



# Northern Illinois University Safety and Health Management Plan

Northern Illinois University  
Environmental Health and Safety

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## **1. PURPOSE**

The Safety and Health Management Plan (SHMP) is general in nature and provides a framework for identifying and mitigating hazards in work areas under the jurisdiction of Northern Illinois University (NIU), thereby creating the foundation for the complete occupational safety program for NIU employees.

### **1.1. Authority**

The authority for the implementation of the SHMP is based upon the Northern Illinois University Campus Health and Safety Policy, located at <https://www.niu.edu/policies/policy-documents/health-and-safety-policy.shtml>.

## **2. PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

The SHMP is comprised of the following program elements:

- General workplace safety rules (Section 2.1).
- Compliance with federal, state and local standards and codes (Section 2.2).
- Emergency Preparedness Plans and Procedures (Section 2.3).
- Investment of employees with authority to stop operations posing an imminent danger and protecting employees from discharge and discrimination for making complaints (Section 2.4).
- Employee training (Section 2.5).
- Regular inspections and audits to identify hazards and noncompliance with regulatory requirements (Section 2.6).
- Procedures for reporting, investigating, and documenting all work-related accidents and near misses to identify root causes and appropriate corrective actions (Section 2.7).
- Operation of Safety Committees (Section 2.8).
- Periodic review of the SHMP (Section 2.9).

### **2.1. General Workplace Safety Rules**

The following are general workplace safety rules that apply to all NIU employees:

- No employee is authorized to conduct any task that he or she knows is not safe without implementing the appropriate controls to prevent exposure to such hazards.
- No employee will be reprimanded or discriminated against reporting unsafe conditions or acts.
- All employees are encouraged to share their observations and ideas for enhancing workplace safety with their supervisor, the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), and/or the appropriate Safety Committee.
- All employees share responsibility for maintaining a safe work environment. All potential hazards that are beyond an employee's authority or expertise to correct or fully evaluate are to be promptly reported to a supervisor or other authority.

- Every employee is expected to adhere to all applicable safety procedures and requirements contained in this Plan and other safety/compliance plans developed in response to specific regulatory requirements.
- Supervisors are expected to continually monitor employee safety performance and take action to ensure that employees act in a safe and compliant manner. Supervisors are expected to serve as role models in this regard.
- Every employee shall ensure that they are familiar with emergency procedures, including designated evacuation routes, alarms, and designated shelter-in-place locations.
- Horseplay is prohibited.
- Employees are encouraged to discuss personal conditions/situations that may adversely impact their ability to work in a safe manner (e.g., stress, fatigue, illness, etc.) with their supervisors.
- Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be worn at all times when conditions warrant and in specific designated locations.
- All employees must observe good housekeeping practices. This includes ensuring that stairwells, exit routes, exit doors, and access to electrical panels are free of obstruction. It also includes ensuring that spills, accumulated liquids, or other potential risks of slips are cleaned up and/or removed.
- Machine guards and other protective devices (such as interlocks) must be maintained in proper position and working order. Machines or equipment with defective or missing guards or interlocks must be promptly removed from service.
- Department-issued tools, equipment and machinery must be properly inspected, serviced and maintained in good working condition in accordance with the manufacturer specifications.
- Employees shall refrain from moving heavy objects unless specifically trained in proper techniques and authorized to conduct such tasks. Appropriate mechanical devices shall be used when such use will greatly minimize the risk of injury.
- Employees shall not handle or tamper with any electrical equipment, machinery, air or water lines in a manner not within the scope of their duties.
- The appropriate and proper tool or equipment shall be used for any given task. Using a tool or equipment in a manner other than intended is prohibited. Tools and equipment that are not in good condition must be promptly removed from service and immediate supervisor notified.
- Extension cords are to be used only for temporary applications, and only when in good condition and equipped with a ground prong.
- Ladders must be used and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and limitations. As wooden ladders are taken out of service due to damage, they shall be replaced with fiberglass or aluminum constructed ladders with the appropriated duty rating.
- Employees must promptly report all occupational injuries/illnesses. Employees are encouraged to report "near misses" to their supervisor so that appropriate action can be taken to abate or prevent hazards before an injury occurs.

