

WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

BOG Policy #71

Title: Environmental Health and Safety Authorization Policy

Section 1. General.

- 1.1. The Office of Safety Compliance and Chemical Hygiene/ Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) is authorized to implement programs and plans designed to ensure compliance and maintain a safe and healthy environment for the campus community. This document defines the responsibility and accountability for the Environmental Health and Safety Program at West Virginia State University(WVSU).
- 1.2. Authority: Occupational Safety and Health Act, §21-3A of the West Virginia Code, Federal Regulation CFR 1910 (OSHA), US EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, WV Department of Environmental Protection.
- 1.3. Application: This policy applies to all University and Research and Development employees, students, faculty, university affiliates and visitors. This policy applies to all facilities, building and property owned by WVSU.
- 1.4. Effective Date: 12/9/2024
- 1.5. New Policy

Section 2. Scope

- 2.1. West Virginia State University is committed to protecting the environmental health and safety of its students, faculty, staff and visitors. As such, the university is committed to ensuring an environment and culture of safety. Through the development, implementation and training of health and safety programs that align to our mission and values, the university will accomplish this by:
- 2.2. Establishing and following university standards relating to environmental protection and personal safety. The objective will be to reduce the risk of injury

or illness to people, prevent property damage at all locations where operations and/or activities occur, and ensure continuity of operations;

- 2.3. Achieving and maintaining compliance with federal, state and local environmental health and safety laws and regulations;
- 2.4. Identifying and correcting environmental health and safety hazards and encouraging faculty, staff and students to help develop programs to identify, to report and to correct potential hazards;
- 2.5. Participating in the development of proactive, sound environmental health and safety guidelines and policies;
- 2.6. Conducting activities in a manner that is protective of the environment, inform the WVSU community on topics regarding environmental impact and employ hazardous waste minimization best management practices for institutional operations;
- 2.7. Measuring and continuously improving our environmental health and safety performance; and
- 2.8. Providing information to faculty, staff and students about health and safety hazards.

Section 3. Definitions.

- 3.1. EHS – Environmental Health and Safety.
- 3.2. Incident – An accident, incident or near miss, whether or not death or personal injury or other property damage is caused.
- 3.3. Near Miss – An event where there is potential for injury, but no one got hurt.

- 3.4. Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) - a method to identify and reduce the risk of workplace hazards. In a JHA, each basic step of the job is analyzed to identify potential hazards and recommend the safest way to do the job.

Section 4. Authority and Responsibilities.

- 4.1. EHS is authorized to coordinate the university's compliance with standards and policies. EHS provides technical expertise, assistance with consultations, and serves to assure compliance with legal requirements. Through technical assistance and oversight, EHS will direct the campus toward compliance with environmental health and safety practices that are required by laws or regulations. All university employees shall communicate the risks and safety expectations to the WVSU community and support a strong culture of safety.

EHS shall specifically have the authority to:

- 4.1.a. Audit and recommend appropriate corrective or planning strategies, including the development of safety programs;
 - 4.1.b. Consult with external agencies or regulatory bodies as necessary and appropriate, on behalf of the university;
 - 4.1.c. Survey and monitor all areas of the campus to assess environmental risks in the manner outlined in this policy;
 - 4.1.d. Issue noncompliance citations in the manner outlined in this policy; and
 - 4.1.e. Immediately suspend or restrict an operation in the manner and circumstances outlined in this policy.
- 4.2. Senior Vice President for Strategic Finance and Strategic Planning shall:
 - 4.2.a. Allocates necessary resources for implementation of the university's safety policy, programs and committees;
 - 4.2.b. Supports safety trainings, inspection programs and emergency drills within the university; and
 - 4.2.c. Ensures that effective systems are established to identify and address institutional safety concerns.

4.2.d. Communicate the risks and safety expectations to the WVSU community and support a strong culture of safety.

4.3. Deans and Administrators shall:

4.3.a. Ensure that all environmental health and safety laws and regulation are carried out in the academic and agricultural departments/administrative units under their control.

4.3.b. Ensure that their agricultural and academic department/administrative units are implementing all required EHS programs, inspections and trainings.

4.3.c. Communicate to faculty, staff, students and visitors that everyone shares the obligation to work in a safe, environmentally protective manner.

4.4. Department Heads and Unit Directors shall:

4.4.a. Ensure that the faculty and staff understand and implement responsibilities for their operations and workspaces;

4.4.b. Ensure the development and implementation of safety practices, protocols and rules for teaching laboratories, research laboratories and work spaces within their purview;

4.4.c. Ensure that their department members, students and affiliates receive compliance training regarding potential hazards associated with each person's employment with WVSU;

4.4.d. Work with EHS to comply with regular inspections for teaching/research laboratories, shops, storerooms, studios or any other work area; and

4.4.e. Assist EHS periodically to update compliance training records for employees and students.

