



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE  
DRAFT Minutes of Meeting #222, February 9, 2005

MEMBERS:

Cathy MacLean (P)	University Appointee	Anne Weeden (P)	DUAG
Marlene Daye-Smith (R)	University Appointee	Michael Kieft (A)	DFA
Colin Stuttard (A)	University Appointee	Curtis McGrath (P)	DSU
Darrell Boutilier (R)	University Appointee	Tom Hunter (P)	IUOE
Mateo Yorke (P)	University Appointee	Dawn Korn (A)	NSGEU
Patrick McGrath (P)	University Appointee	Forest Fyfe (P)	DFA
Paul Amyotte (P)	University Appointee	Joe Dorey (P)	IUOE
Ruth Murray (P)	University Appointee	Marvin Silver (P)	CUPE

(P)resent - (R)egrets - (A)bsent William J. Louch -Director Jan Taylor McIntyre - Recording Secretary

---

**1. CHAIR FOR FEBRUARY MEETING**

In D. Boutilier's absence, R. Murray agreed to chair the meeting.

**2. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting called to order at 9:04 am.

**3. DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Draft minutes of December's meeting were approved as distributed. Moved by F. Fyfe, seconded by M. Yorke. Carried.

**4. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**4.1 Influenza Immunization Update**

With Health Canada lifting the restriction of distribution of flu vaccine, University Health Services was able to reschedule one clinic on January 28<sup>th</sup>, to make up for the clinics that were cancelled in November.

Information on the numbers of those who attended immunization clinics was included in the Committee's materials.

**4.2 March Meeting - Dr. Joanne Langley & other Guests**

The Committee agreed to plan to dedicate the March meeting to discussing flu immunization. As requested by the Committee, a letter is being sent to potentially interested individuals inviting them to attend the meeting and participate in the discussions.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**5.1 Bill C-45 Briefings**

W Louch informed the Committee that the University Administration has asked that he and K. Crombie brief Deans and other senior administrators on Bill C-45, a new amendment to the Criminal Code. This new piece of legislation places obligation under the criminal code on both individuals and organizations to conduct their activities with the appropriate level of care for safety.

W. Louch and K. Crombie have spoken to the Dean's Council and senior members of Facilities Management. A session is also planned for the President's Administrative Directors Forum.

W. Louch has also been asked to speak to faculty and staff at the departmental levels on several occasions.

P. Amyotte asked for clarification on the term 'due diligence'. Using an example of a recent trenching accident, W. Louch explained that due diligence is a defence offered when the courts hear cases under environmental or occupational health and safety laws. Criminal

prosecutions allow the use of other defences. But in essence, an organization that has practised "due diligence" in its activities, will be well equipped to make an effective defence against Bill C-45 charges.

## **5.2 Smoking Research in Psychology**

W. Louch briefed the Committee on discussions that are underway about accommodating a new research program in Psychology. A new researcher proposes to study the links between smoking and gambling - particularly problem gambling associated with VLTs.

W. Louch told the Committee that his advice to the administration was that such research could be conducted, subject to the appropriate constraints that would ensure that we met the terms of provincial legislation, that there would be no involuntary exposure to cigarette smoke and that the facility did not become a means to circumvent the University's smoking policy.

P. McGrath reported that there were problems with smokers gathering in the area of the Dalplex during the examination periods. W. Louch indicated that the efforts made by Mr. McGrath and other Dalplex staff, to encourage smokers to leave the University property, were very much in line with the steps being taken elsewhere by the Safety and Security Offices. W. Louch indicated that he will assist during the spring examination period.

C. McGrath told members that he will be attending a National Youth Forum on Tobacco Reduction Strategies in Ottawa at the end of the month. He will share with other delegates, Dalhousie's experience with establishing the Smoke-Free policy. The Safety Office will try to assist in the preparation of a briefing package which Mr. McGrath could take with him to the Forum.

## **5.3 Revised University Storm Closure/Class Cancellation Policy**

A copy of the revised policy was circulated for the Committee's review.

Questions were raised in how announcements of closure/cancellations are made to radio stations. W. Louch indicated Dalhousie's plans to rely primarily on CBC and CKDU. Information is also available, however, through the switchboard and the web site.

W. Louch suggested that these procedures had worked fairly well during recent storms although he expects that further refinements will be made as we gain experience with the procedures.

## **5.4 Update on Removal of Radioactive Source**

The removal of the gamma beam from the University took place on January 19. Demand for the unit had decreased dramatically in recent years. Increasing costs associated with making security upgrades and eventual disposal, prompted the University for disposal at this time.

Photos of the contractors carrying-out the removal were circulated to members. W. Louch assured members that both the contractor and Dalhousie carried-out testing to ensure that there was no leakage of radiation during the removal and that there were no traces of radioactive contamination in the space which is currently being renovated for other uses.

## **5.5 Waste Water Testing Program**

The Halifax Harbour clean-up effort is now underway and new waste water treatment facilities are being constructed. W. Louch reported that an HRM official had recently met with Dalhousie staff asking that the University test sewer discharges to ensure that oil and grease contamination would not present operational problems for the treatment facilities.

W. Louch told members that a testing program is about to begin that will gather preliminary data on the levels of oil, grease and selected other pollutants in the sewer discharges of a number of University buildings.

A report will be forwarded to the Committee when it is ready.

## **5.6 Autoclave Audit Program**

In the next stage of the Biosafety program, the Safety Office is initiating an audit of the performance of research autoclaves. As part of this quarterly quality assurance program, a contact in each department will be provided with a small test strip which is to be included in

a routine sterilization run.

Members were pleased to learn of the new program. Some members suggested that the point may have been reached where additional resources are required to allow the University's health and safety program to continue to grow. Members encouraged W. Louch to discuss these resource matters with the University administration.

### **5.7 Annual Safety Award**

W. Louch suggested that the Committee might wish to consider the Flu Clinic Program as a candidate for this year's Environmental Health and Safety Award.

Members responded positively, suggesting that the matter be brought back for discussion following the discussions with Dr. Langley. Members felt that such an award might provide an opportunity to shine a spotlight on other immunization programs as well. The University community probably has a poor understanding of the importance of immunization, generally in the University's infection control efforts.

Members felt that it is also important to seek input from beyond and asked the Safety Office to use Notice Digest to solicit other nominations.

## **6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A copy of the Director's Report was received and highlights were reviewed by W. Louch.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **7.1 Sampling Results**

Correspondence with the results from sampling for mould/mildew and asbestos was circulated for the Committee's review.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 am.

Next meeting is scheduled:  
Wednesday, March 9, 2005  
9:00 - 10:30 am  
Room 406  
Weldon Law Building