

MINUTES

University Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee Meeting
Seminar Room, KCIC
Tuesday 28th January, 2014
10:45 – 12:00 noon

Present:

Mike Carter, Occupational Health and Safety Officer
Garry McIver, Coordinator, Purchasing Services, Bus Office, Administration Rep
Greg Deveau, Manager, Technology Consulting, Tech Services, AUPAT Rep
Matthew Guy, Manager, Residence Life
James Sanford, Senior Director, Student Affairs, Administration Rep
Marcel Falkenham, Director of Facilities
Rosie Hare, Executive Assistant, Office of VP Administration and Finance

Regrets:

Ann Myers, Cataloguing, Vaughan Memorial Library, SEIU Rep
Kevin Cleary, Director, Safety & Security
Sue Conlan, Instructor, Nutrition, AUFA Rep
Derek Parker, General Manager, Physical Plant
Jeff Harvey, Information Technology Specialist, Technical Services
Andrea Jeffs, ASU Rep
Jay Rees, Environmental Services Manager, Physical Plant
Patrick Difford, Operations Manager, Safety and Security

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Garry McIver at 10:45 a.m. Garry confirmed that there was not a quorum so that nothing requiring approval would be voted on.

2. Approval of the Minutes of November 27th, 2013:

Tabled.

3. Approval of the Agenda:

Tabled.

4. Business arising from previous minutes):

Reports from Sub-Committees:

- i. Workplace Violence Sub-committee:
Mike Carter reported that the survey was now complete and that it had been forwarded to the JOHS Committee members for feedback and completion.

ACTION: Mike will send a reminder out to the committee members to encourage them to complete the survey by January 31st, 2014.

The JOHS committee will then have a final review before rolling the survey out across the campus to every employee including student employees, and everyone will be encouraged to complete it. HR will assist with the mechanics of this.

Marcel asked whether the survey would be forwarded to ASU employees.

ACTION: Mike will speak to Ian Morrison to determine whether the survey should be circulated to ASU employees.

ii. Biosafety Committee:

Mike noted that the Biosafety Officer was Todd Smith and that he was intending to send out the survey during early February. This would identify any bio hazards that existed on campus. The committee will then resume work on the Bio Safety manual.

iii. Water Quality Sub-Committee:

Mike reported the latest rounds of testing that had taken place in Residences, and noted that the Water Quality sub-committee had met recently and discussed the Residence buildings. Further testing was conducted in early January. Mike felt that work needed to be carried out on a communications plan now, because nothing had been posted on the JOHS website for some time.

Mike also noted that it was important to engage with the town of Wolfville and have them along as an enthusiastic participant in any testing or research.

Marcel confirmed that the town was interested in collaborating on some key bond testing for monitoring corrosion properties, and doing some sampling.

Greg asked about the corrosion issue. Marcel responded that the Ph level of the water was what was causing lead to be extracted from the brass fixtures. This was not to the extent of pitting, but was making the lead more soluble in the water.

Greg asked whether the town Ph levels were within an acceptable Ph range. Marcel agreed that the levels were within the ranges acceptable to the town and noted that the water coming into the pipes had no lead in it.

Matthew noted that brass fixtures could contain up to 8% lead and still be sold as 'lead free'. Marcel agreed that even new buildings with plastic piping showed evidence of lead in the water, as a result of the fixtures. Marcel noted that despite War Memorial Gym having new faucets this year typical of high end residential ones, test results showed evidence of lead. Marcel felt that the issues experienced by the university were typical of those that would be experienced in a normal home, and noted that flushing of water was a good general practice.

Mike noted that SMU had experienced problems recently despite Halifax Water having a strong anti-corrosion approach.

James asked whether the town of Wolfville was considering explaining to residents the importance of flushing taps as a normal practice.

Marcel will be raising this with the town.

Review of water quality testing and recommendations:

Mike presented the most recent data and noted that at least one sample was taken from every Residence building, with the exception of kitchenettes. This was because the taps were disconnected for a period of 20 hours or more in order to be able to provide stagnation time, to allow for a worst case scenario.

Mike sampled water flow recording '0', '5', '10', '30' and '60' seconds. Results showed a dramatic drop in the lead content between 0 seconds and five seconds, with additional minor drop offs as the sample went to 60 seconds. This was the same in all instances.

As Mike carried out all of these tests himself he was able to see how seriously the custodians were taking the flushing exercise. Marcel agreed to pass this on to Derek Parker.

Marcel noted that 5 seconds of flow would equal water running through about 20 feet of pipe and proved that the fixtures were the issue.

Greg asked about using hot water for consumption.

Mike cautioned to stay away from drinking hot water because the heat made lead even more soluble.