4.5. Principal Investigators/Supervisors shall:

4.5.a. Ensure that personnel and operations in their areas comply with environmental health and safety laws and regulations;

4.5.b. Analyze work procedures to identify hazards and ensure measures are communicated to eliminate or control the hazards;

- 4.5.c. Ensure workplace hazards and EHS related policies and procedures are communicated to employees, students and visitors;
 - 4.5.d. Ensure safe operating procedures are in place with proper safety equipment and personal protective equipment to perform the work safely;
 - 4.5.e. Conduct periodic hazard analysis of all program activities to identify potential risks and areas in need of additional safety measures, standard operating procedures or training;
 - 4.5.f. Ensure that participants in their programs are adequately trained and have completed all EHS and job specific trainings to identify and mitigate potential hazards;
 - 4.5.g. Encourage prompt reporting of environmental, health and safety concerns and any accidents/incidents in the work area;
 - 4.5.h. Assist EHS staff with safety inspections in their operations and take prompt actions to fix any noted deficiencies; and
 - 4.5.i. Ensure that a proper material (i.e., chemical, biological, radiation, etc.) inventory is maintained and updated annually or whenever significant change occurs.
- 4.6. Employees/Laboratory Workers/Trainees/Students shall:
- 4.6.a. Read, understand and follow all safety rules and regulations that apply to their work area;
 - 4.6.b. Complete all appropriate safety trainings, provided by the EHS department and supervisor;
 - 4.6.c. Conduct each operation in accordance with the work area's specific procedures and measures;
 - 4.6.d. Utilize available and proper engineering, administrative controls and appropriate personal protective equipment;
 - 4.6.e. Develop good personal work area safety habits and promote good housekeeping practices in work areas;

- 4.6.f. Immediately report all safety incidents or accidents to the supervisor and/or faculty member;
- 4.6.g. Report unsafe practices and hazardous conditions to the work area supervisor; and
- 4.6.h. Participate in periodic safety inspections of the work area.

Section 5. Disciplinary Referrals and Corrective Action.

- 5.1. Corrective Actions and Citations: EHS is authorized to survey and monitor all areas of the campus to assess environmental risks, life safety exposures and training requirements, and to recommend improvements. EHS will submit written reports identifying hazards and recommending corrective actions. In presence of severe hazards or in the case of non-compliance with local, state and federal regulations or university policies, improvements will be required.
 - 5.1.a. The EHS Director or designee has the authority to issue, following appropriate investigation, noncompliance citations to the appropriate individuals and principal investigators for lack of improvements in response to a formal report or recommendation.
 - 5.1.b. Copies of any formal reports and noncompliance citations associated with unsafe work practices will be provided to the individual, their immediate supervisor, administrators, and to Human Resources. Copies of the reports and or/citations given to individual students or student organizations may be forwarded to the Dean of Students, if required. The dean or designee will determine an appropriate resolution utilizing the normal student disciplinary process as outlined in the student handbook.
 - 5.1.c. Noncompliance citations will be recorded in the employee personnel file and shall be reviewed and included in the employee's annual performance evaluation. The totality of the review will include citations and corrective deadlines.
- 5.2. Human Resources will be notified of incidents and pending investigations, and will work with appropriate administrators and supervisors to determine if interim employment action is necessary. This will include a review of past violations by employee and/or department. Any disciplinary action will be determined in accordance with university policy.

Section 6. Cessation of Hazardous Activities

- 6.1. The EHS Director or designee has the authority to immediately suspend or restrict an operation that:
 - 6.1.a. Presents a serious hazard (real or potential) associated with the health, life, safety or welfare of campus personnel or the public; or
 - 6.1.b. Is found to be a violation of standards; or
 - 6.1.c. Is detrimental to the environment.
- 6.2. In the event that EHS orders cessation of an activity, EHS will immediately communicate the problem(s) and violations to the individual, to his direct supervisor, to other administrators with responsibility for the department or center involved, and the appropriate regulatory agency, when required by law.
- 6.3. The activity may be resumed with the approval of the EHS Director or designee, in consultation with the provost or vice president as appropriate, and relevant administrators or supervisors.

Section 7. Job Hazard Analysis

- 7.1. A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) is a process that identifies hazards in a job or activity and develops ways to reduce or eliminate them. A job hazard analysis helps you to identify and control hazards that might emerge when a new process or piece of equipment is introduced. We document these analyses with a Hazard Assessment Form.

Section 8. Committees

- 8.1. The following committees are responsible in part, for developing procedures and providing guidance to senior management on matters of biological, chemical and environmental safety:
 - 8.1.a. Laboratory Safety Committee
 - 8.1.b. Institutional Biosafety Committee

Cabinet Position and Department: Justin McAllister, Business and Finance Strategic Planning

Resources:

[*WV State OSHA Program*](#)

[*OSHA Laws and Regulations \(Standards-29 CFR\)*](#)

[*US EPA*](#)

[*WV Department of Environmental Protection*](#)

[*US Department of Transportation \(Hazardous Waste\)*](#)