

Zika Virus: What you should know

The Zika virus is an emerging mosquito-borne virus that has dominated news headlines.

WHAT: The Zika virus is a member of the Flavivirus family (as are Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever, and West Nile) and was first discovered in the Zika Forest of Uganda in 1947. Outbreaks have occurred in various locations since then, but in February 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Zika virus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

Symptoms include fever, rash, joint pain, and red eyes lasting several days to a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito. The illness is usually mild, but Zika infection during pregnancy may be associated with miscarriages, stillbirths, and microcephaly.

HOW: Zika virus is spread primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. Zika can also be spread from mother to child during pregnancy, through sexual contact, and from donor to recipient through blood transfusions.

WHO: Anyone who has not yet had the virus is potentially at risk.

WHERE: Outbreaks are occurring in many countries. No local mosquito-borne cases have been reported in the U.S., but there have been travel-associated cases.

If you will be travelling out of the continental U.S., see the CDC's [Zika travel page](#) for more information.

WHAT DO I DO?: Pregnant women are advised to avoid areas with active Zika transmissions, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend all travelers practice [anti-mosquito measures](#). If you think you may have contracted Zika virus, it is important to discuss it with your doctor and take measures to prevent transmission to others.

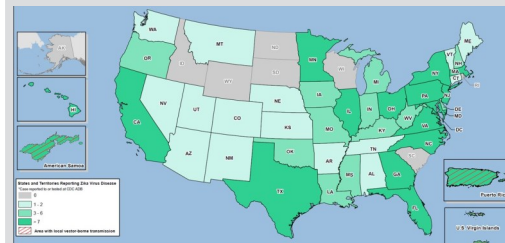


Photo: AP



Zika Resources:

- [ZIKA 360](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Brazos County Health Department](#)
- [Current map of Zika virus in the US](#)



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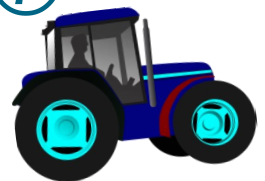
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Texas A&M University Laser Safety Program

The Radiological Safety unit of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) office is home to the Texas A&M University Laser Safety Program. This program is responsible for ensuring safe use of lasers and providing safety guidance to researchers and experimenters utilizing lasers. To ensure responsible uses of lasers, all Class 3b and Class 4 lasers which are operated, possessed, purchased, donated, manufactured, created, assembled or otherwise received by any person or entity at the University must be registered.

Lasers are classified into different categories based upon their associated risks. The classifications are based on the ability of the beam to cause biological damage to the eye or skin. Most commonly, lasers can cause damage to eyes and/or skin. Lasers can pose more of a hazard than ordinary light because they can focus a lot of power onto a small area.

Before you decide to use lasers in your research lab, proper engineering and administrative safety controls need to be in place. These controls include such things as laser barriers, laser safety eyewear, operating and alignment procedures, etc.

The most prominent safety concern with a laser is the possibility of damage from exposure to the laser beam. The nature of the damage and the threshold level at which each type of injury can occur depend on the beam parameters: wavelength, beam divergence, and exposure duration. The Laser Safety program at Texas A&M University offers support to researchers for safe usage of lasers in the following areas; training of students and research personnel, annual safety inspections of laser laboratories, and maintaining all records of registered lasers.

Under no circumstances shall a Class 3b or Class 4 laser be used or energized on Texas A&M property before it is listed on a valid Texas A&M University Laser Permit unless otherwise authorized by the Laser Safety Program.

For additional information, call EHS at 979-845-2132 or reference the university's [Laser Safety Program Manual](#).

Flood Safety

With heavy flooding in May 2015 and record breaking floods in April, May, and June of this year, knowing what to do or what not to do in a flood could save your life. Floods are the number one natural disaster in the United States.

Here are several resources to help you learn more about flood safety:

- [National Weather Service—Flood Safety](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security—Floods](#)
- [“Flood Safety for You and Your Family” brochure](#)
- [“Be Ready! Floods” poster](#)
- [“Turn Around Don't Drown®” video](#)



Flood safety is about far more than avoiding high water. Here are a few key concepts:

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| • Stay informed before, during, and after a flood | • Prepare an emergency kit | • Secure your home or office |
| • Determine if you are in a safe place | • Learn which roads are prone to flooding | • Get to higher ground |
| • Determine how you will communicate with your family | • Plan your evacuation, know where you will go | • Heed evacuation orders |
| • Charge your phones | • Don't wait until it is too late to evacuate | • Avoid flood waters |
| | | • Avoid disaster areas |
| | | • Wait for the all clear |

Emergency Evacuation Drills

The safety of our students, faculty, and staff is a priority at Texas A&M University. One of the many ways we try to ensure safety is by conducting emergency evacuation drills in all campus buildings. Knowing what to do when a fire alarm sounds in your building could save you and the lives of others.

