



# THE SAFETY GUIDE WIRE



University of Connecticut's Environmental Health & Safety Newsletter

\*June 2007\*

Chemical  
Safety –  
[Aerosol Cans](#)



## JUNE -- NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

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### ~Chemical Safety~

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#### Proper Management of Aerosol Cans

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Aerosol cans are used by many departments at the University of Connecticut on a daily basis. They are used for numerous products including paints, cleaners, degreasers, disinfectants, and pesticides. Aerosols work by coupling a product (e.g. paint) with a propellant (e.g. propane) which dispenses both the product and propellant from the container when the nozzle of the can is pressed.

In accordance with the Resource Conservation & Recovery Act (RCRA), aerosols can be considered a hazardous waste by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Therefore, those aerosols that contain flammable, toxic, or corrosive chemicals need to be managed and disposed of properly. Even “canned air,” often used in offices to clean computers, can contain hazardous chemicals. Below are some general guidelines to follow when managing aerosol cans in the workplace:

- Review the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for the aerosol products commonly used at your facility to identify those which are hazardous.
- Store all aerosol cans as instructed on the container label. Storing aerosols in areas of excessive heat can potentially cause them to explode due to the pressure of the expanding gas.
- Spent aerosol cans containing flammable, toxic, or corrosive chemicals should be placed in a box in the laboratory or shop's “Satellite Accumulation Area.” The box needs to be labeled properly with the words “Hazardous Waste” along with the hazardous contents of the cans (e.g. Aerosol cans containing trichloroethylene).
- When the box has been filled with cans, submit a chemical pick-up request to Environmental Health & Safety at (<http://ehs.uconn.edu/cwc/request.php>).
- At **NO POINT** should aerosol cans generated from the University containing hazardous chemicals be placed in the regular trash.

After the pick-up has been completed, EH&S will puncture each can, drain and collect the excess chemical contents, and send them out to be recycled. By taking the time to properly manage aerosol cans, we can further enhance our regulatory compliance and the overall safety of our University community.

**FYI** – There is a **Chemical Safety Training** scheduled for **July 10, 2007 \* 2:00 – 3:00 pm**. If you have recently been transferred to the University of Connecticut and need chemical training to work in your lab, please go to [www.ehs.uconn.edu](http://www.ehs.uconn.edu) . Click on **training**, then on **class registration log-in** under the Chemical section. There will be more training scheduled for the upcoming semester.

## 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.



## ~Occupational Safety~

### Hearing Conservation and Summer Landscaping Activities

By Val Brangan

Hey, I'm hear (*pun intended*) today to talk about hearing conservation... **WHAT!?!?**

 As you're reading this article, what do you hear? Are you hearing pleasant outdoor activities, such as birds and crickets? Do you hear the constant drone of your air conditioner, cars and trucks passing by, or music? How about work activities that are going on around you?

Everyday, we are constantly exposed to different noise sources, normally at a safe level. But some loud sounds, over time, can affect our hearing. [Noise-induced hearing loss](#) (NIHL) is the destruction of sensitive hair cells in our inner ears from noise that is too loud, or noise that extends for too long a period of time. These cells are responsible for transmitting sound waves into electrical impulses for our brains to process. Once these cells are destroyed, there is no way to get them back. NIHL does not occur suddenly, but is a silent (no pun intended), gradual problem. You slowly start to lose your hearing. Over time, conversation becomes distorted and muffled, and it's difficult to understand speech. This is not an age-related disease! In fact, given the advent of Ipods and MP3 players, doctors are seeing an increase in NIHL for teens and pre-teens.

The key to avoiding NIHL is to reduce time and exposure to loud sounds. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)) have standards in place to protect workers from exposures to loud sounds in their work environment. Many summer activities produce very loud noise levels. Just operating a lawn mower for more than a few hours can exceed OSHA's permissible noise level, requiring controls to be used by the employee. String trimmers, leaf blowers, chain saws and other lawn maintenance equipment have even louder noise levels and thus, shorter periods of time to be safely exposed to them. As a rule-of-thumb, if you have to raise your voice to be heard by someone within 3 feet of you, there may be a noise issue in your work environment. EH&S has a [noise policy](#) that incorporates the OSHA standard to protect UCONN employees from hazardous levels of noise.

