

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting #245, June 13, 2007

MEMBERS:

University Appointee		Heather Ann Walker (P)	DUAG
Roberta Emms (P)	(for Cathy MacLean)	Mike Tipping (A)	DSU
Greg McNutt (P)	University Appointee	Zita Hildebrandt (P)	NSGEU
Paul Bourgeois (P)	University Appointee	Denise Sommerfeld (P)	DFA
Marlene Daye-Smith(P)	University Appointee	Forest Fyfe (P)	DFA
Mateo Yorke (P)	University Appointee	Trent Ritchie (R)	IUOE
Patrick McGrath (A)	University Appointee	Michael Armstrong (R)	IUOE
Paul Amyotte (R)	University Appointee	Troy Winters (P)	CUPE
Ruth Murray (P)	University Appointee	Ian Campbell (P) (M. Armstrong)	IUOE
		Mike Knechtal (R)	Dentistry Safety Cte.

(P)resent - (R)egrets - (A)bsent

William J. Louch-Director
Jan Taylor McIntyre-Recording Secretary
Stephen Ellis-H&S Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

2. DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the May meeting were adopted as circulated.

3. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Fire Warden Day

S. Ellis provided a recap of the events for the Fire Warden Day noting that the main topics discussed were Communications between wardens, Fire Service and Dal Security, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), Lock-Down, Training and Fire Drills. Approximately 75 wardens attended.

3.2 911 Meeting

G.A. MacDonald organized a meeting last month with the 911 HRM group, W. Louch, J. Lamb and himself. An ongoing problem has been having 911 people call Dal when they receive a call originating from the campus. They are not willing to commit to doing this with the volume of traffic calls they receive but they will make an attempt to contact Dal Security.

911 has an internal (alias) database to look up civic addresses. They agreed to put Security's phone number into the database so when they receive an emergency call from a University address they will have immediate access to the Security number.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Department of Environment and Labour Response

The Committee received a series of orders which followed an inspection of areas of the Dunn Building. Also included was draft letter of response to the orders and a summary of attachments.

P. Bourgeois noted a change in wording for item #021 indicating that Dalhousie was working with the supplier to identify a suitable fixture.

Discussion followed on Order #021 regarding the grades of ladders. Grades 1 and 2 are acceptable for use in a workplace. Grade 3 ladders are for household use and are not approved for use in an occupational setting. Members speculated on how many step stools are in use around the campus which would not be in compliance.

The Committee was satisfied with the draft response and will revisit the Committee action items in the fall.

4.2 Soil Test Results

The Women's Centre was planning to build a vegetable garden. Facilities Management took soil samples which were tested by an environmental group. The testing showed that the soil does not meet the Canadian standard for food production.

In order to plant a garden, the Centre would have to raise the bed with a barrier between the ground soil and the raised soil. Test results are available if the Committee was interested.

Years ago, many properties located on the Peninsula were filled with slag and other materials which are now considered to be contaminated with organic chemicals (often residues of combustion) and metals.

4.3 Laser Training

The Safety Office is planning to develop a Laser Safety Program on-line. As there are many lasers used on campus, people working with lasers will be required to take formal training.

4.4 Radon in Buildings

W. Louch explained radon gas is created as uranium disintegrates eventually becoming lead. In areas where there is significant quantities of uranium in soil and rock, the generated radon can find its way into buildings. In poorly ventilated basements, radon can accumulate, eventually reaching concentrations where it presents a long term cancer risk. The Federal Government has recently reduced the exposure guideline to 1/4 of the old values. Dalhousie recently received a letter from the Department of Environment recommending that the University conduct radon testing in buildings. The Safety Office has purchased testing kits and W. Louch and P. Jones will begin testing during the winter months. The testing will focus on residential buildings. But a selection of other buildings will also be tested.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

W. Louch reviewed the report for the Committee. It was noted that a survey of UV testing in bio containment cabinets was being done in labs on campus. Results will be available in the fall.

D. Sommerfeld noted the new Environmental Sustainability Office is being developed. W. Louch reported that he has been asked to meet with senior officials to look at developing a framework for the Sustainability Office based on the model of Safety Office and the Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Committee Membership & Leadership in 2007-2008

M. Yorke will move to the Chair position in the fall and a new Deputy Chair will be needed from the Employee representative group.

6.2 Summer Recess - Administrative Procedures

Members were asked to review the information on the poster “Do You Have a Health or Safety Question or Concern”. Members not planning to sit on the Committee in the Fall were asked to let the Office know so that the poster can be updated.

There are no Committee meetings scheduled in July and August. If an emergency arises and the Committee is called to meet, members who are available will meet on behalf of the whole Committee.

D. Sommerfeld thanked the Committee for the letter and noted that she would be retiring the end of the year and would be stepping down from the Committee.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 12, 2007
 9:00 - 10:30 am
 Room 406
 Weldon Law Building