## **2.2. Compliance with Federal, State, and Local Standards and Codes**

NIU is committed to compliance with applicable standards and codes which include but are not limited to; Illinois Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), and related university safety policies. The EH&S Department is charged with responsibility for developing institutional plans and procedures to assist NIU units successfully comply with specific codes and standards. All NIU units are charged with responsibility for referencing such plans and procedures to develop and implement their respective safety programs.

In addition to compliance with applicable rules and regulations, supervisors are required to develop department-specific operational safety procedures to ensure employees can safely operate tools, equipment and machinery to which they are assigned. Job Hazard Assessments (JHA) can be used in the development of such procedures. Guidance on developing a JHA is provided by EH&S.

## **2.3. Emergency Preparedness Plans and Procedures**

Certain hazards, such as fire and tornadoes, are common to all work areas and employees. The NIU Emergency Planning and Preparedness web site, (<http://www.niu.edu/emergencyinfo/>) is the primary source of information regarding natural and man-made emergencies (i.e., tornados, fires, bomb threats, etc.). While NIU publishes general guidance and procedures to address such hazards, supervisors must instruct employees on information that is unique to their work area (i.e., specific evacuation routes and shelter-in-place locations, locations of alarms and emergency equipment, etc.). All employees are encouraged to subscribe to NIU Alert, (<http://www.niu.edu/emergencyinfo/register/>) which will provide information regarding emergency situations via email, phone, and text messaging for those who are registered.

## **2.4. Imminent Danger/Employee Complaints**

Imminent dangers are those safety hazards that pose an immediate threat of serious personal injury, illness, death, and/or significant damage to University property.

- Stop the operation (if under their immediate control).
- Notify affected employees.
- Report the danger to the immediate supervisor having jurisdiction over the area.
- Report the danger to their supervisor.
- Contact EH&S for assistance as necessary.

An employee may not be discharged or discriminated against for making any verbal or written complaint to their supervisor, department head, safety committee, EH&S, or any governmental agency. Please refer to the following website for additional information. (<http://www.whistleblowers.gov>).

## **2.5. Training**

Effective training is a critical component of hazard control. Training is intended to inform employees of hazards and effective mitigation strategies. A comprehensive safety training program will be established and maintained with the following components:

- Initial safety orientations on general rules, policies, and procedures for new employees.
- General safety training on hazards that may be encountered in the workplace
- Job-specific procedures and/or work-area-specific training so employees understand how to safely use and operate tools, equipment and machinery.
- Retraining whenever new substances, processes, or equipment are introduced into the workplace or when new hazards are identified.
- Refresher or re-training, as mandated by specific regulations/safety plans.

Department heads shall require employees to take all appropriate training in accordance with applicable written safety programs. Depending upon the subject matter, the EH&S Department personnel may consult with department heads to conduct, assist, or arrange for external agencies/organizations, to provide training to their department(s).

### **2.5.1. Initial General Safety Orientation/Training**

All employees must complete initial general safety training. At a minimum, this training must include the following modules. (Contact EH&S, 815-753-0404 for information)

- Northern Illinois University Health and Safety Policy
- Safety and Health Management Plan
- Emergency Response Guide
- Fire Prevention Program

### **2.5.2. Job Specific Training (Equipment/Work Practices)**

Employees must be trained on job and/or worksite specific procedures before commencing work. This includes but is not limited to:

- Proper use and operation of equipment, tools and machinery to which they are assigned;
- Procedures and work practices to which are they assigned;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) appropriate to work practice and identified through job hazard assessments (JHA).

### **2.5.3. Hazard-Specific Safety Training**

Employees assigned to certain tasks will require additional training, generally available through EH&S. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Asbestos Awareness
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Chemical Safety/Hazard Communication
- Confined Space Awareness
- Ergonomics
- Fall Protection
- Lockout/Tagout
- Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWP)
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Powered Industrial Trucks (PIT)
- Respiratory Protection
- Scaffold and Ladder Safety
- Silica Awareness
- Spill Prevention Control/Counter Measures

Contact EH&S for department specific required training.

### **2.5.4. Refresher or Re-Training**

Frequency of refresher or re-training is generally mandated by specific regulations. For example, annual refresher training is required for employees enrolled in the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Program. In addition to specified frequencies, refresher training is always appropriate when:

- New hazards are introduced.
- Procedure, process, or equipment changes rendering previous training incomplete or obsolete.
- Observation indicates that the employee has not retained the requisite skill or knowledge from previous training efforts.

