



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting #213, February 11, 2004

MEMBERS:

Cathy MacLean (P)	University Appointee	Anne Weeden (A)	DUAG
Christine Delodder (P)	University Appointee	Bill Freedman (A)	DFA
Colin Stuttard (R)	University Appointee	Curtis McGrath (P)	DSU
Darrell Boutillier(P)	University Appointee	David Clarke (P)	IUOE
Mateo Yorke (P)	University Appointee	Dawn Korn (P)	NSGEU
Patrick McGrath (P)	University Appointee	Forest Fyfe (P)	DFA
Paul Amyotte (P)	University Appointee	Joe Dorey (P)	IUOE
Ruth Murray (R)	University Appointee	Dr. Marvin Silver (P)	CUPE

William J. Louch, Director (P)
(P)resent - (R)egrets - (A)bsent

Jan Taylor McIntyre, Recording Secretary (P)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made to welcome Mr. P. McGrath. Mr. McGrath, a University Appointee, replaces Kathie Wheadon-Hore, who has stepped down from the Committee after serving for five years.

Mateo Yorke was welcomed back to the meeting. He indicated that for the interim, he would be attending meetings on behalf of Jan Hines.

2. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES OF DECEMBER'S MEETING

Draft minutes of the December meeting were approved as distributed. Moved by M. Silver, seconded by P. Amyotte. Motion carried.

3. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Safety Award Nominations

As requested at the December meeting, W. Louch had prepared a briefing on the preparation for and response to Hurricane Juan at Fenwick Place. Members suggested several edits. They then asked W. Louch to forward the document to B. Mason, along with their recommendation, for the 2003-2004 Award.

3.2 Orientation Handbook and Fire Warden Handbook Updates

In response to recent Committee discussions, the Safety Office prepared updates to both documents. Members were asked to forward comments. The Safety Office plans to send them to print shortly. Both documents will be posted to the Safety Office website.

3.3 Department of Labour Orders

Fenwick Place

W. Louch informed members that while driving by Fenwick Place, a Labour Department inspector noticed that window repair work was underway. Concerned about the possibility of a fall, the inspector visited the site. He noted that - as set out in the project safety plan, workers engaged in replacing windows were wearing fall arrest equipment. He did, however, order that a first aid kit be placed in the project manager's office and that the names of those serving on the project safety committee be posted. Within the time frame set out in the order, both the construction firm and Dalhousie responded, describing the steps taken to comply with the order.

Several weeks later, a passerby reported to the Department of Labour that workers carrying the window replacement, dropped a piece of metal window trim. The piece of metal landed between the building and the sidewalk. No one was injured, and no damage was done.

The inspector again visited the site and ordered that steps be taken to prevent injuries that might be caused from falling materials. Within 24 hours, a covered walkway was installed to protect pedestrians.

Dalplex

A visitor to the Dalplex called the Department of Labour expressing concern that the exposed fibreglass, which insulates the roof, presents a hazard to occupants. The inspector toured with Facility with W. Louch, K. Wheadon-Hore and P. McGrath. The inspector did not indicate any concern with the condition of the insulation. She did, however, suggest that Dalhousie consult with the Environmental Health and Safety Committee about testing to document the levels of fibreglass in the air.

The situation presented an opportunity for interested Committee members to take part in the testing. Staff of the Dalplex are likely to take part in the testing. He indicated that there are several testing protocols. The simplest would involve renting a sampling device which could yield several test results in one day. The unit, however, measures total fibres in air and is incapable of distinguishing between fibreglass and other types of fibre, which might also be present in the building air.

The Committee suggested that using the rental equipment should provide at least an indication of whether there are significant amounts of fibre present in the Field House air.

W. Louch expected to be able to report on the testing in March.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Fumehood Renovations

D. Boutilier explained that work is underway on the system that serves about 105 fumehoods in the Tupper Building. The exhaust capacity of the present four exhaust fans, has been reached and there is no additional capacity to serve new fumehoods. The existing fans are being replaced with new fans which are able to force exhaust well above the roof of the building. This system also provides the opportunity to redesign the system in the Penthouse which could force contaminated air into enclosed spaces.

The first stage of the project involved taking pairs of fans out-of-service and changing the associated Penthouse ducts. To ensure that researchers would not be endangered by poorly operating fumehoods, an air balancer has checked each fumehood to ensure reduced fan availability does not lower fumehood air flows to unacceptable levels.

In the second stage which is scheduled to take place in late winter, pairs of existing fans will be taken out-of-service and replaced with new fans.

4.2 NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) Facility

A new Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Facility is being located in the area of the Dunn Parking Lot entrance to the Chemistry and Killam Library buildings. The Facility uses two very powerful magnets which operate at liquid helium temperatures. As the Facility is very near to the Killam Library's Technical Services work area, staff have expressed concern. W. Louch tabled a letter which Dr. R. Boyd, Chairman of the Chemistry Department, had sent to W. Maes, providing information about the Facility and the protections that are designed into the system.

W. Louch indicated that he plans to check the magnetic fields around the new facility.

Members noted that although nitrogen and helium are not toxic gases, at high levels, they are asphyxiates. They suggested that W. Louch review with the facility's manager, the potential of an emergency, such as a power failure, that could cause a significant release of gas.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Members received the report. W. Louch reported that one of the crews from the University Avenue Fire Station had toured the Life Sciences Centre and the Tupper Building. These tours provide an opportunity for fire crews to familiarize themselves with the buildings' layout and fire systems.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Correspondence

B. Mason's Response Re: Chemistry

B. Mason's response to the Committee's recommendations, was circulated. Mr. Mason has asked W. Louch to thank the members for their work on the matter.

Sampling - Peter Green Hall, Student Union Building, Chemistry Building

Copies of correspondence describing results of recent sampling was provided to the Committee.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.. Moved by C. McGrath.

The next meeting:

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

9:00-10:30 am

Room 429, Weldon Law Building