

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

SAFETY DISPATCH

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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DISTRACTED DRIVING

Distracted driving is one of the fastest growing safety issues on the roads today. In 2015 alone, 3,477 people were killed, and 391,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers. During daylight hours, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones while driving. That creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. But, you already knew that! The sad reality is, that these facts are well-known and yet people continue to multitask while driving.

Your full attention is needed while driving in order to drive safely. Sending or reading a text message takes your eyes off the road for about 5 seconds, which at 55 mph is equivalent to driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed. Drivers are 23 times more likely to crash if they are texting while driving.

So what is being done?

While Texas does not have a statewide ban on using cell phones while driving (until September 2017), over 100 cities, including College Station, have already banned the practice. The ordinance went into effect November 9, 2016, and bans all handheld wireless communication devices while driving in the College Station city limits, and applies to any person operating a motor vehicle or bicycle. Authorized emergency personnel acting in an official capacity and licensed amateur radio operators are exempt. The ordinance allows the use of handsfree devices such as Bluetooth or connected devices. The use of navigation from a cell phone is allowed if it is mounted in the vehicle. Hand-held



devices can be used to report a crime, traffic accident, medical emergency, serious traffic hazard, or to prevent a crime.

The National Safety Council (NSC) is taking a stronger stand and asking for all Americans to break the habit behind the wheel including hands-free calls. The NSC launched a national campaign, *Calls Kill*, to illustrate that hands-free cell phones are not risk-free, and no call is worth a life.

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Slow Moving Vehicles

In order to provide a safe environment for students, faculty, staff and university visitors, certain procedures and regulations have been created to establish proper safety procedures for Slow Moving Vehicles (SMVs) operated on or off university property when conducting university business. Slow Moving Vehicles include golf carts and utility type vehicles such as Mules, Gators and Rangers, which have no less than four wheels, a maximum speed of 25 mph, and are used by departments, contractors, and private partners to move people

and materials on or off university property when conducting university business. Personally-owned SMVs are prohibited from operating on University property.

All operators of SMVs must possess a valid Texas driver's license, know and adhere to the State of Texas motor vehicle laws, and annually review the Utility Vehicle Operating Procedures Program provided by Environmental Health and Safety.



Safe Operation Guidelines

All original equipment safety features should be kept in good working order. Never overload the SMV, e.g., carrying more passengers than seat belts provided or overloading the vehicle's recommended carrying capacity. The maximum speed limit when driving off standard roadways is 10 mph (5 mph when pedestrians are present). The SMV must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks and may follow pedestrians no closer than 10 feet. SMVs may not be driven on narrow sidewalks (6 feet or less). Never smoke or use cell phones, headphones or other devices that could limit hearing or cause a distraction while operating the SMV. Operators must adhere to all traffic laws and signs, including posted speed limits.



All Utility Vehicles and trailers (pulled by Utility Vehicles) must have the slow moving vehicle reflective triangle clearly displayed on the exterior of that vehicle and any trailer.

All SMVs must travel in the right hand lane following the flow of traffic, unless turning left. SMV's should not operate in the bike lane or drive around or otherwise bypass gates. When moving through congested areas, especially at class change, speed should be no faster than pedestrians walking in the same area. **Pedestrians have the right-of-way on campus sidewalks.** SMV operators must be diligent and pay particular attention to the needs of disabled persons, as limitations in vision, hearing, or mobility may impair their ability to see, hear, or move out of the way of an SMV. When unattended, secure the SMV by removing the keys and engaging the parking brake.

SMV operators must report any accidents to their immediate supervisor. If the SMV is not operating properly, park in a safe location, remove the key and any valuables, and notify your supervisor immediately. Transportation Services (979-845-0057) can assist with a non-working SMV.

SMVs may not be driven on Wellborn Rd./FM 2154, University Dr./Raymond Stotzer Pkwy, George Bush Dr., or Texas Ave, except while crossing at signalized intersections.

For more information about slow moving vehicles, visit transport.tamu.edu.