## **2.6. Inspections**

Routine safety inspections are essential for identifying unsafe conditions that could result in serious personal injury, illness, death, or property damage. Department heads/supervisors are responsible for performing regular workplace inspections. When an unsafe/non-compliant condition is identified, it must be promptly corrected.

### **2.6.1. Department/Supervisor-initiated Inspections**

Supervisors must perform routine evaluations of their operations for safety hazards and/or non-conformance with regulatory requirements. Inspections must be conducted at a frequency that ensures expedient identification of potential hazards. Unit safety committees are often a valuable resource for conducting department-wide safety inspections and providing a second view of deficiencies that may not be recognized by individual supervisors.

Supervisors certify Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/hazard assessment on an annual basis. Contact EH&S for guidance.

### **2.6.2. EH&S Inspections and Audits**

EH&S reserves the right to conduct department and/or program specific audits to monitor compliance. These audits are not a substitute for supervisor inspections. Supervisors must take action to correct identified hazards, regulatory non-conformances and/or issues identified by EH&S.

## **2.7. Occupational Injury/Illness/Near Miss Reporting and Investigation**

### **2.7.1. Occupational Injury/Illness Reporting**

In the event of a work-related accident or injury (regardless of magnitude) follow the steps below:

- Call 911, as applicable, and/or seek medical attention as necessary.
- Report the incident to the supervisor. The supervisor may provide an application packet upon report of injury or request.
- Call **Tristar** to report injury at **855-495-1554**.
- Contact the Workers' Compensation Coordinator (WCC) for additional information at **815-753-6000**.

As forms are completed, please fax to **815-753-6777** or scan and email to [workerscomp@niu.edu](mailto:workerscomp@niu.edu) . If scan or fax is unavailable, please send via campus mail to Human Resource Services.

- The Application Forms Packet contains required forms to be completed by the employee, supervisor, witness(es), and physician, as applicable.
- The Information Only Packet is recommended viewing for all employees as it provides detailed workers' compensation information, including rights and responsibilities involving the claim process.

It is recommended that employees remain within the parameters of their own insurance in the event that a Workers Compensation claim is deemed non-compensable.

Occupational incidents involving the death, amputation, loss of an eye or hospitalization of a NIU employee must be reported to Human Resource Services (HRS) and EH&S immediately. Per state code, HRS will contact the Illinois Department of Labor within eight (8) hours to report a fatality or 24 hours to report an amputation, loss or eye or inpatient hospitalization.

### **2.7.2. Occupational Injury/Illness Investigation**

The supervisor is responsible for initiating an incident investigation to determine the root cause of the incident. The EH&S Department may assist as needed especially if the accident involved a fatality, multiple injuries, or an investigation initiated by a regulatory authority. Reports of such investigations shall be presented to FMCS Safety Committees for further review and corrective actions.

It is also highly recommended that an NIU Accident/Incident Report (<http://go.niu.edu/EHSIncidentReport>) be completed and forwarded to EH&S. EH&S will use this data as one of several key performance indicators to monitor the health of the safety program. EH&S will use this information in determining if corrective action is necessary. Filing of this form does NOT replace registering for Workers Compensation.

### **2.7.3 Near Miss Reporting**

It is also important to communicate and to report an issue that “almost happened” or a “near miss”. This information may be used to identify and mitigate potential hazards that exist in the workplace. It is highly recommended that an Accident/Incident Report (<http://go.niu.edu/EHSIncidentReport>) be completed and forwarded to EH&S. EH&S will use this data as one of several key performance indicators to monitor the health of the safety program. EH&S will use this information in determining if corrective action is necessary.

### **2.8. Unit Safety Committees**

Safety Committees that are currently in place at NIU: Physical Plant Safety Committee (PPSC), Campus Services Safety Committee (CSSC), Building Services Safety Committee (BSSC) and Lorado Taft Safety Committee. The PPSC is represented by the Physical Plant, Heating Plant, Grounds and Architectural and Engineering (A&E). The CSSC is represented by Materials Management, Parking and Transportation. Unit safety committee activities may include preparing unit safety plans, organizing safety training, conducting inspections, reviewing department injuries/illnesses, and addressing department-specific safety/compliance concerns.

### **2.9 Document Review**

It is the responsibility of EH&S to periodically review and if necessary, update this Plan.