ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY
ANNUAL REPORT 2008

INTRODUCTION

Mission

The Environmental, Health and Safety Department is responsible for facilitating University safety by implementing programs that serve the students, employees and clients within the state. Effective fulfillment of our responsibility is made possible through the significant efforts of many individuals as well as our partnerships with various constituents of the campus community and regulatory agencies. EH&S provides leadership in environmental stewardship and regulatory compliance assistance to the NMSU system.

EH&S fulfills its mission to make NMSU a safe environment by implementing high quality/timely health and safety services in eight major areas.

1. Education, Training & Protective Equipment
3. Health & Safety Inspection/Facility Audits/Activity & Work Reviews
4. Regulatory Compliance
5. Accident & Exposure Investigations
6. Exposure Prevention/Indoor Air Quality
7. Radiation Licensing & Permitting
8. Safety Standard & Procedures

Vision

Our vision at NMSU is to be recognized as a premier university. NMSU will not be recognized as such, unless the University demonstrates a strong commitment to protecting the health and safety of employees, students and the public as well as protecting the environment. Our goals are to have a workplace free of injuries and hazardous exposures, to prevent or minimize any adverse impact to the environment, to provide services of the highest quality to the NMSU system and to be recognized as leaders in the areas of environmental protection, health and safety.

Department Values

Staff will practice their profession by following recognized scientific principles and management practices, factually informing affected parties of their findings in an honest, straightforward manner, exhibiting the highest level of integrity, honesty and empathy, while never compromising the public’s welfare. Staff will strive to be involved in continual education and professional development, to provide superior customer service in all areas, to perform service only in the areas of their competence and maintain information as confidential when appropriate.
Overview of 2008

- 20% increase in employees trained in safety
- 28% increase in number of safety trainings delivered
- 37% increase in laboratory facility and safety equipment inspections
- Over $100,000 of BRR was used for correction of facility safety deficiencies
- 40% decrease in number of work related injuries and illness claims
- Provided significant safety support to remote campuses and Ag. Science Centers
- Had to recover $120,000 from other departments to support statewide safety and Air Permit compliance
- Reorganization and two new staff resulted in a 45% increase in compliance inspections, and 58% increase in activity reviews and indoor air quality incident investigations
- Disposed 80,000 lbs of hazardous waste and managed a 36% increase in items handled
- Approval of 1.2 M renovation project for Environmental Management Facility (for haz waste)
- Completed 5 year renewal for Air Permit and took on expanded compliance oversight
- Increased compliance with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard throughout NMSU system
- Implemented new Animal Worker Occupational Health & Safety Program
- Supported dental clinic opening with 8 new X-ray machine registrations
- Moved radioactive sources and decommissioned Gardner Hall for renovation
- Moved and disposed residual chemicals for Gardner Hall renovation
- Passed NM Environment Department Radiation Protection inspection with no findings
- Responded to EPA and OSHA inspection findings with no penalty
- Validated 2251 driver's licenses, a 275% increase over previous years
- Coordinated large multi-agency disease tabletop training for Administration and essential departments.
- Draft policies for emergency preparedness including personnel practices and developed checklists for various types of emergency response

Overall the department continued to provide most services at an acceptable level in most program areas. However, the resources needed to meet the needs of the remote facilities were not budgeted but were obtained by internal departmental charges through annual service agreements. The quality of services continues to be strained due to increased demand for services and lack of staff due to inadequate reoccurring funding. As new university space is added to the list of EH&S responsibilities, new demands are created and new resources are not being provided. There remains a critical need to increase funding levels when new space or new responsibilities are added.

