
Interdepartmental Correspondence
Environmental Health and Safety
Occupational Health and Safety Office
Box 354400, 206.543.7388, FAX 206.543.3351
www.ehs.washington.edu

DRAFT UNIVERSITY-WIDE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2009 1:00-2:30 pm – Electrical Engineering 303

In Attendance

Leslie Anderson (1)
Connie Bartlett (1)
Pete Federici (2)
Diane Hanks (3)
Paul Zuchowski (3)
Barbara Lovseth (4)
Chuck Treser (4)
Susie Sargent (5)
Tracy Harvey (6)
Stephen Costanti (8)
Michael McMillan (8)
Jack Herndon (9)

In Attendance

David Zuckerman (10)
Kristian Haapa-aho (11)
Rick Gleason (Faculty Senate)
Laura Davenport (SEIU - 925)
Paul Bentson (WFSE 1488)
Tracy Mosier (Ex-O, FS)
Wendy Winslow-Nason (Ex-O, RM)
David Leonard (EH&S)
Denis Sapiro (EH&S)
Carol Garing (Crtv Com)
Scott Preston (UWEM)
Charles Easterberg (Guest)
Michael Merrill (EH&S)

Not Present

Ron Fouty (2)
Bob Ennes (4)
Rich Lee (4)
Megan Amen (5)
Sherri Huber (6)
Deborah Conley Staerk (7)
Ken Jones (7)
Michael Glidden (9)
Margery Cooper (10)
Ray Hartman (11)
Elizabeth Dahl (Ex-O, AGO)
Jude Van Buren (EH&S)
John Freudenthal (UAW Local 4121)

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Presentation : H1N1 Flu Awareness
3. Minutes for June
4. Group and Union Reports
5. EH&S Report – L&I inspections
6. Adjournment

Recorded: by Michael Merrill

1. Meeting was called to order by Denis Sapiro for Vice Chair, Jack Herndon, who arrived later.

2. H1N1 Flu Awareness.

Denis introduced the speaker, Charles Easterberg, EH&S Public health Advisor for the UW. Charles has been developing a presentation on the H1N1 flu virus to be used during the upcoming flu season. It is still being refined; this is the 3rd time he has given it. An updated UW Guidance for Communicable Disease Management is also expected to be released in a week or so containing changes to the previous plan. It will be located on the UW Emergency Management website. When it is available, Michael will send an e-mail to safety committee members providing the link.

Charles' presentation covered a lot of aspects of the flu: history, periodicity, definitions, risk groups, symptoms, how it's spread, and how it's prevented. Some main points regarding the 2009 H1N1 "swine flu":

- Seasonal flu and the H1N1 swine flu are different diseases requiring different vaccines.
- The H and N refer to proteins on the virus's coat; the numbers reflect the primary H-N pattern. Within the primary pattern, there are numerous possible sub-combinations:
 - H = Hemagglutinin
 - N = Neuraminidase
 - H5N1 and H9N1 = bird flus
 - H3N2 = many seasonal human flus
- Historically, there have been minor shifts and major shifts in flu strains.
 - Minor shifts take place about every 10-11 years causing higher than normal mortality:
 - Major shifts take place about every 35 years (similar to generational interval) when a "novel" flu appears that has the potential for high mortality:
 - Past epidemics (not all influenza)
 - Philadelphia Yellow Fever 1793
 - Memphis Yellow Fever 1878
 - Paris Grippe 1887 (lacked "flu science" at that time, but likely H1N1)
 - Spanish Flu 1918 (H1N1)
 - Polio: late 1940's and early 1950's
 - Asian Flu 1958 (H2N2)
 - Hong Kong Flu 1968 (H3N2)
 - Russian Flu 1977 (H1N1)
 - Swine Flu 1976 (H1N1)
 - Jack-in-the-Box E. coli 0157:H7 1993
 - SARS 2002
 - Bird Flu H5N1 2003
 - 2009 (H1N1)
 - The 2009 H1N1 flu is a new ("novel") mix of human, bird, and pig RNA.
 - Was discovered in Mexico in March, 2009
 - Was confirmed in Los Angeles April 15, 2009

- Was declared a public health emergency April 26, 2009
- WHO declared it a Stage 6 Pandemic based on spread (not severity)
- June 19: detected in all 50 states and > 70 countries
- August 25: present in > 150 countries

- 2009 H1N1 key points:
 - Strikes hardest young people age 5-17 (also true of 1918 Spanish flu)
 - Other high risk groups:
 - Pregnant women
 - Immunocompromised
 - Lung disease
 - Prevalent outside of normal flu season (also true of 1918 Spanish flu)
 - Wave 1 (spring/summer) has been mild with fewer deaths (1 in 4000 cases) than the seasonal flu (1 in 1700 cases) which kills 36,000 Americans annually
 - However, if it mutates, it may become a much more serious strain as
 - Wave 2 during autumn and winter (regular flu season)
 - Could become life-threatening within hours
 - Vaccines won't be available until October.

- How is it contagious?
 - Infectious 1 day before symptoms appear
 - Infectious until the fever ends (5-7 days after symptoms appear)
 - Lasts longer in children and people with weakened immunity
 - Virus can survive 2-8 hours on surfaces
 - When droplets from coughs and sneezes that contain viruses land on objects that are touched, they may be transferred to mucous membranes of mouth, eyes or nose. Droplets can also be inhaled directly.

