

Employee Safety Handbook

**Alabama A & M University
Environmental Health and Safety**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Alabama A & M University. The skills and talents you bring to AAMU are vital to our mission of teaching, research, and service for the State of Alabama. One of the keys to accomplishing that mission is a safe and healthy campus environment. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) is charged with providing AAMU employees with educational programs, technical assistance, and other services in these areas.

This Employee Safety Handbook is intended for all AAMU employees, full time and part time, regular and temporary, and all other AAMU employment categories (student workers, etc.). It has been developed to provide you, the employee, with answers to general questions you might have concerning health and safety in the workplace. It is important, however, that you and your supervisor discuss site-specific safety policies and programs for your department. Your supervisor must inform you of the safety procedures and required training you will need to do your job. (There is no separate safety manual for "supervisors." The duties of supervisors are found throughout this Employee Safety Handbook.) The University's policies, procedures, manuals, and many other safety resources may be found by contacting EH&S directly.

Remember "AAMU" Safety Begins With You.

Health and Safety Policy

Alabama A & M University intends to provide a safe and healthy environment for its students, faculty, staff and visitors. The University strives to play a leadership role in the State of Alabama in its environmental stewardship, health protection and safety standards and in its compliance with laws and regulations relating to the environment, health and safety. The achievement of these goals is an objective for units at all levels of the institution. Employees and students are expected to be supportive of these goals in their University activities.

Health and Safety Responsibilities

Good environmental health and safety practices are a responsibility of each faculty member, staff member, student, and visitor on the AAMU's campus. The participation and cooperation of each person is essential to a smooth and effective program.

Employees

Your responsibilities as a AAMU employee include

- following all health and safety rules and procedures;
- reporting hazardous conditions to your supervisor;
- wearing or using prescribed protective equipment;
- reporting any job-related injury or illness to your supervisor and seeking treatment promptly; and
- refraining from the operation of any equipment without both proper instructions and authorization.

Supervisors

Each supervisor is responsible for providing a working environment free from recognized health and safety hazards. Specific safety responsibilities of supervisors include

- informing new employees about health and safety responsibilities, procedures, rules and regulations;
- assuring that required equipment and personal protective devices are provided, maintained, and used;
- taking prompt action when unsafe acts or conditions are reported or noted; providing for health and safety training and education on a continuing basis;
- investigating and reporting all on-the-job accidents promptly and requesting medical treatment if necessary;
- investigating and reporting all job-related health or safety problems promptly;
- coordinating or conducting internal inspections to assure safe and healthful working conditions; and
- requesting the assistance of the next higher level of supervision regarding budget requests for any health and safety improvements needed.

Unit Heads

Deans, directors, chairs and other heads of academic and administrative units have primary responsibility for

- the health and safety of their staff and students;
- compliance with all applicable laws and regulations; and
- providing funds needed for health and safety improvements and for making those improvements.

In addition, some units (e.g., the Infirmary) may have other specific requirements and responsibilities established by agencies external to the University.

The formation of departmental or college safety committees is encouraged. Experience has indicated that such committees can provide an effective means of implementing safety programs.

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

EH&S is responsible for development, oversight, and management of environmental health and safety programs that protect the environment, provide safe and healthy conditions for work and study, and comply with applicable laws and regulations. EH&S provides educational programs, technical assistance, and numerous health and safety services to the University community. Office staff also functions as consultants to deans, directors, heads of academic and administrative units, other staff members, and students in all areas of environmental health and safety. The OEH&S makes health and safety investigations as necessary and upon request, assists departmental safety committees in the development of safety programs, and participates in health and safety training and education.

II. SAFETY PRACTICES

Communication of Hazards in the Workplace

Faculty, staff, and students must be informed of any recognized hazards in their workplace. It is the responsibility of supervisors to provide adequate health and safety orientation related to standard operating procedures, hazards, and personal protective equipment. This orientation should be provided prior to working in the area.

