



Faculty of Science Safety Committee Meeting

May 30th, 2025, ~ 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Dean of Science Boardroom

Attendees:

Dean of Science Office & Meeting Chairperson - Dr. Sam Veres, Dean of Science

Dean of Science Office – Leanne Lucas, Science Safety Advisor

Department of Astronomy and Physics – Dr. Mike Dunlavy

Department of Biology - Dr. David Chiasson

Department of Chemistry – Jennifer Wright

Animal Facility: Caila Henderson

Department of Forensic Science – Dr. Tim Frasier

Department of Geology – Dr. Mitch Kerr

Human Resources Department – n/a

Facilities Management Department – Dennis Gillis

Minute taker – April Scheller

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 10:00 am

GENERAL BUSINESS

Call for Agenda Item Additions

No additions.

Minutes from the January 2025 meeting

Minutes adopted by consent.

BUSINESS ARISING

Scent Posters in Bathrooms

Scent awareness posters have been put up in the bathrooms. If you see any missing, let L. Lucas know. On the poster, there are tips on who to contact if scents are bothering you.

Replacement of Glass Wool with Cotton

L. Lucas followed up with the instructor regarding Incident #7123. There were too many students crowding around the fume hood and glass wool was spilled on lab coats. Cotton wool will be used instead of glass wool in the future.

Safety Posters

L. Lucas shared the revised safety poster with the committee for review. On each poster there is an option to add what PPE is necessary for each lab. L. Lucas will work with Danielle Boudreau and create an editable pdf version for technicians and faculty. It will be included in the next Science Safety email sent to departments.

REPORTS

Safety Advisor Report

Summary of Injury/Incident Reports for Faculty of Science

L. Lucas described the Injury/Incident Reports that had been submitted for Science during February, March and April.

Incident #7146	Bruised hand from improper equipment use. The crank on the equipment was turned the wrong way and the roped snapped and left a minor bruise on the student's hand. Use of all equipment was suspended until the equipment was checked. Action: Regular checks will be done on the equipment and equipment will be labelled.
Incident #7309	Faulty oxygen alarm went off. The lab was evacuated, and Security was contacted but they had a delayed response. P. Farmer and HVAC arrived and called the fire department to have the O2 alarm investigated. The alarm was supposed to alert Facilities and Security, but it was not working properly. The same alarm in the same room went off recently, and the fire department came in again. Security didn't realize it was a low oxygen alarm. Action: L. Lucas and S. Veres will meet with Kevin Trudeau to identify the proper procedures and review training regarding the O2 alarms.
Incident # 7167	Although the incident is not Science related it is a concern. There was a medical emergency in a classroom and the analog phone was not working to contact Security. The instructor had to leave the room and the person requiring assistance to go get help. When Security did arrive, they provided support until EHS arrived. L. Lucas checked the phone a few days later when she was notified about the incident and it was working. She submitted a ticket to EIT to check the phone but they couldn't find anything wrong. Action: L. Lucas will ask the Associate Dean to add checking the phones in labs and lecture rooms periodically to the Start of Term message that goes out from the Dean's office.
Incident # 7189	Mild electric shock. Water was leaking from a fish tank and once it was cleaned up and the power bar was turned off, the tank was removed. When the power bar was turned back on, water pooled in the plug and it caused a mild shock to the student, but no assistance was needed. Action: A new power bar was installed away from the tank and the power bar is attached on the wall. P. Farmer checked the gfci's to ensure they were working, and one will need to be replaced in a different room. L. Lucas will check with Facilities again to see if they received a response from the electric inspector on whether additional dedicated plugs should be installed instead of the wall mounted power bars.

Incident #7250	Eye exposure to chemicals. A student possibly had a chemical go into their eye in a teaching lab from their glove. The eye was washed out for 5 minutes with water and the student's gloves were changed. Instructor offered to get the student transportation to the hospital, but they declined. Action: Student was reminded to take gloves off when adjusting anything near the face.
Incident #7229	Lightheaded and nauseated from smell. A TA was feeling nauseated and lightheaded during an experiment with nontoxic chemicals. They were instructed to go out in the hall and the TA was given water and Gatorade. Security was called and advised they go to the hospital if their symptoms did not improve. Another student felt the same but wasn't sure if it was from a previous sickness. That student was dismissed from the lab. When Security returned they checked whether any equipment, chemicals, or compressed gases in the room could cause these symptoms, but none were in this lab. Possible causes include smell of mouthwash and saline solution, previous illness or stress from upcoming exams. Action: No further action.
Incident # 7290	Broken pipe cut finger. Student was closing the waste box and tried to tie the bag, and a pipette cut their finger. The hand was rinsed for 15 minutes with soap and water. Action: A reminder to not let the waste box get too full and use zip ties instead of tying a knot.
Incident # 7313	Thumb got poked by a needle in a garbage can. The needles were not disposed of properly and a custodial member was poked with an unused needle. Action: S. Veres met with the employee and identified some other issues related to disposal of glass and sharps in this lab. Action: L. Lucas is working with the department to create signage for the lab. These signs will be up before the June 13th SSC meeting.
Incident #7310	Shock from fume hood. Facilities Management employee received shock when working on a fume hood. The worker was reminded to follow workplace practices. Action: More information is needed on this incident. L. Lucas will bring back to the committee.

OHS & Wellness Consultant: JOHSC Activity and Information

JOHSC meeting minutes for December 2024, January 2025 and February 2025 were reviewed.

V. Wadman is waiting for feedback on the Intro to OSH course and the VPFA office will send an email out about training.

V. Wadman is no longer responsible for the wellness portion at SMU and will be known as the OHS Consultant

L. Lucas said CCOHS offer 8 free courses available on their website. **L. Lucas will send the link to committee members.**

NEW BUSINESS

Issues relating to campus evacuation on May 20, 2025

The committee discussed with D. Gillis concerns regarding the response to the evacuation on May 20th. There was a bomb threat received by the Security team, Facilities accessed the level of risk with Police who recommended evacuating all buildings at SMU. D. Gillis noted that Police were very supportive, and a lot was learned during the event.

D. Gillis explained that once the evacuation was put in place, some fire alarms were pulled in the buildings. Once the fire alarm is pulled, Security is unable to send out mass notifications since a fire alarm overrides any other alarm. That caused some buildings to receive an evacuation notice and others to receive a notice to remain in place (first-stage alarm). The Fire department received notification of the fire alarm, but per Fire Department policy will not travel to a location with active bomb threat. Therefore, the Fire Alarms could not be turned off (which only the Fire Department is authorized to do), and as a result Security could not change the mass notification messages.

Executive and Senior Managers learned a lot during this event and will be reviewing the notification system and have plans for more emergency preparedness training. Ways to add a push notification to the SMUSafe app are being explored.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 am.

Dr. Sam Veres
Meeting Chairperson, Faculty of Science Safety Committee
Dean of Science