

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY PROGRAM**

### **I. Policy Statement**

All individuals at Rice University must be committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy campus environment for faculty, staff, students and visitors. The University will comply with federal, state and local regulations governing the environment, occupational health, life safety and workplace safety and will strive for continuous evaluation and improvement in its safety programs. This policy sets out the general safety policy and expectations for the University. Other policies or areas may have safety policies and procedures that are more specific or directed to specific functions (e.g., Laboratory Safety Policy) and that are intended to further the general policy and to enhance safety further in those particular areas.

### **II. Roles and Responsibilities**

Deans and Vice Presidents have the responsibility to ensure that the appropriate guidance, infrastructure and resources needed for a safe teaching, work, athletics and recreational environment are available, and will provide the individuals under their management with the appropriate authority and support to implement effective health and safety programs.

Supervisors including department chairpersons, have the responsibility to act to ensure that each individual under their direct supervision has the appropriate training, facilities and equipment necessary to work safely, and the knowledge to comply with all applicable regulatory guidelines and University policies. Supervisors should identify workplace hazards and seek resolution administratively, with Environmental Health and Safety or with Facilities, Engineering and Planning. Supervisors also have the responsibility to file a report with the Environmental Health & Safety Department and Risk Management on all employee accidents/incidents, near miss situations, or any reportable safety incident (a “reportable safety incident” is any unplanned and unwanted incident that occurs during the performance of a job related activity and that resulted in or could have led to injury, illness or material damage to property).

Faculty, staff, and students are responsible for engaging in their activities safely, and for contributing towards a safe environment for others. This includes reporting to their supervisor or the Environmental Health and Safety Department (EH&S) any accidents, near-miss situations or unsafe conditions within their workplace (including any instructions they receive that depart from safe workplace practices). In addition, individuals are required to attend safety training and participate in emergency drills.

Minors are any persons under the age of 18, including currently enrolled students and visitors. Minors in the workplace or laboratory must be directly supervised at all times by a qualified supervisor and their activities must conform to applicable state and federal labor laws and University Policy 811, *Minors on Campus*.

Environmental Health and Safety Department (EH&S) will provide the support and expertise necessary to assist all university departments and divisions in providing a safe working environment. EH&S will:

1. Develop and maintain a safety program conforming to the accepted standards of a major research university.
2. Determine required safety training for faculty, staff, students and visitors.

3. Review federal, state and local laws and regulations and recommend appropriate policy and procedural changes to ensure compliance. Maintain records and prepare reports to federal and state agencies.
4. Communicate environmental, occupational health, and safety policies and programs to university employees and students.
5. Audit campus facilities for compliance with federal, state and local laws or regulations and recommend improvements to the relevant Dean Vice Provost or Vice President or Director of Athletics.
6. Review all new construction and modification of existing facilities for adequacy of safety design and compliance with federal, state and local laws or regulations applicable to the type and hazard class of facility being constructed or modified.
7. Investigate accidents and report to the relevant department chair, Dean, Vice Provost, Vice President or Director of Athletics and the Safety Committee on the cause and recommendations for prevention of reoccurrences.
8. The Director of EH&S serves on, and administers, the Safety Committee.

Facilities Engineering and Planning Department (FE&P) will develop and maintain a compliance program which is designed to meet the operational and reporting requirements of all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations (including but not limited to those implementing the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act).

The Safety Committee provides recommendations on the university's safety management activities, processes, and conditions necessary to enhance a culture of safety. The Safety Committee, which reports to the Provost, will be comprised of representatives from the academic schools, a faculty member designated by the Faculty Senate, Risk Management, General Counsel, EH&S, FE&P, Housing and Dining, Police Department, and Human Resources. The Safety Committee shall:

1. Review the policies and procedures relating to all aspects of environmental, occupational and life safety and make recommendations for improvement.
2. Review the reports on serious accidents or incidents that occur on campus and make recommendations for corrective actions as necessary.

### III. **Problem Resolution Process**

EH&S staff has the authority to inspect campus buildings and labs to ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations. A copy of the inspection report will be provided to the responsible department head. If corrective action is deemed necessary by EH&S, the department head must comply with the time limit established in the report. If the correction is not done within the established time the Dean, Vice Provost or Vice President or Director of Athletics will be notified for final resolution, unless an extension is granted by EH&S.

The Director of EH&S or designee has the authority to curtail or stop any activity considered to be an immediate or serious danger to health or safety. In the event of such curtailment, the department or division head will immediately be notified. If effective action is not taken to remedy the condition satisfactorily, the appropriate Deans and Vice Presidents will be notified to assist in resolving the matter.

IV. Cross References to Related Policies

Rice University Policy No. 313- Laboratory Safety  
Rice University Policy No. 407-94- Workers Compensation  
Rice University Policy No. 427-96- Compliance with Law  
Rice University Policy No. 813- Whistleblower Protection  
Rice University Policy No. 814- Purchasing Policy  
Rice University Policy No. 811- Minors on Campus

V. Responsible Official: Vice President Administration

VI. Key Offices to Contact Regarding the Policy and its Implementation

Environmental Safety and Health Department  
Facilities, Engineering and Planning  
Risk Management

VII. Links to Procedures or Forms

<http://safety.rice.edu/>

<https://riskmanagement.rice.edu>

*Signed David W. Leebron* \_\_\_\_\_

President

Policy History

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