FACULTY RESEARCH SUPPORT

The NMSU SCORE (Support of Continuous Research Excellence) Program conducted a formal Research Environment Study of researchers (n=266) on the Las Cruces campus, September 2007. Of the respondents, 70% were tenure-track faculty (representing one-third of the total NMSU tenure track faculty) and 19% were research scientist or professional research staff. Most of the respondents had long experience (54% with nine years or more) at NMSU. One repeated theme which emerged from the quantitative survey responses was satisfaction with Environmental Health & Safety support but frustration with other NMSU research support systems. Across all colleges, the Environmental Safety practices were deemed good or excellent by 57% and fair by 32% with only 11% rating poor or terrible. These ratings relate to one's experience with the efficiency of NMSU EH&S systems and processes and whether EH&S procedures are judged to meet the organization's needs without impeding research work. On the other hand, Accounting, Purchasing and Hiring processes were clearly judged as problem areas with poor/terrible scores from 71%, 62% and 68% of respondents for each area respectively. These data indicate that survey participants were distinguishing among categories and not merely complaining about all research support systems.
CENTRALIZED SAFETY TRAINING

We strive for partnerships in safety through quality education and services. EH&S staff provided 192 classes compared to 150 training classes last year, a 28% increase. These classes cover over 25 different safety topics for compliance with regulations, NMSU policy and State Risk Management’s new Loss Prevention and Control Rule.

Overall, a total of 2972 employees attended safety training which is a 20% increase compared to last year. Training includes 17 different routinely offered safety courses plus special sessions such as Ag. Worker Protection Training, Lab Standard Refresher and Graduate Assistant orientation and other special requests. See chart of 2008 Safety Training to review the participation in the various classes last year. We have developed strong partnerships with Departments through our safety training program. This is evidenced in repeated requests for EH&S staff to present special sessions on current safety issues which serves to help departments comply with OSHA’s annual lab refresher training requirement. This year the list of departments that mandated students and staff to attend this annual refresher expanded from three to five. Participation now includes Departments of Chemistry & Biochemistry, Biology, Chemical Engineering, Plant & Environmental Science and Art.

EH&S staff traveled throughout the state to provide safety training to all Agricultural Science Centers, Alamogordo campus and Carlsbad Environmental Management and Research Center. Travel was made possible with added personnel and new operating budget (from OFS Training & Safety) as well as recovery from the College of Agriculture and CEMRC.

New this year is Animal Worker Safety Training which was rolled out to support the Occupational Safety Program for Animal Workers now required by Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for anyone working with animals in research.

Training Goal:
Increase safety training compliance in core courses by providing accessibility for employees at remote locations through web interface.
EMPLOYEE INJURY & ILLNESS LOSS CONTROL

There was a 92% decrease in the number of lost work days during 2008 which is due to better case management (new Worker Comp Coordinator). However, the number of individuals reporting injury claims also decreased by 40%. This positive change correlates with a 20% increase in safety training and a 500% increase in funded facility safety repairs. EH&S focused new training for high risk injury areas including heavy equipment operations, agricultural worker protection, animal and laboratory safety.

![OSHA Recordable Worker Comp Cases - with lost time or restricted work](chart)

- 20% increase in employee safety training
- 2000 participants
- 40% decrease in cases

![Total Number of Days Away from Work (Lost Days)](chart)

- 92% decrease in lost time

### NMSU Workers Comp Claims - actual cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th># Claims Filed Per Risk Man</th>
<th>WC Amount Paid during first year claims were opened</th>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>$389,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>$449,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>$215,719</td>
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* reported by State RM

The actual cost of worker’s compensation claims has continued to decrease since the highest peak in 2005 which closely correlates with a 60% reduction of OSHA injury severity rate in 2008. The worker compensation insurance premiums are based on experience. Currently 54% ($2.2M) of the total risk management premium ($4.1M) is related to workers compensation, so it is important to maintain this constructive decrease in injury rate.

Loss Control Goal: Maintain low injury rate through training, inspections and timely facility repairs to improve workplace safety.
INSPECTIONS & SAFETY SERVICES

It is believed that personnel losses from work related injury and illness were reduced through aggressive EH&S safety surveillance of workplaces (inspections, work site review, response to indoor air quality complaints) as well as after the fact injury investigation to prevent similar incidents. Over $100,000 of BRR was utilized for correction of facility safety deficiencies in 2008. There were approximately 1700 inspections and work investigations of campus buildings, public areas, shops, classrooms and research facilities, as well as remote farm facilities. The number of laboratory facility and safety equipment inspections increased 37% compared to last year. The number of buildings inspected more than doubled from previous years because a new staff inspector was transferred from OFS reorganization. These additional resources have allowed EH&S to ensure that annual inspections of Las Cruces campus high hazard areas are completed (labs, shops, chemical storage areas, warehouse and plant operations, construction sites, mechanical rooms, machine use areas). Student workers are accomplishing annual review and certification of building safety equipment. Annual facility safety inspections are required by Worker’s Compensation Administration and State Risk Management Loss Control Rule (effective 2008) and required by several OSHA regulations.