Information given by supervisors must be presented in a manner that is understandable by all affected employees. This includes attention to literacy levels and language barriers. Appropriate signage should be posted. Regulations and policies affecting employees and students must be made available to them.

Training

Some employees may be required to attend in-house training sessions on such 5topics as, hazard communication, hazardous waste, asbestos awareness, or laboratory safety. A number of training classes are provided by EH&S during regular work hours at no cost to you or your unit. Supervisors of affected employees should exercise a measure of accommodation for those needing training. Checklists to help you understand the training requirements are found at the end of this document.

In some cases, supervisors may conduct specialized training sessions (e.g., safety procedures for using powered equipment). Supervisors can contact EH&S for information or assistance in preparing training materials. Other training may have to be provided by outside vendors (e.g., forklift or bucket truck operation).

At a minimum, health and safety training for employees must include

- recognition of health and safety hazards;
- general and job-specific health and safety practices; and
- state and federal regulations and AAMU'S health and safety policies applicable to the job.

Training should occur when an employee is hired, when an employee is given a new work assignment for which training has not previously been given, and when a new hazard (chemical or physical) is introduced into the workplace.

Personal Protective Equipment

Faculty, staff, and students may be required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) while performing their jobs or in certain environments (for example, chemical laboratories). Your supervisor will inform you of the specific PPE you must wear. The following is a general guideline for selecting what may be necessary.

Eye and Face Protection

Chemical hazards—Safety glasses are the minimum protection recommended for all operations involving hazardous chemicals. When there is a significant risk of splash to the eyes and face when using or dispensing hazardous liquids, non-vented chemical goggles or safety glasses with side shields and full-face shield offer the best protection.

Physical hazards—When using high-pressure cleaning or spray equipment, safety glasses with side shields and full-face shields are the recommended PPE. Those work activities that produce chips or dust—such as grinding/drilling, power fastening, or power tools—require safety glasses with side shields as a minimum protection level and in some instances may also require the use of a full face shield.

Welding—Welding operations require a full welding hood with the appropriate tinted vision screen. Safety glasses with side shields must be used when the hood is raised or removed. When doing acetylene-oxygen torch soldering, brazing, or cutting, appropriately tinted safety glasses with side shields or tinted goggles are the appropriate PPE.

Lasers—When using lasers or when in an area with a working laser, appropriate safety eyewear is a must. Different lasers require different types and shades of eye protection. Consult the Laser Safety Manual or Laser Safety Officer for appropriate protective eyewear.

Hand/Arm and Body Protection

When using hazardous chemicals, specialized gloves offering protection for specific chemical families, a laboratory coat, and at times a splash apron are the appropriate PPE. Insulated gloves and arm sleeve covers are recommended when handling hot or cold materials. To reduce cut or abrasion injuries, use puncture or abrasion resistant gloves, arm sleeve covers, and at times an apron, to lessen this exposure.

Head and Foot Protection

Occasions may develop during a work shift or job duty when the use of a hard hat or other head protection and foot protection is necessary. All hard hats or safety shoes must meet the requirements for protection outlined by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Hearing Protection

If your work areas or specific job tasks have been designated as requiring hearing protection, you must wear approved protective equipment. Personal stereos or Walkman @ are not considered approved hearing protection. Supervisors are responsible for identifying hearing protection areas and generally provide training on the use of hearing protection equipment. Certain work areas or tasks may be designated as requiring additional protective measures. If you have questions about high noise levels in your work area, you should ask your supervisor or contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety for more information.

Respiratory Protection

Some employees are required to wear respirators for specific job duties. Respirators include dust masks, air-purifying negative-pressure respirators, self-contained breathing apparatus, supplied-air respirators, and other such devices. If you wear one of these respirators, you must have a physical exam and you must be "fit tested" and trained before using it on your job. Departments with employees wearing respirators must have a written Respiratory Protection Program. Please contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety for more information.

