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A little bit of past news \* This past May, **Governor Rell** officially proclaimed the week of May 3-5, 2009 as **North American Occupational Safety and Health Week** and May 6, 2009, as **Occupational Safety and Health Professional Day** in the State of Connecticut.

## ~ Chemical Safety ~



Fume hoods—small but essential safety devices used in UConn laboratories—are highly energy-intensive, each one consuming more energy than three homes in an average U.S. climate. Increasing airflow rates in an effort to enhance safety not only elevates energy use but can, in fact, compromise safety by causing dangerous turbulence that can foil containment. New design strategies have been demonstrated to reduce energy use by 75%, while maintaining or enhancing safety. The energy savings potential for these hoods across the United States is \$1.5 billion annually. If the fume hood is not in use, keeping the sash wide open **WASTES** about \$1,500 in energy costs per year per hood, about the same as the average US household. Simply shutting the sash when not in use is the best way to save energy costs and help UConn go green. So please, **SHUT the SASH!**

## ~ Biological Safety ~



## Product Recalls

Using **defective, hazardous, improperly labeled and unsafe products** poses a risk to you and your family.

[www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) is a gateway to the latest product recall information about:

- Food
- Medicine
- Motor vehicles

## Our Vision

To promote and maintain a safe and healthful environment by ensuring the highest level of environmental health and safety services for faculty, staff, students, and visitors at the University of Connecticut.

## Our Mission

To provide comprehensive environmental health and safety services for the University community by developing and administering effective policies and procedures that prevent personal injuries and maintain regulatory compliance in the areas of biological, chemical, occupational, and radiation safety, thereby supporting the University's mission of teaching, research, and public service.

## EH&S Services

Training schedules which are updated on a regular basis.

Waste Pickup and Delivery Request Forms

- Child safety seats
- Boats
- Toys
- Children's products
- Appliances
- Electronics
- Recreation equipment.

These websites are a great resource for household safety information like:  
[childproofing your home](#)  
[pool safety](#)  
[fireworks safety](#)

You can also report an unsafe product or sign up for email recall alerts located at each website.

*Be Informed and Have a Safe Summer!*

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## ~ Occupational Safety ~

### Surgical masks vs. Respirators

With the recent events regarding H1N1 (swine flu), we've all seen the images of people wearing masks in public. Did you know there is a difference between surgical masks and filtering facepiece respirators (aka, N95's or dust masks)?



**Surgical masks** are loose-fitting, disposable masks used in the medical and research community to **prevent the wearer from contaminating those around them**. The surgical mask collects droplets released by the wearer, but could also be used by the wearer to prevent exposure to splash and large droplets. Surgical masks do

not form a seal around the face, so small droplets and particles can and do enter the wearer's breathing zone. The CDC recommends using a surgical mask if you are sick or when you intend to be in a crowded location for a short period of time. Once removed, dispose of the facemask--it is considered contaminated and is not meant for reuse.



**Filtering Facepiece Respirators** such as the N95-rated dust mask pictured at left, are disposable masks that provide a tight seal on the face, *when fitted properly*. They **protect the wearer from exposure** to small droplets and particulates in the environment, including airborne viruses. These respirators are certified by NIOSH to provide

a minimum level of protection as identified by the manufacturer. If the mask does not have 'NIOSH' printed on the label, with at least an N95 designation, it is not a true respirator and does not provide the intended protection to the wearer. Beyond popular belief, these masks are **not** one-size-fits-all! They may be one-size-fits-most! And because it may not fit properly, it may give you a false sense of security. When respirators are required in your workplace, a "fit test" must be performed to

ensure that the respirator provides an appropriate seal and fits your face. In general, the CDC does not recommend using a filtering facepiece respirator unless you are working in a healthcare setting and will be in close contact with sick or presumed sick individuals. Once removed, dispose of the respirator--it is considered contaminated and is not meant for reuse.

Neither mask will provide complete protection from the flu. Basic safeguards are still a must and are your first line of defense: proper and frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoidance of crowds and gatherings during a pandemic.

More information about the use of each type of mask can be found in the following CDC guidance documents: [Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use to Reduce Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Transmission](#) and [What You Should Know about Using Facemasks and Respirators during a Flu Pandemic](#). For more information on respirator use at the University, contact [Val Brangan](#) or see the University's [Respirator Policy](#).

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EPA's new Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule will affect all departments that do renovations or repairs in pre-1978 housing or child occupied locations.



