



A Quarterly Newsletter by the Environmental Health and Safety Office

[www.uic.edu/depts/envh](http://www.uic.edu/depts/envh)

## WINTER EDITION 2007

### WHAT'S A UIC ERT?

No, it's not a warm fuzzy animal...it's our UIC Emergency Response Team, coordinated by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. This team consists of 28 volunteers fully trained and equipped to respond to chemical, biological, and radioactive materials emergencies. Members of the team are mainly from EHSO, but we also have four UIC Police Officers, Public Affairs staff, and staff from the Biological Research Laboratory (BRL). They undergo a rigorous 40 hour initial training program followed by biweekly continuing training sessions. Their equipment includes self-contained breathing apparatus (SCUBA-like gear), totally encapsulated chemical suits and an array of special chemical-specific gloves. They also have monitoring equipment to detect flammable atmospheres, oxygen-deficient areas, chemical vapors and radiation. In addition they maintain an inventory of supplies and equipment for clean-up of chemical, biological or radioactive materials spills. Their mission is not to clean up small spills that can be handled by persons in the immediate work area, nor to handle major chemical releases that could impact a building or city area appropriate for the Chicago Fire Department Hazmat Team. But rather, their mission is to assess and handle incidents they can prevent from escalating and to provide response services to those intermediate level spills beyond the capability of the staff on hand.

Some of the incidents to which they have responded have been

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mercury spills, formaldehyde spills, hazardous materials tossed and reacting in dumpsters, chemical spills in hallways, and segregation and guarding of aging highly reactive shock sensitive chemicals. They even provided equipment and support to the UIC Police in a mutual aid response with the Chicago Police at a suspected clandestine drug laboratory off campus. The team is activated when the On-Call Safety Officer identifies a situation requiring their services. An On-Call Safety Officer is available 24 hours, seven days a week, including holidays, at 312 996-7233 (6-SAFE).

Let's face it, accidents happen. If in doubt, don't be afraid to call. We're not here to blow the whistle, we are here to help!

### NEW CHEMICAL FEDERAL REGULATION

*A New Federal Regulation*  
On October 4, 2006, the President of the United States signed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act of 2007. This law provides DHS the authority to regulate the security of facilities that use chemicals in their operations, including colleges, universities and medical



centers. In April, DHS issued the "Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards" (CFATS) as a final rule intended to prevent potential misuse of certain chemicals. On November 1, 2007 the Appendix A to the rule was issued. This appendix lists the specific DHS chemicals of interest and their corresponding Screening Threshold Quantities (STQ). If a university possesses, or later comes into possession, a chemical of interest on the list at or above the specified screening threshold quantity, it must complete a consequence assessment tool known as a Top-Screen. DHS will use this inventory information to rank facilities into four tiers based on risk levels. Those facilities deemed "high risk" must then perform vulnerability assessments, develop site security plans, do facility personnel background checks and implement additional security measures. Facilities determined by DHS not to present a high level of security risk will

drop out of the regulatory program and go no further. *What You and UIC Must Do*  
UIC now has 60 days to report chemical information using this Top-Screen. EHSO has been tasked with leading this effort. We will be gathering information on what chemicals are used, where on campus and in what quantities they exist. Please be prepared to submit information about chemicals of interest present in your inventory or to certify that you do not possess or use any of the chemicals on the Appendix A list. The Appendix A list is available on the EHSO website at [www.uic.edu/depts/envh](http://www.uic.edu/depts/envh). Further information will follow on the methods EHSO will be using to gather the necessary data. We thank you in advance for your time and assistance with this regulatory compliance mandate.



#### NEWSLETTER SPOTLIGHT

- Emergency Response Team (ERT)
- New Chemical Regulation
- IEMA Inspections
- NIMS
- Director's Corner
- Shelter-in-Place
- Lasers
- Spreading Influenza
- Safety Cartoon

## A Surprise Knock On Your Door Can Mean... the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Inspector Has Come Calling

*Don't be surprised when an inspector from the Division of Radiation Safety from IEMA shows up SOON at your laboratory unannounced and accompanied by a staff member of the UIC EHSO Radiation Safety Section.*



After introductions and the initial shock that an inspection is about to begin, you'll be quickly rearranging your schedule and the notion that it would be just a routine day. You might feel that you are the first place for the inspector to visit. The first official day of inspection, however, starts in the EHSO offices with a meeting with the Director of Environmental Health and Safety and the Radiation Safety Officer. Because of the size of the UIC campus these inspections last 2-3 days. Inspectors examine all items covered by Illinois regulations for ionizing radiation. This include records of radiation surveys, radiation safety training programs and attendance, dosimetry records, radiation safety committee minutes, monthly inventory records and much more. At your lab they look for storage practices, disposal records, possible contamination, work procedures and safety procedures. One violation they always look for is food and drink in the laboratory. They not only inspect the lab itself but they also interview a numbers of radiation workers, looking for deficiencies in training and unsafe work habits.