Miscellaneous Personal Protection Equipment

Some employees may be required to wear other types of PPE not mentioned in the above paragraphs. If you have questions about any type of personal protective equipment, please contact your supervisor or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety for assistance.

Workplace Hazard Inspections

In order to identify hazardous conditions, it is necessary for faculty and staff to conduct routine inspections of their work areas. EH&S are available to assist in inspection activities and may conduct independent compliance inspections upon request, or as they deem necessary.

Imminent hazards must be corrected immediately. If the means of correction are not readily apparent or available, the condition must be reported immediately to your supervisor. If your supervisor is unavailable, report the condition to your department head or to the appropriate physical plant division (PPD), management and operations unit, or EH&S. Supervisors must also inform any faculty, staff, or students who may be affected by the condition.

Faculty, staff, and/or students must not be discriminated against for reporting a health or safety hazard to their supervisors or to EH&S. Supervisors are to encourage their staff to report all workplace hazards.

Documentation

Supervisors are responsible for maintaining written copies of safety programs and employee training documentation. This documentation is a requirement of most regulatory standards. EH&S staff may occasionally request these records to evaluate the degree and frequency of training provided to departmental staff. Regulatory agencies may ask to see these documents during an inspection.

Emergency Procedures

The establishment of well thought out emergency plans is one of the cornerstones of an effective safety program. Evaluating potential emergency situations, developing emergency procedures, and conducting practice exercises can help save lives.

You should become familiar with the posted evacuation plan for your building. In the absence of a posted evacuation plan or specific duties for your job function, you should follow the **General University Evacuation Plan**:

When the fire alarm sounds: Leave the building immediately by the nearest exit, closing the doors behind you. Do not try to locate or fight the fire when the alarm sounds. Do not reenter the building until the "all clear" signal is given by fire officials.

If you discover a fire: Leave the building immediately, *pulling the fire alarm on your way out*, then call 5555 from a safe location to report the fire. The AAMU's Police Department provides a 24-hour emergency number and first aid assistance on campus. **The campus emergency number is 5555**

This number should be used when you are in classroom, research, clinical, utility and administrative buildings; residence halls, and sports facilities.

In the event of a serious injury requiring immediate medical assistance or any other emergency, call the University's emergency number. Describe the emergency, give the exact location, and stay on the line until released by the dispatcher.

In the event of a severe weather emergency, follow these guidelines: **Tornado watch**—tornado is possible; stay on alert. **Tornado warning**—tornado has been sighted; take cover in the lowest level of the building, preferably in an interior room.

Accident Reporting

Most accidents can be prevented. Safety is an important work practice; in fact, you should be aware that safety is one of your job performance measures. Supervisors should make sure that a high level of safety awareness exists in each facility and that all employees are thoroughly trained in their duty assignments, including proper safety practices.

If an accident should occur, it must be reported to your supervisor as quickly as possible. Any fatal accident, any accident requiring hospitalization of three or more people, or any serious injury involving a student, visitor, or employee must be reported to the Occupational Health and Safety Department (Human Resources) immediately.

III. OEHS AND PROGRAMS

This section contains a brief description of EH&S responsibilities, programs and publications. It is intended to give you an overview of the services it provides. If you need assistance in any of these areas or believe your department should be participating in a particular program, contact the OEHS (4091)

Responsibilities

Environmental Protection

OEHS focuses on environmental compliance and activities that could affect the quality of air, soil, drinking water or groundwater. It also handles asbestos testing and abatement, lead, radon, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), air and water quality, environmental site assessment, and contaminated site remediation.

Hazardous Materials Management

EHS has primary responsibility for management of AAMU's hazardous waste, including waste pickups. It also handles hazardous materials spills and releases, biohazard wastes, and chemical recycling.

Occupational Health and Safety

EHS is responsible for all OSHA-related programs, such as respiratory protection, hearing conservation, blood borne pathogens, hazard communication, and laboratory safety, and many others. EHS also conducts fume hood inspections, indoor air quality investigations, and accident investigations, and assists units with general safety procedures, such as ladder safety, chemical storage safety, electrical safety, and construction safety.