According to the rule, departments at the University who could be expected to impact more than 6 square feet of painted surface in pre-1978 housing or child-occupied locations will be required to do the following:

- Prior to doing work, provide to the tenants and occupants (including parents of children in child care facilities) the pamphlet [Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers, and Schools](#), and get acknowledgement that pamphlet was received.
- Have a certified renovator on site during the project. To become a certified renovator, an individual must have completed an 8-hour EPA course taught by an accredited training provider.
- Use specific engineering and work practice controls to reduce the generation of lead dust during the project including: containments, wet methods, HEPA vacuums, final clean-up, appropriate waste disposal and recordkeeping.
- Conduct post renovation cleaning verification at the end of the project, either through methods taught to the certified renovator, or by an accredited separate dust sampling technician.

Contractors hired to do work at the University in the target locations are also covered by the rule and must comply with the same requirements. In addition, firms that employ certified renovators must also be certified through EPA.

It is important to understand that these types of activities are not considered lead abatement. Lead abatement is the complete removal or encapsulation of the lead-containing materials with the intent of eliminating the lead hazard. Lead abatement is regulated by the EPA and the CT Department of Public Health. The Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule regulate work where *the intent is modification or repair*, not the complete elimination of the hazard.

Parts of the EPA new standard are already in affect. The [Renovate Right](#) pamphlet

is required to be in use **now**. Also, as of 4/22/09 training providers must now be certified by EPA to provide the certified renovator and dust sampling technician training.

Employees can now register with accredited training providers for certified renovator training. Firms can become certified starting 10/22/09. ***On April 22, 2010, all parts of the rule will be in effect.*** Don't wait to get into compliance!

Further compliance information for affected departments can be found in EPA's publication: [Small Entity Compliance Guide to Renovate Right](#). You can also contact Val Brangan at 486-3613 for more details and information on accredited training providers.

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## **~ Radiation Safety ~**

### **ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION AND TANNING**

#### ***Ultraviolet Radiation***

*Ultraviolet* (UV) radiation is *non-ionizing* but sits very close to the *ionizing* forms of radiation (x rays and gamma rays) on the electromagnetic spectrum.



#### ***General***

Tanning is the skin's response to UV radiation. As skin cells are exposed to UV radiation, they produce brown pigment called melanin to protect them from further UV exposure. This results in a darkening of the skin (tanning), which is the body's natural defense mechanism and attempt to prevent further damage from UV radiation. The more frequent the UV exposure, the more melanin produced in the skin cells, and the darker the skin. People with naturally darker skin have less risk from the harmful effects of UV radiation. Individuals with naturally fair skin are more susceptible to health effects from UV radiation.

Sunlight and artificial tanning methods, such as tanning booths or salons, are sources of UV exposure. Sufficient amounts of UV exposure are known to cause adverse health effects in humans and are a public health concern.



#### ***Biological and Health Effects and Tanning Bed/Booth Risk***

Tanning and burning play a role in health effects, including skin cancer. UV radiation damage can result in mutations that promote or cause cancer, and repeated UV exposures may result in photo-aging (wrinkles, sagging skin, loss of elasticity, and sun spots). Cataracts are a known health effect from UV radiation exposure and eye protection is essential when tanning.

Tanning beds and booths do not provide a "safe" tan. Tanning beds and booths may emit the same type and amount of UV radiation as the summer sun at noon, and sometimes more. Therefore, tanning beds and booths may provide two to three times the risk for health effects as compared to sun tanning under certain conditions.

#### ***Ultraviolet Protection***

Information regarding UV protection is available from the FDA:  
<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/radhealth>.

Source: Health Physics Society.

[http://www.hps.org/documents/Tanning\\_Salons\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.hps.org/documents/Tanning_Salons_Fact_Sheet.pdf)



**Workplace Safety** should be at the top of every department's priority list. **Environmental Health & Safety** offers various training year round to employees and students. Your supervisor can help you determine if you need training, or go to the [Laboratory Safety Checklist](#) and the [Occupational Health and Safety Checklist](#).

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**On-line** registration for **Biological, Chemical, Radiation** and **Occupational** training classes. All schedules are on-line.

- ☞ Go to <http://www.ehs.uconn.edu/> and **click** on **Training**.
- ☞ Click Training Schedule for the appropriate section and to see which dates are scheduled
- ☞ Click [HERE](#) to register

You will need your **NET ID** to register. If you are not sure what your NET ID is, go to <https://netid.uconn.edu> and follow the prompts.

Thank you for registering for our training classes on-line. Please call 486-3613 for assistance.