

Health & Safety Bulletin



Issue 3

January 2012

Radiation Laboratory Decommissioning



Due to the major moves that have taken place over the last year, the Radiation Protection Unit has been and continues to be busy with decommissioning surveys of several University buildings

previously used for work with radioactive material. Decommissioning large premises is time consuming. For example, the survey of Summerhall, which was completed in November with the assistance of staff from across the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, involved full measurements in 35 laboratories, a quick look round 490 other rooms and 570 sample wipes.

The RPU is now decommissioning the old Roslin building, and this is looking even bigger; sample numbers so far exceed 900. Decommissioning of the Roger Land Building is expected to be completed in February, and there are some labs at Easter Bush in the pipeline. It is important that the RPU is given notice of building moves and timetables, so that the work can be planned in with the RPU's other work.

As well as contamination monitoring the survey includes looking for old and forgotten radiation warning signs. There are many examples of where the discovery of a trefoil sparks a major public scare, despite the absence of any actual radioactive material. The photo above shows an example of one of those forgotten signs! Further information on laboratory decommissioning can be found in Radiation Protection Code of Practice CoP 002.

Who to contact in the Health and Safety Department



Corporate Office – guidance and advice on University policy as well as general health and safety advice. Finance and secretarial duties are handled by the Office staff.

www.ed.ac.uk/schoolsdepartments/health-safety/about/staff-profiles/overview



Occupational Health Unit – independent, impartial and confidential service to benefit University employees and employer alike. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/occupational-health



Fire Safety Unit – guidance and advice on all aspects of fire safety at the University. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/fire-safety



Biosafety Unit – guidance and advice on all aspects of biological safety at the University. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/biosafety



Radiation Protection Unit – guidance and advice on all aspects of work at the University relating to ionising and non-ionising radiation. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/radiation-protection



Occupational Hygiene Unit – guidance and advice on physical parameters in the workplace, for example temperature, lighting, dust. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/about/units/occupational-hygiene



Training and Audit Unit – health and safety, including first aid, training courses and University audits. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/about/units/training-audit-unit

The Löfstedt Report reviewing health and safety legislation

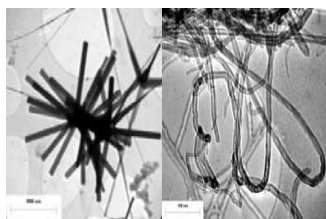
In March 2011, the Government established an Independent Review of Health and Safety legislation to make proposals for simplifying the existing raft of health and safety legislation. This review was chaired by lead-

ing risk management specialist Professor Ragnar Löfstedt. Professor Löfstedt's report "Reclaiming health and safety for all: An independent review of health and safety regulation" was published on 28 November 2011.

This can be found on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/health-and-safety/

Working Safely with Nanomaterials Conference

The British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) is hosting Working Safely with Nanomaterials. The programme has been organised by The UK Nanosafety Partnership Group which is a collaboration between UK Nanosafety Forum, BOHS, HSE, IOM, HSL, Environment Agency and other individual experts in the nanotechnology field. This



one day session on Working Safely with Nanomaterials will feature the newly launched generic guidance and discussion on issues relating to how to work safely with nanomaterials. This is

your opportunity to ask questions on nanosafety and other regulator issues.

The conference is on Friday 6th July 2012 from 9am till 4.45pm at The Royal College of Physicians, 9 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JQ. The session is £100 + VAT and can be booked via the link below

www.bohs.org/Events/WorkingwithNanomaterials/

HSE link



The Health and Safety Executive has a very useful section on its website dedicated to ergonomics in the pharmaceutical industry

and is well worth a look.

In particular the website identifies occupational hazards and provides ergonomic solutions to tasks involving pipetting and the use of syringes.

To visit the website go to

www.hse.gov.uk/pharmaceuticals/goodpractice/pipette.htm

Latex gloves

Latex allergy is a major, and potentially life threatening occupational hazard in health care and laboratory environments, for which there is currently no cure.

The use of latex gloves can cause dermatitis and asthma in roughly one in ten of those who use them. In a small number of cases persons who have been sensitised to latex are at serious risk of a potentially fatal anaphylactic shock if they are further exposed to even minute traces of the substance. Research has shown that the risk of allergic response is greatly increased if powdered latex gloves are used.



The use of latex gloves should therefore be avoided wherever possible and in all cases where there exists a viable and practicable alternative to the use of latex gloves the alternative should be utilised. There are a few instances where the use of latex gloves remains the preferred first choice barrier (e.g. handling of blood-borne viruses, cytotoxic drugs, and some biological hazards). The risk of latex allergy is greatly increased if powdered latex gloves are used therefore only non-powdered latex gloves are to be used. The use of powdered latex gloves is prohibited within this University.

For further guidance and information on latex gloves, please see the Code of Practice aligned with the University Health and Safety Policy Part 5 www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/Safety/policy/p5cl/p5cl5.pdf as well as the extensive guidance on glove selection, risk assessment and health surveillance available on our website at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/guidance/ppe/gloves-latex

Fire alarm activations 2011

The annual fire alarm activations published by the Fire Safety Unit can be found at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/fire-safety/policy-and-guidance/fire-alarm-activations These give the number of activations from 2011 and compare them to 2010 divided into Accommodation Services, Pollock Halls and Other University Buildings as well as over all totals.

Contact Details

Health and Safety Department
Charles Stewart House
9-16 Chambers Street
T: 651 4255
E: Health.Safety@ed.ac.uk
W: www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety

Forthcoming Training Courses

- Basic Course in Radiation Protection in Teaching and Research (7th and 14th March 2012)
- Laser Safety Course (21st March 2012) www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/radiation-protection/training/timetable
- Fire Steward and Fire Extinguisher theory and practical use (8th March 2012) www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/fire-safety/training/timetable

For more information on H&S training courses go to www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/training