Fire Safety -Where You Live and Work

Each month, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) conducts inspections in all residence halls and apartment buildings on campus that belong to Residence Life. The focus of these monthly inspections is to ensure stairwells, corridors, and common areas are accessible in case of an emergency. Inspections are also conducted in all Residence Life facilities annually. These facilities include residence halls, apartments, corps housing, and playgrounds. Annual inspections are thorough checks of entire facilities to include corridors, stairwells, common areas, vending rooms, mechanical rooms, and custodial closets. In addition to monthly inspections, EHS inspectors work to inspect approximately 5,300 rooms in the residence halls and apartments each fall. In the spring, a thorough review is completed in rooms of all new incoming students as well. EHS also provides Fire & Life Safety Training for new Resident Assistants (RAs) three times a year and conducts room by room inspector training annually.

"It is important for us to check the areas where our students live to help prevent fires from occurring. It is also important to help our students know what to do to get out and stay alive in the event of a fire," says Danny Lackey, Occupational Safety and Health Inspector III for EHS. Some of the common items of concern during each fire and life safety inspection include signage on building exteriors, blocked exits and egress areas, general housekeeping in storage areas, and extensive use of extension cords as permanent wiring. Fire alarms and fire suppression equipment are inspected on a regular basis as well. The job of the inspector is to identify dangers that would encourage the spread of fire & smoke, and identify any general hazards or safety issues. If any safety issues are identified, a work order is then submitted to resolve the issue.

EHS also conducts fire and life inspections on all buildings that belong to Texas A&M, including staff and faculty office buildings. EHS requests your assistance in maintaining a safe living/working space by addressing fire safety around you:

- Use extension cords for temporary situations (e.g., 8-hour work period)
- Keep wiring in good working order (do not use frayed cords)
- Only use UL-approved power strips with internal ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)
- Do not daisy-chain power strips
- Avoid excessive fire loading (do not store excessive amounts of combustible materials)
- Keep exits, corridors, and the fire extinguisher free from obstructions

It is important to always have an exit strategy — know at least two ways out of your office or room and remember that the way out may not be the way you entered.

To learn more about residence hall and building inspections, or fire safety, visit ehsd.tamu.edu.







Good Laboratory Design Reduces Risk, Improves Safety & Productivity

Good laboratory design goes beyond providing a safe environment. It provides laboratory users with a solid foundation to reduce risk and prepares them in the chance of an emergency situation by providing a secure and healthy environment— all while getting their work done.

There is a perception that laboratories have become more dangerous in recent years, based on a few high-profile lab disasters. However, there is not a lot of data to support that perception. In addition to impacting the health and safety of employees and students, well-designed academic and research laboratories can improve compliance, reduce risk, improve productivity, and facilitate the necessary safe,



healthy, and secure environment for teaching and research across the campus.

Faculty, researchers, and departments can realize many positive benefits by being proactive to ensure quality laboratory design and function, including:

- 1. Laboratory users' needs are fulfilled
- 2. Reduced risk of laboratory accidents and incidents
- 3. Improved layout and logistics within the laboratory
- 4. Achieve safe, successful and productive research outcomes
- 5. Researchers can focus on their work instead of worrying about emergencies
- 6. Flexible laboratory design can be readily adapted for future research needs

Safety is only one discipline involved in laboratory design and planning. Laboratory researchers must work proactively with planners, architects, engineers, accountants and others to achieve a useful, flexible, and compliant design that not only meets the needs and objectives, but also supports the Aggie mission for quality academics, research, and service.

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Ways to get involved

We can all play a part in the fight to save lives by ending distracted driving. The best way to end distracted driving is to spread the word about the dangers of distracted driving. Ask your co-workers to commit to distraction-

free driving. Any type of behavior that draws a motorist's attention away from



I pledge to be an attentive driver:

driving is dangerous. Some simple tips to end distracted driving includes waiting until later to talk or text, use an app to disable texting when driving, or safely pull over to the side of the road if a phone call or text cannot wait.

Take the pledge. Visit https://www.nsc.org/forms/distracteddriving_pledge.aspx for more info.

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Reporting Environmental Complaints

Have you ever been walking on campus and saw something that you just thought wasn't right or looked strange to you? Maybe you see a strange ponding of water or a discolored area of grass around a transformer. When you come across these type of issues, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) should be notified.

