



## Upcoming Events:

### EHSO Meeting

February 19, 2009  
 Medgar Evers College  
 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

March 12, 2009

City College of New York  
 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

### NYCER Meeting

February 23, 2009  
 CUNY Office 535 E. 80th St.  
 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

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## Hunter Prides “Zero Findings” EPA Audit

By Abner Felix

Hunter has worked hard to advance its EHS program significantly over the past few years. Just seven years ago, O'Brien and Gere, a consulting company, conducted an extensive EPA-related audit and raised numerous concerns. In 2007, the CUNY Internal Audit team found several minor issues, and in 2008, Hunter was not cited for a single violation by an EPA inspector.

On Sept. 30, 2008, Steven

Petrucelli, Environmental Engineer from the EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Compliance Unit, audited Hunter College 68<sup>th</sup> St. Main Campus, months after the Self-Audit Disclosure Agreement with EPA had expired. The audit outcome was outstanding – “zero violation.” Petrucelli, a veteran EPA inspector, praised Hunter for being among the “most compliant EHS program he ever inspected.”

From numerous violations to zero in seven years is no small

feat, but because it is largely the result of hard work and training, it can be replicated at other CUNY colleges. Just as in the movie “Ratatouille,” where the protagonist is encouraged by the message, “Anyone can cook,” preparing for a successful EPA Audit simply requires that you follow the recipe. Here are the key ingredients:

### What has been done by Hunter to prepare for the EPA Audit?

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## CUNY Walks

*A Healthier You. A Healthier CUNY. A Healthier NY.*

By Kurt Klein

The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports recommends that everyone 18 and older should walk 10,000 steps daily. How many steps do you walk each day, and how will you reach the 10,000 mark?

The average person's stride is approximately 2.5 feet long, so over 2,000 steps to walk one mile, and 10,000 steps is close to 5 miles. Five miles may seem like a great deal of walking for those of us who lead sedentary lives and average 1,000 to 3,000 steps a day, but adding steps can be easy and has many health benefits. Thirty minutes or more of daily brisk walking can control weight, lower cholesterol, strengthen the heart and reduce the likelihood of serious health problems. A reasonable goal

for most people is to increase average daily steps each week by 500 per day until you can easily average 10,000 per day.

Wearing a pedometer is an easy way to track your steps each day. Start by wearing

**10,000 steps = 350 calories burned; 150 steps = 1 minute of cycling or swimming.<sup>1</sup>**

the pedometer every day for one week. Put it on when you get up in the morning and wear it until bed time. Try recording your daily steps in a log or notebook. By the end of the week you will be able to calculate your average daily steps. You might be surprised by how many (or how few) steps you get in each day.

There are many ways to increase your daily steps. You can use your imagination and

come up with your own list, but here are some ideas:



- Walk to the subway instead of taking the bus;
- Take the subway a stop further from your house or work;
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator;
- Plan a walking meeting;
- Walk the dog;
- Take a walk with your spouse, child, or friend; and
- Park farther from the store.

If you feel that you are in poor physical health, or if at any point you feel that you are progressing too rapidly, slow down a bit and try smaller increments. If you have any health concerns seek your physician's advice prior to starting or changing your exercise routine.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B0000C1XUB/thewalkingsite>

## Hunter Audit (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

- Extensive lab and building inspections (correcting ALL deficiencies or discrepancies e.g., labels, posting of permits);
- Conducting series of meetings and discussions with respective departments and personnel who are instrumental in day-to-day implementation of EPA compliance programs in the college;
- Updating permits and registrations as needed;
- Updating and/or developing EHS programs when necessary;
- Monitoring compliance tasks from various areas, e.g., facilities (boiler engineers, refrigerant technicians, etc.);
- Filing of EPA-related documents (Hazardous Waste Manifests, Certificate of Recycling, Bill of Landing, Permits, etc.);
- And last, but certainly not the least, Training, Training, and even more Training!

### What audit areas/items were inspected by the EPA?

(The following items should be checked/noted for compliance issues) :

#### I. Chemical Laboratories.

The EPA representative inspected 10 randomly-selected laboratories on the following items:

- Hazardous Waste Accumulation Areas

- Labeling
- Secondary containment
- Proper segregation based on compatibility

Note: EPA even interviewed Lab personnel about:

- How do they properly label hazardous waste containers?
- How do they dispose of hazardous waste?
- How often do they dispose of waste?
- How soon do they need to call for waste pick-up after filling-up a waste container?