Mike would like to be able to demonstrate to the students in the Eco House that a five second flush would drop the lead levels considerably. Matthew noted that one of the students had been so concerned that she had moved out of the Eco House.

Mike agreed to test some other locations in addition to the Residences (which were having the water flushed for ten minutes every day).

Greg asked whether kitchenettes in the BAC could be tested and the same approach (5 second flush) employed to see whether that would be adequate. Marcel noted that the Physical Plant did not have the resources to carry out a ten minute flushing in every building, and that the data had not been captured.

Matthew pointed out that the 10 minute flushing of water in Residences might prove to be unnecessary. Custodians were currently flushing the water while they cleaned the bathrooms, so that there was no wasted time.

Marcel stated that in spite of the 10 minute flushing's the University was not using more water than it had historically, partly because they had fixed leakage in some areas and problem areas in the swimming pool.

Mike tested a number of drinking fountains and found that the filters were performing well.

Marcel noted that the filter on the coffee machine in Wheelock, which was causing a restriction in flow, was now causing more of a restriction of flow after six months of heavy use.

ACTION: Mike will test the Eco House, the University Club, 24 Highland, Godfrey House, The Wong Centre and Hayward House.

A decision will need to be made on whether a ten minute flush was needed or not.

Mike will suggest to Darrell that Scott Roberts assist with some messaging around this issue.

James felt that the message should stress the thoroughness and diligence with which the testing had been carried out.

Mike acknowledged the expertise and assistance provided by Jenny Rand and appreciated the guidance that she had provided to the sub-committee.

Safety provisions for off-campus activities:

Mike met with Brian Wilson who is involved from the Emergency Management committee. Brian was already looking at various off-site locations, with relation to drowning protection and boating safety. Mike noted that First Aid regulations in Nova Scotia require that a 'remote location plan' is in place if a group was more than 30 minutes from a health facility.

Brian will be checking with the SRMK to determine what they do with the 10 day Outdoor Trip each year, and also checking with other universities to see what they do.

Mike would like to visit Bon Portage and Heckman's Island.

Sue and Mike were continuing to work with Brian on the best way to control risks in off-site locations.

Mike noted that the JOHSC site included a posting about what the obligations were for a trip leader. These need to be modified.

Other Business arising:

Mike noted that James was now working on the Safety Responsibilities and Accountability Policy.

Mike noted that there was a great turnout for the Building Manager session in December. Kevin, Mike, Marcel and the Physical Plant all presented and received good feedback from those present. Many Building Managers asked for clearer directions and timelines as to what they should be doing.

Mike met again with the presenters and they now have directions ready to circulate to the Building Managers. He was also hoping that building inspections could be carried out over the Study Break.

Greg requested assistance in the form of a Coop student to work on the e-tutorial and bring it to completion, noting that it was a long process to build this to completion.

Matt noted that he would like to see on-line training materials for student leaders to make use of, in addition to information for incoming students.

Greg noted that this project was being done with Technical Services resources, whereas a resource such as Dave Sheehan could produce a more professional product. Matthew noted that Darcy Benoit's Computer Science students also produce videos but Greg would need an additional scope to the work beyond just video.

ACTION: Mike will research some funding for a Coop student to assist with the e-tutorial project.

5. New Business

Review of JOHSC Objectives: Deferred.

6. Occurrences and Hazards:

Marcel reported that planning was in progress for the new Welcome Centre, the Arena and one other project.

The Natural Gas project should be on-line by late March.

Mike noted that there had been four slip and falls on ice, all staff and all had recovered quickly.

Last Friday in Elliot Hall a student pouring a chemical at eye level dropped some of it onto the bench. The student was wearing safety glasses but some of the irritant splashed onto her neck. This was quickly removed and Mike met with Teri Guillon to discuss whether safety glasses were adequate. Visors will be introduced and Technicians will be more present in future. TA's will also be coached more carefully in future.

Marcel noted that two rental pieces of snow removal equipment were being used to assist with snow clearing maintenance, because of breakdowns. The Physical Plant also had a very efficient new salt spreader.

7. Summary of Actions and Results Timetable arising from this meeting:

ACTION: Mike will send a reminder out to the JOHS committee members to encourage them to complete the workplace violence survey by January 31st, 2014.

ACTION: Mike will speak to Ian Morrison to determine whether the survey should be circulated to ASU employees.

ACTION: Mike will test the Eco House, the University Club, 24 Highland, Godfrey House, The Wong Centre and Hayward House.

ACTION: Mike will research some funding for a Coop student to assist with the e-tutorial project.

8. Schedule Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday 26th February, 2014 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be held in the Alumni Board Room, Fountain Commons.

A meeting request invitation will be sent with the minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Garry Mclver, Co-Chair

Date

Sue Conlan, Co-Chair

Date