On the last day, they conduct an exit interview which includes a senior member of the administration and the chairman of the radiation safety committee. All items of concern and violations are discussed at this time. A follow-up letter is then sent to the Director of Environmental Health and Safety with formal citations for any violations and the requirement that corrective actions be instituted. Fines and even loss of our radiation materials license can be instituted if the violations are significant enough. While our radiation safety staff provides project renewal inspections, laboratory surveys and many other services, they cannot monitor your operations continuously. Through cooperative efforts

with them, the Principle Investigator, and your staff, we can ensure minimal risk to radioactive materials use and compliance with Illinois regulations. Please contact our radiation safety office at 996-7429 with any questions or requests for assistance.

## WHAT IS NIMS?

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was created by Homeland Security to comply with Presidential Order HSPD-5, 8. Its purpose is to integrate effective practices in emergency preparedness and response into a comprehensive national framework for incident management and enable responders at all levels to work together more effectively to manage domestic incidents no matter what the cause, size or complexity. Elements of NIMS are:

- Standardized organizational structures, processes and procedures;
  - Standards for planning, training and exercising, and personnel qualification standards;
  - Equipment acquisition and certification standards;
  - Interoperable communications processes, procedures and systems requirements;
  - Information management system requirements; and
  - Supporting technologies – voice and data communications systems, information systems, data display systems and specialized technologies.
- The current federal NIMS standards, training programs etc. are still a work in progress, with increasing requirements coming on line at a steady pace.

## DIRECTOR'S

**C** Safety and Security – Not One and the Same!

**O** Sometimes the concepts of safety and security are lumped together to represent the same function or occupation. In fact some countries like Italy have only one word for both meanings:

**N** "sicurezza." But in the United States and here at UIC, they are not only separate functions but separate departments.

**E** The Environmental Health and Safety Office at UIC has the responsibility for *safety*: to provide a safe and healthy workplace and environment including compliance with regulations from agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This is different than the *safety* you see and hear about that addresses *public safety* (security) and crime prevention. At other times, however, there is a blending of responsibilities, such as in emergency planning and preparedness. Read our article in this issue that describes our UIC Emergency Response Team, as an example. However, for workplace safety, including hazard identification and mitigation, EHSO is your resource. We have an On-Call Safety Officer available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, at 996-7233 (6-SAFE). Please check out our website for further information, training programs, safety policies, manuals, and regulatory compliance updates at [www.uic.edu/depts/envh](http://www.uic.edu/depts/envh).

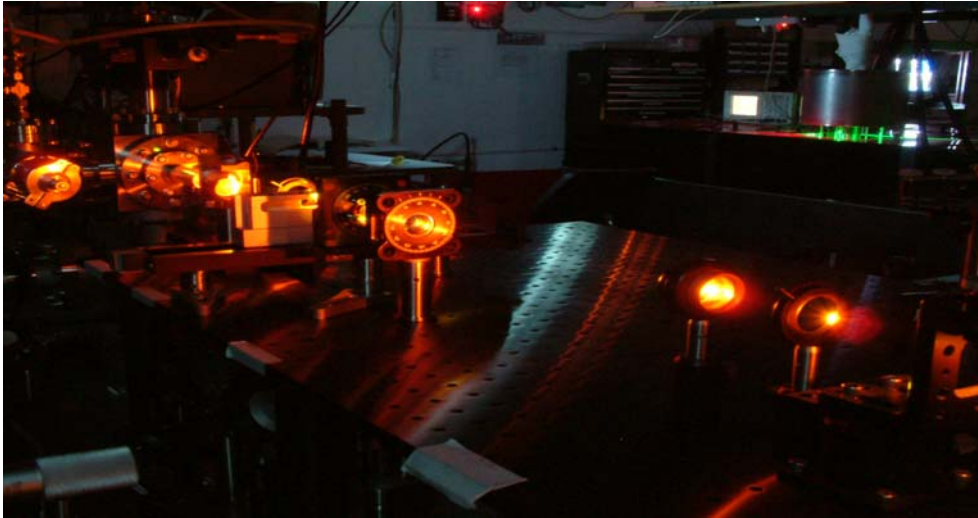
## Why UIC Must Comply:

HSPD-5 required Federal departments and agencies to make adoption of the NIMS by State and local organizations a condition for Federal preparedness assistance (through grants, contracts, and other activities).