When a fire alarm sounds in a building immediately evacuate the building and go to a common meeting place that has been designated in your emergency evacuation plan. This should be at least 200 feet from the building.

Always close doors behind you, to slow down the spread of fire and smoke produced by combustion.

When you are at the designated meeting place you should notify the building proctor and emergency personnel if you know someone is unaccounted for or if you know of any people who were not able to evacuate due to a disability.

Never re-enter a building until told to do so by emergency personnel no matter what the circumstances. For more information about emergency evacuation drills or evacuation planning or to request an emergency evacuation drill please contact the Fire and Life Safety group with Environmental Health and Safety at 979-845-2132.



ATTENTION: The EHS website will be updated soon. If you or your department accesses the EHS webpage for important information or refer directly to our website in your publications, note that some links may need to be updated. We will announce this change via Twitter and Facebook.



Campus Carry

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents fully supported and endorsed the recommendations provided to them at their regularly scheduled April 2016 meeting. As a result, President Young has established the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Carry Implementation to ensure consistent implementation of [University Rule 34.06.02.M1 \(PDF\)](#).

The committee is responsible for developing and communicating procedures to the campus community and the President that address implementation of the rule by June 15, 2016, and submit those procedures for review as Standard Administrative Procedures by September 1, 2016. These procedures will address guidelines for posting approved signage and the processes for requesting and reviewing requests for presidential approval of areas where licensed carry of a handgun will be prohibited. The committee will develop a program to periodically review and update the list of premises on the Texas A&M campus where licensed carry of a handgun is prohibited by February 1, 2017. Throughout this process, the committee will provide regular updates to the Texas A&M community.

To better understand the campus carry rules, University Police Department (UPD) invites all interested individuals to attend one of the information sessions listed to the right, located in Rudder Tower, Room 601. One of the sessions will be videotaped and available for review from the Campus Carry [website](#).

The new campus carry rules go into effect on August 1, 2016. For more information, please see the [summary of the Texas A&M University System Campus Carry Rules](#) and the Campus Carry [website](#).

Sessions

Tuesday, June 28
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Thursday, July 7
2 – 4 p.m.

Tuesday, July 12
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Wednesday, July 20
2 – 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 4
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Tuesday, August 9
2 – 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 18,
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Get to Know Us



Michael Bowe is an Occupational Safety and Health Inspector II. He has worked for EHS since June 2013 and is primarily responsible for conducting laboratory inspections, assisting when necessary with chemical fume hood inspections, and laboratory decommissioning throughout campus. Michael graduated from TSTC-Waco with a degree in safety and environmental compliance. Previously, he worked as an environmental sampling technician for soil, air, and water, in addition to performing inspections of various buildings. Michael is currently working toward the certificate in safety management and gradually working toward the ASP certification. In his free time, Michael enjoys researching family history with his wife, keeping up with sports, and traveling.



Jason Ward is an Environmental Health and Safety Chemical Waste Supervisor. He has been an EHS staff member since 1997 and has provided support to the university's hazardous waste program throughout that time. Jason's primary role in the department is as a chemical waste expert: he guides his staff to safely handle routine chemical waste but then also tackles the bizarre concoctions (such as materials that may have become explosive) with skill. Jason is a graduate of Blinn College with a degree in Fire Science. He has previously worked as a volunteer fire fighter and has hazardous materials training. In his spare time, Jason enjoys hunting, fishing, and anything to do with the outdoors.

OUR CORE VALUES: Safety—Communication—Cooperation—Integrity

Don't forget to keep up with EHS...

Click on any link to stay connected



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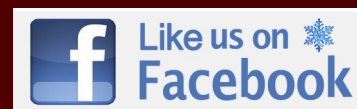
EHS webpage



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EHS
The Environment

Gardens Beautification Project

In 1998 the Board of Regents designated White Creek and the surrounding riparian areas as West Campus Greenway in an effort to preserve campus greenspace.