Safety Inspections Performed

37% increase safety equipment certifications and lab inspections

Buildings Inspected

Number of buildings inspected in 2008 more than doubled with additional staff (new inspector)

There were 115 responses to incidents primarily involving indoor air quality complaints and minor hazardous materials spills/incidents, a 35% increase with inclusion of mold and asbestos concerns. There was also an 84% increase in activity evaluations compared to last year because of the new work site evaluations performed for OFS.

Remote Area Inspections

All NMSU components and entities need safety services and the importance of routine safety inspections and training became a tragic reality just four short years ago. The root cause of the worker
fatality was determined to have a number of contributing factors, including need for routine safety training and workplace inspections. Steps have been taken to provide training and inspection services to all 12 Ag Science Research Centers and farms; however, the funding to support this effort is obtained through an annual service contract with College of Agriculture.

For past two years, EH&S staff provided significant support to remote campuses and all Agricultural Science Centers including on-site training and inspections. This year, experienced staff provided safety inspection for 11 ASC’s and the facilities at Carlsbad, Grants and DACC campus. Each report of inspection details safety deficiencies with corrective actions and a summary prioritizing safety concerns for executive leadership. In addition, there were several unscheduled visits to remote campuses to investigate and report on serious incidents. These include repeated nail gun injuries at the Carlsbad campus, Ethics Point safety concerns and secondary OSHA inspection at Grants campus. All deficiencies were immediately corrected with a timely response so no penalty was assessed by OSHA.

**Inspection Goals:**
- Seek central funding to provide annual inspection of all remote campuses, Agricultural Science Centers and laboratories (currently under annual service contract with EH&S and Colleges)
- Increase inspection budget as new square footage is added to the NMSU system

**MANAGEMENT OF ASBESTOS REMOVAL**

New in 2008, EH&S became responsible for overseeing asbestos management, previously under Office of Facilities Services. This re-organization was appropriate as EH&S is responsible for providing a safe environmental workplace for NMSU employees, students and visitors and for compliance with federal and state regulations. EH&S has continued to provide NMSU departments with timely and professional response in regards to asbestos, mold and lead related issues. These responsibilities include providing immediate initial inspections, ensuring surveys and monitoring to assess potential environmental hazards and conducting Asbestos Awareness Training for campus personnel. Additionally, EH&S provides similar services for the remote campuses.

There is one dedicated employee and one other employee that provides back up which are qualified as an asbestos inspector annually. During 2008 the department completed 34 abatement projects, 15 of which required permitting through NESHAP. All asbestos abatement projects are performed and monitored by licensed contractors. Several mold assessments were also completed during this same period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NESHAP filings in 2008</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>14777 sq.ft. Total</th>
<th>718 ln.ft.Total</th>
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Education and training are essential to ensure health, safety and environmental compliance.

Although EH&S offered regular Asbestos Awareness Training in both English and Spanish at four different times last year, only six employees attended. Supervisors were reminded of annual refresher training requirements for their employees. This training informs staff on potential locations and types of materials that may contain asbestos and the NMSU procedure for notification so that appropriate containment and abatement is performed by contractor prior to NMSU employee work in these areas. Specific maintenance involving class IV non-friable asbestos and those with documented negative exposure are allowed by trained NMSU employees.

