

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Effective Date: August 1, 2014

Date Revised: N/A

Supersedes: N/A

**Related Policies: Code of Ethical Conduct; Policy on Professional Standards and Business Conduct; Environmental Health & Safety guidelines, plans and procedures**

**Responsible Office/Department: Environmental Health & Safety**

**Keywords: safety programs, safety committees, environmental management, hazardous materials**

## **Policy on Environmental Health and Safety**

### **I. Purpose and Scope**

Northeastern University strives to provide a safe and healthy environment in which to study, research, live, work and visit. The University places a high priority on conducting its work, teaching, research and other activities in compliance with environmental health and safety laws and regulations, and in accordance with recognized health, safety and sound environmental management practices. At the same time, the university endeavors to be a responsible steward of the environment and a leader in taking steps to protect the environment and reduce the environmental impact associated with its activities.

This policy applies to all faculty, staff and students, as well as visitors, contractors and agents, and to all activities undertaken on each of its campuses, as well as to off-campus activities undertaken in support of teaching or research, including but not limited to field studies.

### **II. Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, **Safety Committees** are responsible for overseeing the implementation of specific safety and environmental compliance programs. Committee members are appointed by senior management and should have appropriate expertise as indicated by applicable standards and regulations. Committees shall include representatives from departments or units that must implement the specific safety or environmental program, as well as a representative from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety and senior management. Safety committees review teaching and research protocols as well as operational programs to identify or develop procedures that meet regulatory compliance and support best safety and environmental management practices.

**Department Safety Officers (DSO)** are responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe conditions within a department that conducts academic teaching or research activities; facilities support functions; or other activities that utilize hazardous materials or equipment. A DSO is appointed by the department chair or unit head and has delegated authority to coordinate department safety program implementation with the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. The DSO may serve as a department representative on safety program committees.

**Environmental Health & Safety program managers** are employees within the Department of Environmental Health & Safety with responsibilities related to specific safety programs who have specific education, expertise and professional training in those areas.

### **III. Policy**

It is the policy of Northeastern University to promote a safe and healthy environment for our faculty, staff, students, visitors, contractors and agents, and to comply with state and federal laws and regulations relating to workplace and environmental health and safety. The university expects adherence to good environmental health and safety practices and compliance with laws and regulations by all members of the University community. Managers and supervisors, including deans, department chairs, principal investigators and individual faculty members, are responsible for the establishment and maintenance of appropriate environmental health and safety practices within their areas including, as appropriate: 1) the appointment of DSOs; 2) promulgation and enforcement of work rules to promote best environmental health and safety practices; 3) compliance with laws, regulations, policies, and University environmental health and safety procedures and rules; and 4) supporting an environmental health and safety culture throughout the University .

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) has oversight of environmental health and safety programs at Northeastern University, and has the authority to issue procedures and rules, and to suspend activities and close laboratories or other work areas it deems to be unsafe to people or the environment, or in violation of University policy or applicable law. EH&S provides overall guidance to the university on applicable laws and regulations, and works with the Department Safety Officers and Safety Committees to support and maintain an effective program. EH&S also evaluates environmental health and safety risks and develops mitigation strategies, and coordinates the response to incidents, investigations, audits, and regulatory reviews, as well as managing related filings, reports and licenses. EH&S will convene safety committees in specific areas where required by law or in keeping with best management practices. Such committees have authority, in coordination with EH&S, to develop, implement and enforce health, safety and environmental plans.

Detailed guidelines and procedures in specific environmental health and safety areas, as well as plans for working with specific hazardous materials, must be followed and are available from

the EH&S website: <http://www.ehs.neu.edu>. Newsletters, forms, and training registration are also available at that website. Managers and supervisors are responsible for keeping informed of the policies, practices, programs and requirements posted there.

#### **IV. Additional Information**

EH&S program managers monitor compliance with environmental and health and safety regulations as well as University policies and programs in their specific areas; respond to incidents and report and make recommendations to senior management related to environmental health and safety practices in those areas; develop, implement, manage and, when necessary, refine environmental health and safety programs and procedures; provide guidance and technical assistance on interpreting safety regulations and guidelines and identifying and responding to hazards; participate in risk assessments, crisis management planning, and emergency response; and promote best environmental health and safety practices throughout their areas.

Any failure to follow this policy, or any of the environmental health and safety procedures and work rules applicable to a particular area, may result in disciplinary action and sanctions, up to and including termination of employment for faculty and staff, or separation for students.

#### **V. Contact Information**

If you need help or information about environmental health and safety matters, call EH&S at 617-373-2769 or e-mail at [ehs@neu.edu](mailto:ehs@neu.edu).

For emergency environmental health and safety matters, call the Department of Public Safety (Campus Police), at 617-373-3333.