Vice Chancellor and Dean Dr. Mark Hussey saw a need growing on campus – connecting students with nature and each other. The Gardens, our green oasis, will preserve and develop nearly 40 acres into a public garden and greenway for teaching, research and extension/outreach.

The master plan for this restoration was developed by Texas A&M Landscape Architecture graduate students and revised by Rottenberry Wellen Architects and White Oak Studio. Once completed, this 40 acres will boast of teaching gardens, the restored White Creek, an event lawn and entrance plaza, and a pavilion.



The Teaching Gardens Complex

The Teaching Gardens are currently under construction and will be the nation's premier teaching gardens complex. With more than three acres for both outdoor teaching and demonstrations, this area will feature a pavilion and thematic gardens. These will include the following:

- Bird Garden
- Butterfly and Bee Garden
- Century Oak II
- Citrus Grove
- Farmer's Market
- Food and Fiber Fields
- Fruit Orchard
- Garden Walk
- German Heritage Garden
- Grand Arbor
- Herb Garden
- Homestead
- Maroon and White Garden
- Mexican Heritage Garden
- Outdoor Classroom
- Pecan Bottom
- Rain Garden
- Rose Bed
- Student Landscape Demonstration
- Texas Superstar Garden
- Tree Park
- Vegetable Garden
- Wine Grape Vineyard

The Event Lawn promises to be a premier location for the annual College of Agriculture and Life Science Tailgate as well as many more activities. This luscious green space will be lined with post oaks to provide comforting shade. In addition to the Event Lawn, a pavilion capable of hosting 150 people will be in The Gardens. The pavilion will be an octagonal shaped building that will be available for both indoor and outdoor events.

To learn more about this restoration project, any of the amenities in the gardens or assisting with making the project a reality, please visit [The Gardens](#) online.

Construction and Stormwater

As Texas A&M University and the surrounding community continue to grow, construction projects can have potentially unwanted environmental effects such as sedimentation, erosion, and contamination. Environmental Health & Safety conducts stormwater inspections every 14 days and as necessary with rain events. These inspections document violations and start a series of activities to correct or prevent these unwanted environmental effects.

The most prominent violation is compromised inlet protection. Typically this means that somewhere on the construction site, an existing stormwater inlet is allowing dirt, debris, or other pollutants to enter the stormwater system. Inlets within the construction site are protected by some form of barrier. A compromised inlet protection could have a broken, missing, or overwhelmed barrier.

Because the stormwater system will eventually lead to a creek or other naturally occurring waterway or body of water it is important to keep dirt, debris, and pollutants out. Those items can cause harm to the plantlife and wildlife and could additionally compromise drainage downstream.

For more information, you can find the Texas [A&M Stormwater Management Plan](#) on the Environmental Management [page](#). If you have a construction or stormwater concern, you can report the incident by [email](#) or by phone at 979-845-4311.

Spring Stream Clean

On April 23, 2016, Environmental Health and Safety hosted the 7th Annual Stream Clean. This event was originally scheduled for October 25, 2015; however, the event had to be postponed due to inclement weather.

Nearly seventy volunteers came out to assist in the clean-up of White Creek on West Campus, from AgriLife down to the George Bush Library. Forty-five bags of trash were collected along with a plastic car bumper, plastic housing for a laptop, and vast amounts of construction debris from various projects happening in the area.

Thanks to our sponsors Keep Brazos Beautiful, SET Environmental, Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professional – Lone Star Chapter, and Brazos Clean Water for the use of supplies and the purchase of t-shirts for our volunteers.

We will be hosting the next Stream Clean in the fall of 2016. Be sure to contact us at (979) 845-2132 for more information if you or your group would be interested in participating.



The Laboratory Safety Institute's 24-Hour Lab Safety Short Course

Learn to identify and manage common laboratory hazards and many you may not have considered. Discover how federal, state and local EHS requirements apply to the laboratory environment, and how to improve regulatory compliance, reduce liability exposure, and convince others to care more about health, safety, and the environment.

Who should attend?

- Anyone who wants a safer lab
 - EHS professionals
- Facilities/Risk/Operations managers
- Lab managers/supervisors/workers
 - Researchers/Pis
 - Safety/Security directors
- School administrators/educators

August 1-3, 2016, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Texas A&M University Equine Complex—
3240 F&B Road, College Station, TX 77843**

Cost:

**Texas A&M: Staff—\$775;
Grad Student—\$249; Undergrad—\$149
Non-Texas A&M: \$1,095 (\$975 two or more)**

Learn more and register online [here](#).