#### II. Main Hazardous Waste Storage Room

- Segregation
- Weekly Inspection Sheet
- Fire Suppression System
- Condition of the waste containers
- Emergency Procedures and Telephone Numbers
- Emergency and Eye Showers
- Spill Containment capability

#### III. Corridor Areas

- Lamps (and other universal waste)
- Any EPA-related items and issues

#### IV. Universal Waste Area

- Segregation
- Proper Containers Used
- Labeling
- Are universal waste handlers trained?

- How to handle broken lamps?
- Which vendors are used for disposal or recycling?
- Checked Manifest or Bill of Landing
- Documentation, e.g., Scrap Metal Exemption

#### V. Record keeping

- Hazardous Waste Manifests Training Records and Programs
- Annual GM Report
- Pesticide Reports and Registration
- Combustion Permits updated?
- PBS registered?
- Silver Recovery Records
- Radiation Program (Asked if people mix radioactive with hazardous materials.)

There's no magic to it. CUNY colleges can all prepare for these regulatory inspections via planning, collaboration and a dedication to excellence.

## CUNY Walks (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

**CUNY Walks** was recently initiated at CUNY Headquarters at 80th Street. The goal is to challenge yourself to increase the number of steps you walk per day, with the ultimate goal of walking at least 10,000 steps each day! To help and encourage, a listserv has been established to make it easier for people to share walking tips, create walking routes, assemble groups, and plan walks. To sign up for the **CUNY Walks Listserv** please email Brian Cabezas at [brian.cabezas@mail.cuny.edu](mailto:brian.cabezas@mail.cuny.edu).

## Sustainable Holiday

By Michael Spath

I confess, the house on our block with all the Christmas decorations is mine (48 pieces to date). In preparation each year, I start by heading to the local mega-store for replacement lights. Most of the decorations take 25 watt incandescent lights; anything more powerful would melt the plastic. Right next to the low watt incandescents at the store, though, were the compact fluorescents. A 13 watt compact fluorescent puts out as much light as a 75 watt incandescent, without adding extra heat (or tripping my circuit breaker). This year, the two decorations that needed new lights were re-lamped with the compact fluorescents. The difference was incredible! I had to change four more decorations because of the difference in brightness between the incandescents and fluorescents.

Just from those lights alone, 15.5 Kwh of electricity was saved. If I replace all of my incandescents with fluorescents, the annual power reduction would be 64 Kwh. Maybe with the money I save, I could replace my miniature incandescent light strings with LEDs.

## Lab Safety Made Digital at York

By Brian Cabezas

At the November Environmental Health and Safety Officers meeting, Ching-See Chan of York College showcased a lab safety video that York College developed this past summer. The product was the result of a collaborative process that included Michael Spath, Environmental Compliance Manager at CUNY, Kurt Klein, Health and Safety Manager at CUNY, and a number of other technical experts both at the CUNY Offices of EHSRM and at York College. The video is approximately 15 minutes and offers safety tips to pre-

vent common laboratory accidents. Ms. Chan, Director of Environmental Health and Safety at York College said, "I am very proud of the video" and thanked Mr. Spath and Mr. Klein for their invaluable input. The video was directed and produced by York College's Media Department. "Making the video was tedious because we had to keep doing take after take" said Ms. Chan. Featured in the video is former EHS Assistant Karim Waters who recently left York College to begin graduate studies.

Ms. Chan was as yet undecided if the video will be re-

quired viewing for all lab students prior to working in the labs. At the time of the Council viewing there were still a few edits that must be worked out, such as one scene showing a student not wearing his goggles when in the lab (One of the safety tips: Goggles must be worn at all times when in a lab).

The video is available on the York College EHS website accompanied by an eight question laboratory safety quiz. The website may be accessed at the following link: <http://york.cuny.edu/administrative/environmental>.

## New Lab Rule - Subpart K

*The content of this article was taken with permission from a notification on the lab rule by Triumvirate Environmental.*

On November 18, 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed the long awaited *Hazardous Waste at Academic Laboratories-Final Rule*, originally proposed back in May of 2006. The new rule contains a new subpart to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste generator regulatory requirements -- Subpart K: designed to offer academic and "eligible" non-profit research centers and teaching hospitals an alternative, more flexible, performance-based set of hazardous waste regulations directed towards laboratories.

A pre-published version is currently available on the EPA website at: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/hazard/generation/labwaste/>

Some of the key highlights of the new rule include:

1. States with authorized hazardous waste programs are not required to adopt these requirements as a condition of federal authorization (or otherwise). Triumvirate is currently canvassing these agencies to determine their intentions.