- If a college has a police department, that police department would need to be NIMS compliant
- State of Illinois EXECUTIVE ORDER (Number 12) 2004 Governor Rod Blagojevich

"THEREFORE, I hereby direct the following:

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## LASER COMPLIANCE

### ATTENTION: Class 3b and Class 4 Laser Users

The State of Illinois IEMA is now regulating the possession and use of all Class 3b and Class 4 lasers, including home/custom built units. Your laser must be approved by a UIC Laser Safety Officer and be registered through the Environmental Health and Safety Office with the state. The state will be conducting inspections of your laser, signage, personal protective equipment, training records, operating protocols and much more. EHSO is ready to assist you in meeting compliance requirements and in preparing for state inspection. If you have not already done so or if you have any questions or request for assistance, please contact the Laser Safety Officer assigned to your campus location as follows:

Medical Center : Keith Hronek  
413-3705 [khronek@uic.edu](mailto:khronek@uic.edu)

East Campus: David Wilson  
413-3706 [dhw@uic.edu](mailto:dhw@uic.edu)

West Campus: Scott Dubick  
996-7429 [sdubick1@uic.edu](mailto:sdubick1@uic.edu)

The complete Laser Safety policy/plan is now available on the EHSO website. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

Marilyn L. Hau  
Director of Environmental Health & Safety  
[mhau@uic.edu](mailto:mhau@uic.edu), 996-7429

### NIMS Continued from page 2

I. All state agencies shall adopt NIMS as their model for emergency planning, Unified Command and response to emergencies and disasters.”

#### What UIC is doing:

The Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services has spearheaded this compliance effort through a small, intensive task force to collect, coordinate and create a combined NIMS compliant program.

All EHSO personnel and UICPD officers have completed the required federal training programs for NIMS and Incident Command.

The EHSO has established benchmarks and cooperative sharing of NIMS works with 35 Mid-West universities.

The Task Force is now developing an inventory of campus resources for emergency response: such as equipment, supplies, and trained personnel.

UIC Police Department is coordinating UIC efforts with those of the city, medical district and state.

Emergency Response Standard Operating Procedures and Emergency Guidance are being reviewed and revised for ultimate campus-wide distribution.

## In Case of Emergency

### How to Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room if possible, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire building. If you are told to shelter-in-place, follow the instructions provided.

Why You Might Need to Shelter-in-Place: Chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment. Should this occur, information will be provided by university authorities through UIC alert systems.

#### How to Shelter-in-Place

1. Stop classes or work, or close business operations.
2. If there are others in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps now, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
3. Unless there is an imminent threat, ask students, staff, customers, clients, and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
4. Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
5. If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
6. Gather essential disaster supplies if possible.
7. Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary.
8. Bring everyone into the room(s). Shut and, if possible, lock the door(s). Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. University and local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greater risk.

# TIS THE SEASON....

## How Influenza Can Spread Between People and How to Protect Yourself



### How Flu Is Spread

Influenza is thought to be primarily spread through large droplets (droplet transmission) that directly contact the nose, mouth or eyes. These droplets are produced when infected people cough, sneeze or talk. Large droplets can only travel a limited range; therefore, people should limit when possible close contact (within 6 feet) with others who are sick. To a lesser degree, human influenza is spread by touching objects contaminated with influenza viruses and then transferring the infected material from the hands to the nose, mouth or eyes. Influenza may also be spread by very small infectious particles (aerosols) traveling in the air. The contribution of each route of exposure to influenza transmission varies according to the characteristics of the influenza strain.

### FLU TERMS DEFINED

*Seasonal (or common) flu* is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted person to person. Most people have some immunity, and a vaccine is available.

*Avian (or bird) flu (AI)* is caused by influenza viruses that occur naturally among wild birds. Low pathogenic AI is common in birds and causes few problems. Highly pathogenic H5N1 is deadly to domestic fowl, can be transmitted from birds to humans, and is deadly to humans. There is virtually no human immunity and human vaccine availability is very limited.

*Pandemic flu* is virulent human flu that

causes a global outbreak, or pandemic, of serious illness. Because there is little natural immunity, the disease can spread easily from person to person. Currently, there is no pandemic flu.

### How to Help Stop the Spread of Germs

Take care to:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough
- Clean your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed
- Practice other good health habits.

**Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough!** Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

#### Clean your hands often.

When available, wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- then rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all surfaces. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. It is the soap combined with the scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs.

**When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used.** You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using a gel, rub the gel in your hands until they are dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in the gel kills germs that cause colds and the flu.\*

\*Source: FDA/CFSAN

#### Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs can live for a long time (some can live for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and tables.

#### Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed

When you are sick or have flu symptoms, stay home, get plenty of rest, and check with a health care provider as needed. Your employer may need a doctor's note for an excused absence. Remember: Keeping your distance from others may protect

them from getting sick. Common symptoms of the flu include:

- fever (usually high)
- headache
- extreme tiredness
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches, and nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, (much more common among children than adults).

#### More Facts, Figures, and How-To Ideas

CDC and its partner agencies and organizations offer a great deal of information about hand washing and other things you can do to stay healthy and avoid the germs that cause flu, the common cold, and other illnesses. For further information <http://www.pandemicflu.gov> and <http://www.cdc.gov>.

## Safety Cartoon



Almeida Cartoons:

[www.almeidacartoons.com/](http://www.almeidacartoons.com/)