**Asbestos Management Goal:** Increase refresher training compliance rate
HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

EH&S environmental compliance team managed 79,909 pounds of waste compared to 84,062 pounds last year, however, the number of items handled increased 36%, with 3385 items in 2008 compared to 2500 items in 2007. This increase in items required an increase in man hours which was obtained by shifting 0.25 FTE from Radiation Safety support to HW management. Much of the additional workload resulted from large chemical clean outs, a byproduct of moving labs out of Gardner and Foster Halls prior to renovation. EH&S engaged Planning & Construction to ensure future renovation chemical clean outs will be contracted in advance and this non-routine expense paid for by the Project. EH&S waste management personnel (3.75 FTE) accomplished 22 distinct shipments of hazardous waste (chemical, biological, universal and special waste). Special projects are chemical waste removal from remote campuses and Ag Science Centers that are not routine.

The amount of chemical waste (80,000 pounds) was consistent with 87,000 pound average of the previous five years. However, the increase in the number of items handled increased significantly (36%) which impacts personnel needed to handle additional items. Chemical waste disposal costs managed by this team are extremely low (about 10th percentile) as compared to 69 other research universities benchmarks reported by Campus Safety, Health & Environmental Management in 2008.

Total Items of Waste Handled

36% increase in hazardous waste containers handled in 2008 compared to 2007
Special clean outs of legacy chemicals, pesticides and paints contributed to the increased number of items handled and disposed as waste. On the average, EH&S provides for a special waste clean out (greater than 50 chemicals) from a lab or shop on the Las Cruces campus every two weeks. This combined with large renovation projects involving laboratories has increased the workload and requires additional man hours which have been shifted from other areas. Long term impact of reduced services in other areas could lead to regulatory non-compliance.

The volume of hazardous waste generated by the Las Cruces campus operations (facilities, research & instruction) has doubled over the past 10 years. Collection and disposal of mercury containing light bulbs, PCB ballasts, lead pipes and other hazardous building wastes contributed to the increase in waste volume. In addition, much of the increase in volume can be attributed to clean out of labs and shops when faculty and supervisors change which leaves the university with unwanted hazardous materials. We hope to educate the NMSU community on ways to minimize waste generation for a sustainable future.

**Hazardous Waste Goals:**
- Seek central funding to support expanded hazardous waste management for NMSU system
- Educate generators on waste minimization to maintain or reduce hazardous waste volume
- Increase budget as waste generation from growth in research and infrastructure increases

**Environmental Management Facility**

After seven years, we have approved funding and building plans for renovation of Wind Tunnel which are within budget. The renovated facility will replace current storage building built in 1980’s. We reduced the program design, floor plan and mechanical system (from that completed previous year) and the cost to complete the Environmental Management Facility project is still at $1.2M. The current A Mountain storage facility is inadequate, has no engineering controls as needed for the type of processing and hazardous waste operations performed and the size of the building is grossly inadequate for the quantity of hazardous waste handled and shipped every 90 days. Explosions caused by pressurization of glass bottles driven over bumpy road and lack of safety shower because of freezing temperature will soon be history that we gladly leave behind. The new facility location will increase efficiencies that currently are lost because of segregated waste accumulation areas at A Mountain chemical building and Wells Street universal and biohazardous waste storage locations.
Title V Air Permit

Environmental Affairs provide environmental compliance program support for Office of Facility Services air pollution (Title V) and PCB operations under a annual service agreement. This is another internal department charge necessitated because of inadequate funding. The amount of support increased significantly as new regulations and responsibilities shifted to EH&S. Highlights of 2009, were a comprehensive renewal application for the Las Cruces campus air pollution permit. All sources of air pollution associated with campus activities were identified and potential emission estimates calculated. Staff continue to monitor and track compliance reporting for emissions and work with NM Environment Department on resolving minor violations without penalties being assessed. Last year, there was one compliance inspection related to the air permit performed by NMED.

BIOSAFETY MANAGEMENT

The Biological Safety program supports the EH&S mission by providing monthly trainings, and performing all administrative tasks related to program management including full support of the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). Primary constituencies served are the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and the College of Arts and Sciences, including the grant funded BRIDGES program, the NM Innovative Biomedical Research (NM INBRE) program, and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Scholars program. The biosafety officer consults on biosafety-related matters with academic and support departments – including the Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory Users Group, and providing training to faculty staff and students in Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogens and Animal Worker Safety. The program provides a critical element in documenting the university’s compliance with the NIH Office of Biotechnology Activities, CDC/Public Health Service, and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and NMSU policy.