The Environmental Compliance group handles environmental issues such as these. EHS will investigate the cause, and remediate the situation if there is an issue that needs to be resolved. Examples of this might be oil/gasoline flowing directly into a waterway on campus, foaming at a waterway on campus, or an obvious fish kill.

To report any environmental issues on campus, contact EHS at 845-2132 or the Communications Center at 845-4311. Once you report a problem, someone from the Environmental Compliance group will talk with you about the details of your complaint. **Please be prepared to tell us details about:**

- the nature of the problem
- the location of the problem
- when the problem occurred (date and time)
- who or what may be the source of the problem
- any information or evidence you may haveparticularly eyewitness information, documents, or photographs.



If the situation is an immediate threat to public health or the environment, we will respond immediately. Other complaints could take longer, but we take every complaint seriously, and we will investigate your concerns if it is within our jurisdiction.

After we have received your complaint and any information or evidence you have, here are the usual steps we take:

- Environmental Compliance will review the given information. We will call to discuss your complaint and any information or evidence you have if there are questions.
- In most cases, an on-site investigation will be done to see if any environmental regulations have been violated.
- If the investigation reveals a violation, we will take appropriate action to notify the proper authorities of the incident and what we are doing to remediate the incident.
- If the investigation reveals no violation but needs attention we will initiate actions to resolve the situation and make improvements to prevent the incident from happening again.

For more information visit ehsd.tamu.edu.



Know the Risks of Heat Stress!



Workers who are exposed to extreme heat or work in hot environments may be at risk of heat stress. Exposure to extreme heat can result in occupational illnesses and injuries. Heat stress can result in heat stroke or heat exhaustion. When the human body is unable to maintain a normal temperature, heat illnesses can occur and may result in death.

Workers at greater risk of heat stress include those who are 65 years of age or older, are overweight, have heart disease or high blood pressure, or take medications that may be affected by extreme heat.

Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related health problem. Heat stroke occurs when the body's temperature



regulating system fails and body temperature rises to critical levels (greater than 104°F). *This is a medical emergency that may result in death!* Signs of heat stroke include throbbing headache, dizziness and light-headedness, lack of sweating despite the heat, red, dry skin, muscle cramps, nausea and vomiting, and rapid heartbeat. If a worker shows signs of possible heat stroke, *get medical help immediately.* Until medical help arrives, move the worker to a shady, cool area and remove as much clothing as possible. Wet the worker with cool water and circulate the air to speed cooling. Place cold wet cloths, wet towels or ice over the body to slowly cool the body.

Heat Exhaustion is also a serious heat-related health problem. Symptoms of heat exhaustion are similar to heat stroke and include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, confusion, thirst, heavy sweating and a body temperature greater than 100.4°F. Workers with heat exhaustion should be removed from the hot area and given liquids to drink.

Cool the worker with cold compresses to the head, neck, and face or have the worker wash his or her head, face and neck with cold water. Encourage frequent sips of cool water. Workers with signs or symptoms of heat exhaustion should be taken to a clinic or emergency room for medical evaluation and treatment. Make sure that someone stays with the worker until help arrives. If symptoms worsen, call 911 and get help immediately.

Prevention of heat stress in workers is important. Employers should provide training to workers so they understand what heat stress is, how it affects their health and safety, and how it can be prevented.



Most elephants weigh less than the tongue of a blue whale?



During a sneeze, all of your bodily functions momentarily stop, even your heart?

Cooking related fires are the leading cause of injuries among people 65 years of age and older? Avoid wearing loose-fitting clothing while cooking and use a timer to remind yourself to check food you have in the oven.

Americans use more than 67 million tons of paper per year,



Fire kills more Americans each year than all natural disasters?



Unmanned Aerial Systems

Flying at Texas A&M University

Drones, unmanned aerial systems (UAS), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) – all different names for the same technology – aircraft that are operated from the ground.

With the popularity of UAS, the FAA has issued guidelines for safe operation, and Texas A&M University has initiated a program to ensure compliance with the applicable rules and regulations.

