Temporary changes to Safety Office services

The COVID-19 emergency has forced all departments to get creative in how their services will continue to be offered. Since the work-from-home order was issued, the Safety Office has continued to provide the majority of our services remotely and we will continue to adapt as things change. At this time, the following services are continuing:

- Monthly safety inspections for areas where workers are on campus
- Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings have moved online
- Incident investigation and reporting
- WSIB reporting of injuries and claims management
- Response to emergency situations (e.g., hazardous spills, fires, critical injuries as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act)
- Hazardous waste receiving in the Environmental Safety Facility (ESF) continues, but must be scheduled in advance with Greg Friday
- Emergency consultations for work that is essential and cannot be delayed

Due to the current restrictions on campus, we have temporarily suspended classroom training, WHMIS relabelling, and all other work that involves in-person consultations.

If you have questions or need support, continue to contact Safety Office staff member you normally would. If you are unsure who to contact, send an email to safety@uwaterloo.ca and as always, contact UW Police with emergencies.
Essential workplaces on campus must continue monthly safety inspections

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, supervisors must perform monthly inspections for the areas they supervise. During the campus shutdown, monthly inspections must continue in areas where workers are required to be on campus to perform their duties. This includes labs operating under the critical research umbrella and departments providing essential services (e.g., Plant Operations, Food Services, Residences).

If you are responsible for an area on campus where workers are continuing to work, please ensure the monthly inspections are completed and that the reports are given to your departmental health and safety committees/coordinators.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for the essential workers on campus. Please contact Elizabeth Ney with questions regarding workplace inspections.

Training updates

Temporary changes to health and safety training

During the campus shutdown, all online safety training will continue through LEARN, but all classroom safety training is suspended until further notice.

We are encouraging all employees to take this opportunity to ensure their safety training is up to date and enroll in required online training modules through LEARN. See the Safety Office's training page for a list of all training health and safety training.

Safety training records for employees can be accessed by departmental health and safety coordinators as well as other designated employees in each department using the Safety Training Reporting Tool. Employees can also access their safety training records using Workday.

WHMIS training update

The WHMIS 2015 transition period has ended and the new training module on LEARN has been updated to reflect changes to legislation.

Contact Doug Dye with any questions related to health and safety training.

Broken mercury thermometer found on campus

We recently received a report of a broken mercury thermometer found in a lab. We want to remind everyone that these devices have been banned from use on campus for quite some time. Even old, unused mercury thermometers should not be on campus.
During your next inspection, please ensure that none of these devices are present in your lab. If you do find one, contact the Safety Office for guidance on how it can be safely disposed of.

**Fire safety while working at home**

Under the Ontario Fire Code, employees working from home are responsible for ensuring their remote work areas have appropriate fire protection (e.g., fire alarm, fire extinguishers). Many of us have changed spaces in our homes into work stations and these spaces may not have been designed to be used in this manner.

Please consider the following when assessing your work setup:

- Is your space designed to provide electricity to the extra devices you now have plugged in? Only use certified (ULC, CSA) power bars and make sure you are using them properly.
- Homes must have working smoke alarms on every level. When was the last time you tested your alarms?
- Do you have fire escape plans in place and have they been reviewed with everyone in your home?
- Review the [Fireproof Your Home](#) and [Escape Plans](#) checklists from the City of Kitchener. These easy-to-follow checklists will help you fireproof every room in your home.

![Fire Escape Plan](image)

**Meeting Place**

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**Reporting work-related injuries sustained at home**

We have received inquiries about the process for reporting work-related injuries sustained by employees at home.

It is critical that Incident and Investigation Reports arrive electronically at the [Safety Office](#) email account within 24 hours of the incident. Injuries that occur
while performing work duties at home will continue to be managed by the Safety Office.

Contact Andrew Scheifele with questions about work-related injuries.

In case you missed it: Essential Workers, Home Office Ergonomics Tips, and the new Lab Ramp-Down Checklist

Since the last Safety Office E-news, the following communications have gone out from the Safety Office.

**Essential Workers**
Only essential workers are permitted to be on campus at this time. On April 22nd, Kate Windsor, Director of Safety sent out a communication to all employees outlining the guidelines for building access.

**Home Office Ergonomics**
Use the Safety Office's Home Office Ergonomic Tip Sheet for guidance on setting up an ergonomically correct home workspace.

**Laboratory Ramp-Down & Temporary Shutdown Checklist**
The Safety Office developed the Laboratory Ramp-Down & Temporary Shutdown Checklist to assist lab managers as they ramp-down operations for temporary shutdowns.

**Updated Programs and guidelines**
The following programs and guidelines have undergone an annual review and the most recent editions are now available on the Safety Office website.

If you have links saved or hard copies of any of the documents below, please replace them with these versions.

- Respiratory Protection Program
- Asbestos Management Program
Other notes

- Welcome to our new health and safety coordinators!
  - Dayna Chan and Louise Green, Management Sciences
  - Bonnie Bishop, School of Accounting and Finance
  - Charles Dal Castel, Chemical Engineering
  - Brad Plata, Housing
- Sign up for the Safety Office E-News (open to all university employees).

This message is sent from the Safety Office
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