- How do I protect myself?
 - Get H1N1flu vaccine when it's available
 - Wash hands before eating
 - Wash hands after shaking hands or touching high-risk objects such as:
 - Keyboards
 - Public phones
 - Doorknobs
 - Handrails
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers if hand washing is not possible
 - Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth
 - Avoid crowds and gatherings
 - Give people 6 feet of space
 - Avoid close contact with sick people
 - Wear mask/respirator if caring for victim or around sick people
 - Follow Public Health advice in case conditions worsen

- How do I protect my coworkers?

- Do all of the above
- Get the seasonal flu vaccine now
- Cover coughs and sneezes thoroughly
- Self-isolate
 - Go/stay home as soon as fever occurs (>100°F)
 - Stay away from work until > 24 hours after fever returns to normal (without medication) and cough diminishes
- How can I NOT get the H1N1 flu?
 - Not from eating properly cooked pork or turkey.
 - Not from mosquitoes or ticks
 - Not by drinking water or swimming pool water (they've been treated)
 - Beware of lake/river water, however (not treated)

3. Minutes for August were approved as amended.

4. Group Reports – Union Reports

Group 1, Administration/Other Academic Programs: Connie Bartlett reported meeting this morning. Jennifer from the Q Center gave a presentation on “Safe Zones”. About 12 people attended. The Center offers 3 hours of presentation, broken into sections depending on a group’s time constraints. One Committee unit has already had the full 3-hour training. “Safety” includes freedom from verbal violence, as well as other types of violence.

Accident reports were also reviewed. The Election Coordinator and 2 “helpers” were chosen. Committee head, Provost Wise, will be receiving a letter from the EH&S Director inviting her to a meeting with other committee heads to discuss election responsibilities.

Group 2, Finance and Facilities: Pete Federici reported discussing how to represent Facilities Services in the coming election.

Pete also offered a recently acquired factoid that “for every injury the UW loses an average of 66 work days.” He wanted to check that statistic since it was so high – higher than any other higher education institutions. Was this out of the total number of claims, or what? It’s not clear. Denis will research this.

Group 3, Student Affairs: Paul Zuchowski reported reviewing OARS reports and discussing election methodology. An Election Coordinator will be elected in their next meeting.

Group 4, Health Sciences/Hospitals: Barbara Lovseth reported their Committee “took a vacation” in August.

Group 5, Built Environments: Susie Sargent reported they also “took a vacation.”

Group 6, Arts & Sciences: Tracy Harvey reported reviewing OARS reports. Bob Blum was chosen to be Election Coordinator.

Group 7, UW Bothell: not present.

Group 8, UW Tacoma: Stephen Costanti reported reviewing the units listed online that make up their Committee. The list was too long, so they revised it. Two OARS reports were reviewed, but the one involving fire extinguishers in fume hoods dominated the discussion. Apparently, no one knew they were there. Susan Wagshul-Golden will be the Election Coordinator.

Group 9, Engineering: Jack Herndon reported reviewing OARS reports. An Election Coordinator will be chosen in their next meeting, tomorrow. Regarding Asbestos Awareness Online Training, they understand that some employee tracking records can be requested from EH&S. They were wondering how to enforce this Asbestos training.

Another topic that was discussed is how the UW internally processes restraining orders issued by a Court (and how that document goes through the Court system). A recent incident generated questions about this. Denis advised committee members to contact the "UWPD Crime Victim Advocate" if they question a response or need more help. (Learn more at: <http://www.washington.edu/admin/police/crimevictimadvocacy/>).

Group 10, Forest Resources: Dave Zuckerman reported that he will be the Election Coordinator. David and Steve West are reviewing the list of units online that have been included in the School of Forest Resources. They will be updating some of the names for use in the election. They expect their Committee will expand from 7 members to 10-12 when combined with Group 11. Two OARS reports were also reviewed.

Group 11, Ocean & Fishery Science: Kristian Haapa-aho reported discussing re-organization of the College and 2 OARS reports.

WFSE 1488: Paul Bentson left early.

UAW 4121: John Freudenthal not present. Denis will check status of student representation from this union.

Faculty Senate: Rick Gleason had no news this month.

SEIU 925: Laura Davenport reported 2 new safety committee members representing SEIU.

5. EH&S Report – L&I Inspections:

Denis Sapiro reported:

- Regarding L&I consultation on June 15-26 asbestos release in McMahan Hall, new carpet is down and there is no danger. Testing showed no asbestos above the Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) and clearance limits at his point.
- Risk Management requested advice from L&I regarding Workers' Compensation costs. Three meetings have been held. Another one will take place with DSHS and DOT on 9/16. They will discuss how claims are handled and the nature of interactions with Risk Management. Additional topics involve the re-organization

that is taking place within L&I /DOSH. Denis will also clarify the “66 lost days per injury” factoid with them since he heard it from them originally.

- Efforts continue to get a variance for the stairwell in HMC’s old firehouse.
- The UW has begun investigating complaints about mold and asbestos dust exposures in the BB Tower on the 10th and 9th floors. A water pipe broke on July 29th during an asbestos abatement project on a hot water line. Repairs are still underway: walls and carpeting are being replaced to prevent future problems. All asbestos test results were below PEL limits. Mold growth was found to be limited to 3 locations; no new ones are showing up.
- September 1st, the UW was contacted by L&I to look into the availability and use of cell phones in the HMC Parking and Security Department. This type of assignment is termed a “Telephone Fax” investigation. The BB-Tower investigation is the same type.
- Scott Preston, formerly CERT Program Manager, is back at the University! He is in charge of business continuity planning with UWEM/Business Community.

6. Vice Chair, Jack Herndon, adjourned the meeting.