But noise doesn't stop when we leave work. The harmful effect of loud noise to our hearing is cumulative throughout the day. At home, we mow the lawn, use string-trimmers, operate leaf blowers, or even have teenagers that listen to loud music. We need to take care when dealing with noise issues outside the work environment. It's highly recommended that hearing protection, ear plugs or ear muffs, be used during loud activities. And keep in mind, the MP3

## 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.

players that we use during these activities just add to the already loud environment. At UCONN, personal music players are not used in loud work environments, such as during lawn maintenance activities.

If you have any concerns about excessive noise levels in your work environment, contact our office (486-3613) for a sound level assessment. And remember, the only way to avoid NIHL is to avoid loud noise. Don't get caught having to say...



**WHAT?!**

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## ~Radiation Safety~



**Security Policy for Radioactive Material Use Labs** – Doors to labs should be kept locked even if there is no radioactive material (RAM) in the lab. Also, cabinets that are normally locked when they contain RAM should be kept locked even when they **don't** contain any RAM. By implementing this policy, you will be less likely to leave the doors open when RAM is present and avoid receiving a violation from Radiation Safety or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

**Radioactive Material Inventories** – At the end of each quarter (March, June, September, December) you will receive a notice (via email) from Radiation Safety asking for the submission of your current inventory spreadsheets. Notices are sent to licensed investigators and any lab personnel that have been identified as a contact for quarterly inventory up-keep. Upon receipt of that notice, you should forward all spreadsheets to Radiation Safety **even if there have been no changes, uses, etc. for that quarter**. The inventory submitted will be reconciled and returned to the person who submitted it. The reconciled copy should then be saved on a working computer that can be accessed by all users in the lab. **If a current, working copy of your inventory cannot be produced during an inspection, your lab will be found in violation.** If you wish to add or delete someone from our quarterly inventory notice list, please contact Dawn Kemp at [dawn.kemp@uconn.edu](mailto:dawn.kemp@uconn.edu).

**Radioactive Waste Vendor and LSV Cocktails** - Radiac Environmental Services are now handling the University's radioactive waste shipping needs. When preparing our waste manifest, we are now required by Radiac to list the types of scintillation liquids contained in the shipment. Therefore, it is **extremely important** that lab personnel list which cocktail they use on the waste disposal log.



## ~Biological Health~

### Food Safety (*true or false*)

1. Perishable food should not sit out at room temperature for more than 2 hours. T or F
2. It is OK to leave pasta salad, made without mayonnaise, at room temperature for more than 2 hours. T or F
3. Platters and utensils used for raw meat, poultry or fish should not be used for cooked food. T or F
4. Marinades used for raw foods should not be used on cooked food. T or F
5. Food is cooked when it looks done. T or F
6. Because it is fruit, cut melon can stay out at room temperature all day. T or F



#### Answers:

1. **T** \* Bacteria in the food can grow quickly when the temperature of the food is between 45°F and 140°F. One bacterium could become over 2 million in just 7 hours. Keep food cold at a picnic by placing food containers in pans or large bowls filled with ice. Store food in coolers or refrigerate as soon as guests are finished. When the temperature is 90°F or higher, food should not be left out for more than **one hour**.
2. **F** \* Most store-bought mayonnaise does not promote bacterial growth. The carbohydrates, protein and moisture in cooked pasta, cooked rice and other grains, cooked meat, fish and poultry and cooked vegetables, including potatoes, provide bacteria with the food and water they need to grow and multiply.
3. **T** \* Never put food on a plate that was used for raw meat, fish or poultry until after the plate has been washed in hot, soapy water. Bacteria on the plate could transfer to the cooked food and make people sick.
4. **T** \* Bacteria from raw meat, poultry or fish can make you sick if the marinade is reused on cooked foods. If you want to use marinade on cooked food, put some in a separate container before adding the raw food.
5. **F** \* The only way to tell if food is thoroughly cooked is by using a thermometer. Burgers that are brown in the middle may **not** be fully cooked. Overcooking food to be sure it is safe to eat may make it dry and unappetizing. Use a thermometer and make sure your food is always safe and delicious. Cook poultry and ground poultry to 165°F. Cook ground beef to 155°F. Cook Fin fish and steaks to 145°F.
6. **F** \* Bacteria will survive and grow on cut melons. Refrigerate any leftovers after two hours or after one hour if the temperature is over 90°F. Always wash the outside of fruit before cutting or peeling because bacteria on the outside can be transferred to the inside.