The biological safety program is staffed by one FTE responsible for administrative tasks, biosafety training, and participation in IBC and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) support and oversight research at NMSU. The biosafety officer maintains records and communicates essential information in support of biomedical and agricultural laboratory-based research involving potentially pathogenic organisms, biological toxins, federal permits, and recombinant DNA.

Examples of records maintained include research protocols and applications, activity modification reports, laboratory surveys, and biological safety cabinet test reports. Other functions include ensuring compliance with annual bloodborne pathogen training and exposure control plan updates, submitting an annual report on the IBC to the National Institutes of Health.
Finally, the Biosafety Officer is responsible for identifying new and amended federal and state regulations regarding research and communicating any new requirements to the research community.

**Biosafety Level 3 Facility**

The BSL3 facility was certified last year and Biology faculty began using it for research project using Dengue virus. Although there are still concerns with back up generator functioning, there are current grant requests for funds to increase the BSL3 capability for Molecular Biology research.

**Biosafety Training**

Personnel training requirements are based on the nature of the materials used in the respective teaching and research activities at NMSU. For example, persons working at the University Health Center, Police, Fire and Emergency Services based on their contact with patients or members of the public are considered to have a routine potential for exposure to human blood, internal body fluids and “unfixed” tissue and therefore are required to attend annual training in bloodborne pathogen exposure control. Also included in this group are research personnel using human cell lines in a research laboratory and employees of the nursing and allied health programs.

Persons working with potential plant or human pathogens at biosafety level 2 (BSL-2) are required to attend Laboratory Biosafety Awareness. Also, as of January 1, 2009 all personnel who work with vertebrate animals are required to enroll in the Occupational Health and Safety Program for animal workers which includes the Animal Worker Safety training. Over 117 participants completed this new training and a DVD recording is available for use at Agricultural Science Centers throughout the state. Completion of a health questionnaire, necessary immunizations and training are required to work with animals at NMSU.

Each of these trainings fulfills the university’s obligation under 29 CFR 1910.1030, the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, the CDC/NIH Public Health Service, and USDA regulations, respectively. Participant surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the content and presentation.

**Biosafety Goals:**

- Improve compliance with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard throughout the NMSU system by offering on-line training and facilitating departmental Exposure Control Plans
- Annual inspections for all IBC approved laboratories
RADIATION SAFETY

The University holds two radioactive material (RAM) licenses and several x-ray certificates of registration (COR) issued by the New Mexico Environment Department Radiation Control Bureau. On main campus, use of radioactive materials is authorized under the terms and conditions of a Broad Scope Type AB Radioactive Materials License. A separate, facility-specific RAM license covers the Carlsbad Environmental Monitoring & Research Center (CEMRC). CEMRC is a small NMSU-owned research chemistry laboratory located near the Carlsbad Branch Campus. X-ray CORs are maintained for medical/dental x-ray machines located in the DACC Dental Clinic, Student Health Center and Athletics Department. Several analytical x-rays located in various departments on main campus and are covered under a blanket COR for main campus. A separate COR covers an x-ray diffraction machine located within the CEMRC facility.

The NMSU Radiation Safety Committee is comprised of 7 faculty and staff with expertise in various areas related to the safe use of radioactive materials and radiation producing devices. The primary function of the committee is to establish radiation safety policies for the university community and provide broad administrative oversight of the NMSU radiation safety program. The day to day administrative and technical duties of running the program are performed by staff employed by NMSU EH&S. These responsibilities include, among other things, maintaining the RAM licenses and x-ray CORs, maintaining program legal records; serving as a liaison between the university and radiation regulatory agencies; providing an interface and point of contact between the NMSU RSC and NMSU faculty/staff using radioactive materials or devices; and identifying changes to federal and state radiation protection regulations that may affect the university. Other primary responsibilities of include providing user radiation safety training (monthly classes); maintaining a university-wide RAM inventory, management and disposal of radioactive waste along with annual inspections, leak testing, central receiving and contamination surveys (see graph below).