SAFETY SOUNDOFF



In May 2016, Tom Marshall of Utilities & Energy Services (UES) noticed the truck he was operating for Solid Waste & Recycling had begun leaking hydraulic fluid on Adriance Road on West Campus.

Tom quickly exited the vehicle and used a shovel to create an earthen barrier to contain the hydraulic fluid on the pavement, preventing it from finding a path to the stormwater system. His quick thinking and action helped maintain the university's clean environment on campus and downstream, also avoiding the cost of any remediation if the nearby soil had been impacted. Great job, Tom!

Agricultural Worker Protection Standard Revisions: Increased Protection from Pesticide Exposure

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has revised the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) to increase protection from pesticide exposure. The WPS has not been revised since 1992, and these regulatory revisions seek to protect agricultural workers and pesticide handlers from risks associated with pesticides on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses.

Major changes to the regulation include:

- Annual mandatory training on required protections. Currently, training is only once every five years
- Expanded training includes instructions to reduce take-home exposure from pesticides on work clothing and other safety topics.
- First-time ever minimum age requirement: Children under 18 are prohibited from handling pesticides.
- Expanded mandatory posting of no-entry signs for the most hazardous pesticides. The signs prohibit entry into pesticide-treated fields until residues decline to a safe level.
- New no-entry application-exclusion zones up to 100 feet surrounding pesticide application equipment will protect workers and others from exposure to pesticide overspray.
- Requirement to provide more than one way for farmworkers and their representatives to gain access to pesticide application information and safety data sheets – centrally-posted, or by requesting records.
- Mandatory record-keeping to improve states' ability to follow up on pesticide violations and enforce compliance. Records of application-specific pesticide information, as well as farmworker training, must be kept for two years.
- Changes in personal protective equipment will be consistent with the Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards for ensuring respirators are effective, including fit test, medical evaluation and training.
- Specific amounts of water to be used for routine washing, emergency eye flushing and other decontamination, including eye wash systems for handlers at pesticide mixing/loading sites.

These changes become effective in January 2017 to allow time to adjust to the new requirements.

For further information about changes to the WPS, see the EPA's [Pesticide Worker Safety Page](#).

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EHS Programs:

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Hazardous Material Shipping
Hearing Conservation
Indoor Air Quality
Industrial Hygiene
Laboratory Safety
Occupational Health
Occupational Safety
Radiological Safety
Respiratory Protection
Scientific Diving

Environmental Health & Safety is a department within the Office of Safety and Security in the Division of Finance and Administration. Click [here](#) to provide feedback.

EHS Training Schedule

Click on a date below to register for classroom training:

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| General Radiation Safety | 7/21, 8/24, 9/22 |
| Vet School Radiation Safety | 7/12, 8/18, 9/20 |
| Hazardous Materials Shipping General Awareness | 7/21, 8/18, 9/15 |

Interested in other trainings?

See the list of currently offered courses (online and classroom) on the [EHS training page](#) or call 979-845-2132 to inquire about additional topics.

DID

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared Zika virus a Public Health Emergency of Immediate Concern (PHEIC) on February 1, 2016. Click [here](#) to learn more.

During April's historic floods in Houston, TX, more than 240 billion gallons of water fell as rain. That is enough to fuel Niagara Falls for 88 hours. Click [here](#) for important flood safety tips.

YOU

The story of how the maroon "Aggie Bluebonnet" came to be starts over 30 years ago. It began as a pink bluebonnet found growing in San Antonio, TX, by horticulturist and former Texas A&M professor Dr. Jerry Parsons. Click [here](#) for Dr. Parson's account of his experience, and [here](#) for Dr. Greg Grant's, who also worked on the project.


Each year, between 1,800 and 3,000 occupational incidents involving pesticide exposure are reported from the farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses covered by the Worker Protection Standard.

KNOW?

! We need to hear from you !

Notice a safety concern that affects you or your department? Have an environmental, health, or safety question you would like answered? Have a topic in mind that you want to see in the next issue of *Safety Dispatch*? [Let us know!](#)

Enter to win a great summer prize...

Can you count how many times the  appears in this newsletter? For a chance to win a prize, email your answer to safetydispatch@tamu.edu.