

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting #246, September 12, 2007

MEMBERS:

Mark Knechtal (P)	University Appointee	Heather Ann Walker (P)	DUAG
Greg McNutt (P)	University Appointee	Mike Tipping (R)	DSU
Paul Bourgeois (P)	University Appointee	Zita Hildebrandt (R)	NSGEU
Marlene Daye-Smith(P)	University Appointee	Tammy Zinck (P)	NSGEU
Mateo Yorke (P)	University Appointee	Denise Sommerfeld (R)	DFA
Chris Keough (R)	University Appointee	Forest Fyfe (R)	DFA
Paul Amyotte (R)	University Appointee	Trent Ritchie (P)	IUOE
Ruth Murray (P)	University Appointee	Ian Campbell (P)	IUOE
		Troy Winters (R)	CUPE

(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 June meeting were adopted as circulated.

3. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Deputy Chair Selection

As no volunteers offered to act as deputy chair to be selected from the Employee representative group, this will be tabled for the October meeting.

3.2 Follow-up to Department of Labour Orders

At the June meeting, copies of the Department of Environment and Labour Orders were circulated to members with a draft response to the inspector. The Committee approved the response which the Safety Office subsequently forwarded to the Department of Labour.

Some weeks, later the inspector contacted W. Louch to review the response. The inspector indicated that the Department was generally satisfied with the response. In particular, the Department acknowledged that the University's use of the web site meets most of the 'posting' requirements established by the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Departmental officials, however, were concerned that the opening page of the site provides a link to the standard disclaimer used by the University. Labour officials felt that a disclaimer on information that relates largely to the University program was inappropriate. The inspector asked that the matter be raised with the Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

The Committee asked that the matter be referred to the University Solicitor.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Facilities Management Safety Program

P. Bourgeois provided the Committee with some background to the development of Facilities Management's Safety Program. He expressed appreciation for W. Louch contributions in the development. Copies were circulated to the Committee. The nine sections of the program covers every area of safety and will be amended as needed.

Hazard assessment is an important component of the program and will be incorporated in Facilities Management's routine programs as well as being added directly to blue prints so that assessment is considered in projects as well.

4.2 AEDs

Four more AEDs were purchased from a contingency fund established to subsidize departments/units on campus who wish to have an AED. An article in Dal News about the AEDs was circulated. The devices will be prominent on campus and training will begin with the fire wardens and any other interested people. Units are very easy to use and are being offered as cost shared. R. Murray noted that Sexton campus could use 2 more AEDs.

4.3 Fenwick Flooding

M. Yorke provided the Committee with a review of the flooding problems that have plagued the lower levels of Fenwick Place for several years.

Late summer, heavy rainfalls caused sanitary waste water in sewer to backup into the Parkade, and washrooms on the PR level also backed up. The City has been studying the problems for several years and is planning a major sewer upgrade in the next year or so. A City engineer was in the basement for one of the floods and saw first hand what goes on in a heavy rainfall and called in an emergency team to deal with the issue. As a result, the City has hired a firm that is trying to remove debris which is partially blocking the sewer down stream of Fenwick.

Remediation of the areas of the PR level that were impacted by the sewer back up, are now underway. Staff of the Faculty of Medicine's Learning Resources Centre have been displaced while contaminated carpets and dry wall are being removed and replaced.

Backflow preventors have been installed on the PR Level sewer drains to prevent sanitary water from coming back in.

4.4 CNSC Audit

During late August, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission carried out a formal audit of Dalhousie's Radiation Safety Program. Unlike the much more frequent inspections which the Commission conducts, an audit is only done once in each 5 year license period. Shortly after the audit, a security officer from CNSC carried out a routine security inspection.

The CNSC auditors will provide a formal report later in the Fall. However, at the exit meeting of the audit the inspectors were impressed with the safety culture they found at Dalhousie. They

indicated that their report would point to several relatively minor areas where they felt the program could be strengthened.

4.5 Laser Printers

G. McNutt was asked by the Department of Medicine to raise a recent concern about health hazards which might be associated with operation of laser printers. He indicated that some printers apparently emit particles into the air. When inhaled, these particles could perhaps become deeply lodged in the lung. He contacted Hewlett Packard but the company was not prepared to comment.

M. Yorke will get some feedback on printer emissions.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Review of Health and Safety Program, Terms

During the inspection of the Physics Department, the Labour inspector suggested that the University should more formally document the safety program. W. Louch indicated that a program review is a logical follow up to the recently completed policy review. Accordingly, he asked Committee members to read the section of the Occupational Health and Safety Act in preparation for a discussion in October.

Members felt the University should continue to operate as a single work site with the Environmental Health and Safety Committee discharging the Committee functions established by the Act. The members strongly supported the continuation of the policy and practice going beyond mere compliance by having local safety committees address local issues. The members see that there may be additional opportunities for engaging local committees in the University program.

5.1 Correspondence

Copies of sample testing was provided to the Committee for information.

Cell phone tower site has re-emerged as an issue of concern. Radio frequency emissions from the LSC site were again tested and report results will be available to the Committee in the Fall.

Excavations for the Chemistry Addition yielded soil which have been impacted by coal ash disposal and other historical practices. Although the environmental codes permit these materials to be managed on-site, the University has opted to have the impacted soil removed from campus and tested prior to disposal.

M. Yorke received a letter form the Chemistry Safety Committee which followed up on an earlier request for improved signage. He agreed to follow up with Facilities Management.

M. Yorke shared copies of the Neighbourhood Guide and Residence Student Guide with members. He noted references to items such as fire safety.

The student mumps vaccination program begins on Monday and will run for four days. It is recommended that students aged 17-37 receive a vaccination.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 am.

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