SECTION 23
CUSTODIAL SAFETY

I. CUSTODIAL SAFETY

A. General Guidelines

1. Personal Protection

   a. Wash your hands often.

   b. Dry hands before handling electrical equipment.

   c. Never use your hands to reach into or pack down trash.
d. When necessary, wear protective equipment such as gloves when using cleaning agents. Wear comfortable shoes with supportive soles. Review Section 14, Personal Protective Equipment, of this manual to ascertain what, if any, protective equipment the job might require and then consult with your supervisor; supervisors are ultimately responsible for choosing the appropriate personal protective equipment (when needed), and for training employees in the usage, care, and maintenance of such equipment.

2. Cleaning

a. Use fresh cleaning supplies.

b. Do not let trash pile up. Empty and clean trash containers regularly.

c. Keep storage places neat and clean.

d. Keep equipment clean. Keep machine guards in place.

e. Use the appropriate signage when mopping or polishing floors.

3. Avoiding Trip Hazards

a. Keep cords and vacuum hoses out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.

b. Report floor "tripping hazards" (ripped carpets, loose, missing or broken tiles).

c. Move equipment slowly. Park equipment and carts away from doorways and corners.

d. Do not block aisles, stairs, or exits with equipment and supplies.

4. Electrical Equipment

a. If problems occur with electrical equipment, remove the equipment from use and inform your supervisor.

b. To unplug electrical equipment, grip and pull the plug; do not yank the cord!

5. Restricted Areas

a. Do not enter restricted areas unless authorized to do so. Permission to enter laboratory areas must be obtained from the supervisor/principal investigator in charge of the lab. His/her name and contact information are available on door signage posted outside the restricted area.

b. Obey all hazard warning signs. If you have any questions, ask your supervisor.

6. Site-Specific Procedures

a. Review with your supervisor any cleaning procedures that may be unique to a specific work area.
b. Make certain that you have the proper equipment for cleaning such areas, and that you are wearing the correct personal protective equipment, if needed.

7. **Monitoring**

If there is a demonstrated need or regulatory requirement for work area environmental monitoring or medical surveillance, the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) shall ensure that an audit is performed to make certain that regulatory provisions have been carried out.

**B. Cleaning Floors**

1. Recommendations of the flooring manufacturer must be followed in keeping floors clean, sanitary, and safe. For example, oily products when applied to wood floors increase the chance of slip-and-fall hazards.

2. When mopping, place warning signs conspicuously to alert pedestrian traffic of wet or slippery floor surfaces. Mop elevator lobbies during off-peak traffic hours, and remain in area to warn persons of wet floor conditions as they exit the elevator.

3. When mopping, handle one section of floor at a time. If traffic is heavy, rope off the section being mopped.

4. LPG (liquid propane gas) fired cleaning/buffing machines are not to be used in Tulane buildings.

5. Materials spilled on floors shall be cleaned up promptly.

6. Use cleaning materials in appropriate dilutions and make certain you are in a well ventilated area when diluting full strength chemical cleaners. Wear appropriate protective equipment.

7. Properly label all diluted chemical containers (see, [Section 12, Hazard Communication](#) of this manual).

**C. Hazardous Materials**

1. Make certain that you read the manufacturer’s label for all cleaning solutions being used. For more information, MSDSs (material safety data sheets) should be available from your supervisor or OEHS.

2. Consult with your supervisor before doing work in areas where hazardous materials are used. Custodial work in such areas may require special handling. For instance, in areas where an accumulation of hazardous dust is possible, such as in the ceramics clay mixing room, wet cleaning methods or vacuum cleaning using specialized HEPA equipment is required for cleaning furniture and lighting fixtures. Custodial work in hazardous areas may also require special training and access to information on hazardous materials.

3. Consult with your supervisor for information and training regarding any personal protective equipment, including respiratory protection, needed to perform custodial work in hazardous areas.
4. Make certain you observe all caution signs posted in hazardous areas.

5. **Hazardous Waste Disposal**

   Wastes determined to be hazardous should **never** be discarded into the sewer system or into regular solid waste receptacles. Such waste must be properly managed according to hazardous wastes policies and procedures (see, **Section 29, Hazardous Materials Safety**, of this manual).

6. Review the outline on page one of each of the following sections of this manual to determine if there are other areas of safety that may be relevant to your job: **Section 12, Hazard Communication; Section 29, Hazardous Materials Safety; Section 14, Personal Protective Equipment; and Section 15, Respiratory Safety.**

D. **Ladders**

   If a cleaning assignment should entail the use of a ladder, review **Ladders and Scaffolds** in **Section 24, Facilities Services**, of this manual for direction on the safe use of ladders. Never stand on a table or chair to accomplish a cleaning task.

E. **Fire Protection**

   Review fire safety guidelines in **Section 26, Fire Safety; and Section 1, Emergency Response** (Section 1 also includes instructions on use of fire extinguishers), of this manual.

II. **COMPLIANCE**

   **Departmental Safety Representatives** (DSR) help to ensure that the units they represent that perform custodial work are in compliance with all relevant policies and procedures outlined in this manual. (A **unit** is a department, section, center, or program, or any number or configuration of these components.) DSRs also collect and submit to OEHS any required documentation such as inspection reports, training acknowledgments, etc., prepared by unit supervisors.

   DSRs help ensure that the necessary measures have been taken by supervisory and other unit personnel to correct problems discovered during unit inspections. If corrections are not made despite deadlines and warnings from the DSR, the DSR shall report the unit's non-compliance to the **Unit Head**.

   If the problem remains unresolved, OEHS shall consult with the Unit Head, and, if necessary, take the issue of the non-compliant unit to the University's **Health & Safety Operations Committee** for resolution.
See Section 2, Environmental Health & Safety, of this manual for information on the University’s Compliance Management System.

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