Most flights on Texas A&M's campus will fall under Part 107 of the FAA rules (https://www.faa.gov/uas/). These rules include

Pilot requirements

- Must have a Remote Pilot Airman Certificate
- Must be at least 16 years old

Aircraft requirements

- Must be less than 55 pounds
- Must be registered if over 0.55 pounds (online registration: https://registermyuas.faa.gov/)
- Must undergo pre-flight check to ensure UAS is in condition for safe operation

Location requirements

• Class G airspace (note: most of Texas A&M's campus is in Class D airspace, so any unmanned flights must be approved in advance by the FAA.)

Operating rules

- Must keep the aircraft in sight (visual line-of-sight)
- Must fly under 400 feet
- Must fly during the day
- Must fly at or below 100 mph
- Must yield right of way to manned aircraft
- Must NOT fly over people
- Must NOT fly from a moving vehicle

If any Part 107 rules cannot be met by the pilot in command, the FAA will allow you to request a waiver. This waiver must be granted by the FAA before Texas

A&M will allow you to operate a UAS on campus. To request a waiver from Part 107 rules, click here: https://www.faa.gov/uas/request_waiver/.

To request permission to fly a UAS on campus (or to hire a third party to fly a UAS on campus), complete the UAS Flight Authorization Application: https://www.tamus.edu/business/risk-management/uas/uas-application/. Allow 15 business days for the application to be reviewed by the Texas A&M University Supervising Authority.

After the Supervising Authority has reviewed the application and determined that flights can be conducted safely, the pilot in command will be given permission to fly in accordance with the details on the application.

To fly UAS for educational purposes, faculty members will be given an expedited review by the Supervising Authority. Contact EHS (ehsd@tamu.edu) to initiate a request for educational use of a UAS.





Get to Know Us



Caroline Ask is an Environmental Specialist, with an emphasis in water regulatory compliance. She has been an EHS staff member since September 2015 and is responsible for conducting municipal, industrial, and construction stormwater inspections, environmental training, as well as writing and submitting regulatory compliance documents for main campus. Caroline is a Fightin' Texas Aggie alumnus with a Bachelor of Science degree in Bioenvironmental Sciences. Previously, she worked for Texas Children's Hospital at the Houston Medical Center campus; her responsibilities involved indoor air quality monitoring, respiratory fit testing, hazardous waste shipping, environmental training, and updating the chemical inventory to GHS

standards. Caroline is currently working towards her ASP, ESP, and CHMP certifications. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and being outdoors.



Theresa Collins is the Administrative Associate IV for EHS under the radiological safety group. She has worked for EHS since March 2011 and her primary responsibility is maintaining the dosimetry program that involves ordering and receiving radiation dosimetry badges, setting up accounts, distributing badges among departments, processing invoices and handling dosimetry reports. In addition to dosimetry, she is involved with providing support to radiological safety staff with radiation safety training updates, radioactive material permit application, permit verification and renewal, and assisting with committee meetings. She is also responsible for answering routine phone calls. In her spare time, she enjoys spending

time with her 4 grandchildren and 2 daughters. She loves the country and being outdoors.

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

SAFETY DISPATCH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

1111 Research Parkway, Suite 220 MS 4472 College Station, TX 77843-4472 Phone: (979) 845-2132 Fax: (979) 845-1348 Director: Christina Robertson

EHS Programs:

Agricultural Safety Asbestos AEDs Chemical Waste **Emergency Management** Environmental Management Ergonomics Fire & Life Safety Food Safety Hazardous Material Shipping Hearing Conservation Indoor Air Quality Industrial Hygiene Laboratory Safety Occupational Health Occupational Safety Radiological Safety **Respiratory Protection**

Environmental Health <u>& Safety is a</u> department within the Office of Safety and Security in the Division of Finance and Operations. Click here to provide feedback.

EHS Training Schedule

Click on a date below to register for classroom training:

General RAM	8/30, 9/12
Introduction to Laboratory Safety	9/7, 9/20
General Awareness DOT/IATA	7/20, 8/17, 9/21

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.

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 newsletter? For a chance to win a prize, email your answer to safetydispatch@tamu.edu.

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