Radiation Safety

The University Radiation Safety Officer is responsible for all aspects of radioactive materials use at AMMU. The radiation protection program includes radioactive materials user authorization, film badges and bioassays, survey meter calibration, radiation safety training, radioactive waste handling, and purchasing of radioactive materials. The RSO is also responsible for x-ray and laser safety programs.

Health and Safety Programs

EH&S has developed a number of model programs to help provide for the health and safety of AAMU employees. Many of these programs are mandatory to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. The following are some of the programs and safety manuals available:

- Biosafety Manual
- Blood borne Pathogens Program
- Laboratory Close Out Policy
- Hazard Communication Program
- Laboratory Waste Disposal Guide
- Hearing Conservation Program
- Chemical Hygiene Plan (Laboratory Safety Manual)
- Laser Safety Manual
- Lockout/Tagout Program
- Personal Protective Equipment Program and Hazard Assessment
- Radiation Safety Manual
- Respiratory Protection Program

These and numerous other safety resources are available in the OEHS

IV. HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING CHECKLIST

The following checklists have been developed to help employees and supervisors understand the health and safety training requirements associated with their job duties. If a unit performs the listed activity, then the corresponding general training for all affected workers must be provided. This training may be provided (1) by the supervisor, (2) by attending the training course shown in the checklist, or (3) by some equivalent method. Additional safety training for specific tasks and procedures must be provided by the supervisor. Training must be documented and must be provided before performing any of the listed activities. Due to the specialized nature of lab activities, a separate list has been prepared for laboratories.

These training requirements apply to all AAMU employees (including temporary, part time, STEPS, etc.) and students.

TRAINING CHECKLIST FOR NON-LAB WORK AREAS

Activity	Required Training	Required Program
Are there hazardous chemicals in your work area?	Hazard communication	<u>Hazard communication program</u>
Do you work with hazardous chemicals?	Hazardous waste	<u>Hazardous waste manual</u>
Do you provide first aid services or do you work with human blood, body fluids or tissues?	Bloodborne pathogens	<u>Bloodborne pathogen program</u>
Do you work with animals?	Contact Dept of Food & Animal Science	
Does your work require hearing protection?	Hearing protection use	<u>Hearing conservation program</u>
Do you use or service equipment for which an unexpected restarting could cause injury?	Lockout-tagout	<u>Lockout-tagout procedures</u>
Does your area have any confined spaces that you must enter?	Confined space entry	<u>Confined space program</u>
Do you operate industrial trucks (e.g., forklift, bucket truck, etc.)?	Safe operation of industrial trucks (none No written program)	
Do you use respirators of any kind (including dust masks)?	Respirator use	<u>Respiratory protection program</u>
Does your area have fire extinguishers for your use?	Fire extinguisher use	Emergency response procedures
Do you do maintenance and operations or housekeeping work?	Asbestos awareness	No written program

TRAINING CHECKLIST FOR LABORATORIES

Activity	Required Training	Required Program
Do you use chemicals in your laboratory?	Hazardous waste	<u>Chemical Hygiene Plan</u> <u>Hazardous waste manual</u>
Do you use infectious agents or other biohazards in your laboratory?	Hazardous waste	<u>Hazardous waste manual</u>
Do you use human blood, body fluids or tissues in your laboratory?	Bloodborne pathogens	<u>Bloodborne pathogen program</u>
Do you use radioisotopes in your laboratory?	Radiation safety	<u>Radiation safety manual</u>
Do you use animals in your research?	Contact Dept Food and Animal Science	
Does your laboratory use or service equipment for which an unexpected restarting could cause injury?	Lockout-tagout	<u>Lockout-tagout procedures</u>
Does your laboratory use respirators?	Respirator use	<u>Respiratory protection program</u>
Are there fire extinguishers in your laboratory or the corridor for your use?	Fire extinguisher use	Emergency response procedures