<table>
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<th>RADIATION SAFETY SERVICES</th>
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</tr>
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CEMRC facility has one on-site employee who, in addition to other duties, provides the day to day radiation safety support for that facility. The employee works closely with the CEMRC RSO located in EH&S Las Cruces campus.

On the Las Cruces campus, the staff working in radiation safety program includes a Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) who also serves as the Director of EH&S, a full-time assistant RSO and a half-time technician. The assistant RSO for main campus also serves as the primary RSO on the CEMRC specific RAM license and X-Ray COR. In addition, the
On Las Cruces campus, approximately 900 lbs of radioactive waste was shipped off site January 2009 for $8,000 which is $8.88/lb compared to $9.16/lb for 1880 lbs of radioactive waste shipped in 2006. Waste costs were minimized by incineration of dry lab waste, shipping exempt quantities for incineration and decaying waste which is processed on site and sent to landfill at no charge. In addition, 420 lbs of radioactive waste from the CEMRC facility was disposed of at a cost of $8.44/lb.

Special radiation services were provided to support Gardner Hall renovation project including extensive decommissioning and removal of radioactive sources from several laboratories. Some of the materials required higher level security and radioactive storage facilities at A Mountain were upgraded to standards issued by Police Department and Department of Homeland Security.

There were two external audits performed by the NM Radiation Control Bureau. The inspections covered aspects of the NMSU radiation safety program and compliance with the radioactive materials license and x-ray registrations issued by NM Radiation Control Bureau. No deficiencies and one positive observation were made in the inspection report. Radiation Safety training courses are provided specific to radioactive materials, x-ray devices and nuclear gauge use. Although the courses are offered monthly, the number of individuals trained has been steadily declining, which relates to fewer active users of ionizing radiation and no refresher training requirement.

Radiation Safety Goal: Increase training participation through a new refresher training requirement.
PERIODIC DRIVER LICENSE VERIFICATION

In 2005, NMSU instituted a periodic driver license validation to review individuals authorized to drive university vehicles. This was the three year renewal period and a total of 2251 driver’s licenses were validated in 2008 which is 275% more than previous years (~ 600 annually). EH&S staff worked diligently to deliver 1866 new vehicle permits, three times more than previous years. The number of issued utility cart permits (385) more than doubled this year compared to last year (150).

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Since the events of 911, Environmental Health & Safety has coordinated Safety & Security Initiatives at the beginning of each Fall semester to keep awareness with departments and provide education of emergency planning for new employees and students. The events include:

- Distribution of written initiatives and annual update requirements for emergency planning
- Testing of Department Emergency Action Plans through unannounced fire drills
- Testing of the Emergency Notification tools & updating emergency contact lists
- Conducting tabletops with external regional participation and University units

With group effort led by Sr.Vice President Woods, a new Emergency Notification Policy and Committee was established at the same time a multifaceted notification tool was implemented for NMSU emergency communications. The revised Emergency Preparedness policy for New Mexico State University System approved in 2008 established an “All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan” to guide responders, administration, and the community during emergency situations. To communicate this plan, representatives from key departments involved in preparedness met with each component of NMSU to discuss their plans using local public safety resources and NMSU system resources.

Other preparedness accomplishments at the Las Cruces campus include:

- Coordination of a multi-agency (regional) tabletop exercise on animal acquired and transmitted communicable disease with 54 participants including NMSU senior administration.
- Development of responsibilities checklists for various types of incidents including Building Fire, Gunman, Bomb Threat, Hazardous Materials Response.
- Led 21 essential function departments in development of Continuity of Operations Plans
- Ensured regular updates for Command/Control/Communications information: Central Administration Response Team and Resource Personnel
- A draft Gunman protocol checklist for tabletop exercise being led by Police Dept. was developed.
- No additional funding or position has been allocated to EH&S in support of emergency management although requests have been submitted to Budget Committee for past four years. EH&S commits about 0.5 FTE for emergency preparedness by shifting priority from other areas.
- Chair and support Communicable Disease Preparedness and University Safety Committees.

Goal: Obtain support for electronic Continuity of Operations Planning tool to facilitate departmental planning and consolidation of information