONTH IN DELAWARE

## GOVERNOR CARNEY PROCLAIMS SEPTEMBER CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY MONTH

At the Conference Luncheon of the Delaware Vol. Firefighters Association that took place on September 13th, Governor John C. Carney, Jr., presented a Proclamation to the Delaware State Fire School declaring September Campus Fire Safety Month.

The Fire School is very proud of the work that is done with University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Goldey Beacom College and Wesley College. We thank Governor Carney for recognizing the efforts of all involved.

Campus Fire Safety Month was put into effect shortly after a fire that took place at Seton Hall University in January 2000 that killed three students. Students living in the residence hall ignored the fire alarm, assuming it was a false alarm. If the students had been prepared for a fire in their dorm and evacuated as the alarms directed, the injuries and deaths could have been avoided. The goal of fire safety month is to not only deter fires on college campuses from but also to prepare students in the event of if an actual fire.

Environmental Health & Safety's Fire Safety Group is busy at work year round spreading the word about fire safety and prevention. In late August we trained over 200 new and returning RA's. They were taught them how to extinguish fires using a fire extinguisher, how to crawl through a smoke filled environment, what prohibited items to look for during inspections, and even how to safely extinguish a stove fire.

In September we begin our first round of residence hall fire drills. These drills make the students aware of what the alarm sounds like and gives them practice utilizing their nearest exit to find their way to their assigned gathering location. Year round we train hundreds of laboratory students and researchers on the importance of fire safety in the lab and how to use a fire extinguisher.

Proclaiming September Campus Fire Safety Month gives us an opportunity to celebrate as well as educate the campus community on the importance of fire safety not only in September but year round on and off campus.



Delaware State University, Goldey Beacom College, The Department of Environmental Health and Safety and the State Fire School attended the luncheon in September honoring the 2019 Campus Fire Safety proclamation.



## HAVE YOU SEEN THIS INSECT? SPOTTED LANTERNFLY UNDER QUARANTINE

Article taken from UDAILY published on August 23rd, 2019  
<https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2019/august/spotted-lanternfly-under-quarantine/>

Article written by Dante LaPenta

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) has enacted a quarantine for the spotted lanternfly in some New Castle County zip codes. This invasive species, which is originally found in China, India or Vietnam, is a destructive plant hopper that attacks many hosts including forests, ornamental trees, orchards, hops and grapes. This insect is detrimental to Delaware's agricultural industries, environment, residential areas and interstate commerce.

Adult spotted lanternflies are an inch long and about one-half inch wide. The front wings are grey with black spots and the hind wings are red with black spots. Its abdomen is yellow with black bands. Immature insects are smaller, black with white spots, and as they age red patches develop. Heavy populations may cause branch dieback, wilting or plant death.

To help keep this pest from spreading to other areas of the state or country, Delaware residents are asked, before moving outdoor items, to make sure all items are free from this pest. DDA offers a compliance [checklist](#).

To check if your area is under the quarantine, the Delaware Department of Agriculture has a spotted lanternfly quarantine locator.



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Environmental Health and Safety would like to hear from you!

We encourage all members of the UD community to submit safety improvement ideas on campus.

You may submit ideas that impact your personal safety here on campus or the safety of the greater community.

Your participation will help raise safety awareness in our community!

Please submit your safety concerns/ideas via email to [dehsafety@udel.edu](mailto:dehsafety@udel.edu)