2. The EPA included more than just academic labs in this rule. "Eligible" research centers and teaching hospitals with an existing, or former, affiliation to the college/university may participate.

3. The rule is optional; colleges/universities and teaching hospitals can elect NOT to become subject to the new standards.

4. The rule requires a written Laboratory Management Plan (LMP) which spells out each facility's specific procedures for lab waste determination, labeling, training, and so on.

5. The rule allows up to six months of in-lab storage of unwanted materials, which would allow participating schools to implement alternative waste removal schedules from labs that comply with the three-day limit.

6. The rule allows the hazardous waste determination to take place outside of the lab environment.

## SharePoint - New forum for EHSOs

Microsoft Sharepoint is a browser-based document sharing platform and collaborative workspace that has been developed for environmental, health and safety officers (EHSOs) at CUNY. EHSOs are encouraged to utilize the password-protected website to collaborate on living documents, to discuss proprietary issues, and to post events. The website may be accessed using the url: [ehsrm.cuny.edu](http://ehsrm.cuny.edu). Please contact Brian Cabezas, [brian.cabezas@mail.cuny.edu](mailto:brian.cabezas@mail.cuny.edu), to obtain a password.

## Waste and Recycling

Sustainable CUNY's Waste and Recycling Committee will be conducting campus visits to assess college recycling efforts. The Committee met with liaisons from each college in a September 2008 meeting and discussed the results of the municipal solid waste survey that each campus completed to establish a recycling baseline. Now, the Committee members will take a first-hand look at the campus process. The visits are intended to help the Committee evaluate the unique needs of each campus.

The Committee will also look into developing a CUNY materials exchange program, addressing water conservation issues, and engaging students and faculty in recycling competitions, such as Recyclemania.

## Laboratory Fire at CSI

On November 25, 2008, a laboratory fire broke out at the College of Staten Island's 6S Science Building. FDNY responded to the alarm. No injuries were



reported, but morning classes were cancelled. CSI sent a CUNY Alert message to inform the community of the incident and the cancellation of classes. The fire broke out in the fume hood of an organic/polymer chemistry lab and triggered the sprinkler system, which extinguished the blaze, but

also caused considerable water damage.

The cause of the fire was a reaction that was left stirring under the hood overnight. The stirrer/hotplate motor was apparently the source of ignition.

CSI's B&G Department replaced used sprinkler heads and Triumvirate

Environmental was contacted to decontaminate the fire zone and dispose of chemicals near the fire and chemical debris.

Milton Santiago, Vice President of Finance and Administration provided a post-incident

report and lessons learned to the Emergency Preparedness Task Force. James Saccardo, Chemical Hygiene Officer at CSI, also offered the EHSO Council a similar presentation at the December meeting.

## Year End Review

At the close of another calendar year, the newsletter would like to take a moment to reflect on a few of the EHS accomplishments made this year. In 2008, a number of CUNY colleges won Sustainability Awards at the First Annual Sustainability Conference on October 30, 2008, including LaGuardia CC, Queens College, and Lehman College. Other accomplishments of note include developing Sharepoint, the hiring of Mel Rodriguez at Queensborough CC, Erin Wilson at Hunter College, and Ilona Linins at Lehman College, an increase in the number

of schools with a fully operational ChemTracker system, improvements in EHS trainings, the 12th Annual Sino-American Conference where participants visited Governor's Island and the Bronx River Greenway, the retirements of Peter Accumano and John Klonowski, Hunter's successful EPA inspection, and BMCC's implementation of its C-CERT program.

For the upcoming year, Michael Spath, Environmental Compliance Manager, plans to increase the number of colleges being audited internally and hopes to have ChemTracker operational at

every campus. Kurt Klein, Health and Safety Manager, said he will be adding a health and safety component to the audit process and that he will be working on making the violation database more robust.

At CUNY, there is always much to do in the EHS arena, but we must also acknowledge the accomplishments we've made together. Best wishes for a successful 2009.



## EHSRM News

### New EHSO at Lehman

The CUNY Environmental Health and Safety Officers Council would like to welcome its newest member, **Ilona Linins**. In November 2008, Ms. Linins joined Shaldon Watson at Lehman College to help fill the void left when John Klonowski and Peter Accumano retired. She comes to CUNY with experience from Rockefeller University and Columbia University, and most recently from the Emergency Preparedness Unit for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She is a graduate of the Hunter MPH program and a certified industrial hygienist. We look forward to working with her in the future.

### Contributing Authors

(in order of appearance)

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