

June 2007



Special points of interest:

- EHSO Council Meeting, June 14, 2007 @ Kingsborough Community College
- NYCER Meeting, June 26, 2007 @ Rockefeller University
- EHSO Council Meeting, July 12, 2007 @ City College

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CUNY EHS News

Environmental Audits

By Michael Spath

Bronx Community College and Borough of Manhattan Community College are the latest two campuses that have been audited in accordance with CUNY's 5-year EPA audit agreement. Both audits went very well and resulted in few findings.

The 5-year CUNY/EPA audit and disclosure agreement will be completed at the end of 2007, when the

Graduate School of Journalism and New York City College of Technology are audited in the fall.

Queens College and the Law School both completed their internal CUNY audits in November 2006. This spring, internal audits took place at Kingsborough Community College, Hunter College, and City College. All schools have demonstrated a measurable commitment to sustaining envi-

ronmental compliance.



small plastic bottles, BIG PROBLEM

By Christina Peters

I'd like you to take a minute to think about the number of bottles of water you drink in a week, a month, a year. Now multiply that estimate by the number of students on your campus, or employees in your department and watch the figure skyrocket. If you complete this exercise taking the U.S. population into account over a period of one year you will come up with approximately 30 billion bottles of water. That's right! Americans will consume more than 30 billion single serving bottles of water this year.

What makes this figure so significant is the 2 million tons of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) or plastic bottles that will be introduced into our landfills as a result of current waste management practices.

During the early 1970s eleven states – California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Oregon and Vermont – passed what are commonly referred to as bottle bills. These bottle bills helped to solidify the concept that individuals should be responsible for recycling their own trash.

Under these so called deposit laws, consumers pay a nickel or dime extra when purchasing a beverage, and then get the deposit back when the container is returned for recycling. What most people fail to note is that plastic bottles and other non carbonated beverage containers are excluded from the deposit law – leading to improper disposal of these recyclable materials. Approximately 18 million barrels of crude-oil will be needed to replace the plastic bottles that

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Plastic Bottles

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Americans will dispose of this year.

The need to update existing policies has never been greater. Bottled water and non carbonated beverages are expected to outsell soda and bottled beer before 2011. This year, bottle bill reviews are gaining greater attention with lawmakers in many states.

Regardless of the associated deposit value, it is important that Americans start taking responsibility for recycling all of their beverage containers. Start today. Make a commitment to recycling PET bottles in your home, at your office, and on your campus.

[Science Safety Series Schedule](#)

June 28, 2007

Energy Conservation at Work and Home

July 26, 2007

Security and Safety in the Laboratory

August 30, 2007

Chemical Inventory and an Introduction to University Chem-tracker Consortium

All trainings will take place from 2:30-3:30pm at the College of Staten Island, Bldg 6S, Room 232.

Science Safety Series at CSI

By James Saccardo

From a health and safety standpoint, training employees in hazard communication presents a number of challenges. The first is getting busy employees to set aside valuable work time to sit through a training series. The second challenge is covering the voluminous amount of material in the limited time available.

To address these challenges, The College of Staten Island's (CSI) Environmental Health and Safety Officers have developed a training program that we call, *The Science Safety Series*.

In a typical Hazard Communication training course, there is seldom enough time to tackle spill cleanup procedures, fire safety, contingency plans or other topics

that are relevant to laboratory health and safety programs. Employees may not be required to fight fires, but knowing how to use a fire extinguisher can make a world of difference. Fire prevention alone can consume an entire training session, as can engineering controls, chemical storage, chemical spill cleanup, and microbiological hazards. *The Science Safety Series* can help to address these safety issues without being too burdensome on employees.

At CSI, *The Science Safety Series* provides specific subject matter content designed for a target audience. Even though there may be overlap in the general safety measures and hazards facing all laboratory scientists, indi-

vidual work protocols and laboratory environments are often very different.

The Science Safety Series courses provide an effective means of raising awareness of specific hazards, and we have had an increased demand for training from faculty, staff and students.

Training sessions are held monthly. They consist of a lecture and slide presentation, a short video, and a Q&A forum. Attendees leave with a better understanding of the hazards associated with the topic and are offered an EH&S poster for their work area that contains a synopsis of the crucial points discussed in the training. For more information, please contact James Saccardo at CSI (james.saccardo@csi.cuny.edu).

Tier II Filing Goes High Tech

By Amy Roman

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has implemented a web-based community Right-To-Know Program that allows facilities to electronically file Tier II reports.

To file electronically, each facility is required to register a unique username online and request a password. After registering, the user will receive a password certification letter in the mail in approximately 3-5 business days. The certification letter must be signed and returned to the DEP. Once received, the DEP will send an e-mail indicating that the password has been activated. Facilities that already obtained their own passwords do not have to

register again. After the facility's username and password have been activated, authorized users will be able to access facility inventory information that has been transferred into the Tier II filing system.

The new web-based program also allows for Material Safety Datasheets (MSDS) to be submitted electronically. The user will be able to choose an MSDS from the library provided by the DEP, or they can upload the MSDS from their computer to be filed with the report.

The new program is very user friendly and should greatly reduce the time it takes for a facility to complete an annual Tier II re-

port. In addition, filing the report electronically is free; the DEP charges a \$20 fee for all hard copy submissions. Any facility that has previously filed a hard copy Tier II will find its data on the web-based program. The user will only have to update the records that require changes and can then resubmit for the new year without having to reenter prior-year data.

A user that has completed all changes and is ready to submit the report will be prompted to print out a certification form, sign it, and send it in to the DEP. Once the DEP has received the certification, the report will appear as "completed" on the system.

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EHS Meeting Updates

By Sheryce Woolery

The May meeting of the Environmental Health and Safety Officers (EHSO) Council was held at the New York City College of Technology (NYCCT) on May 10, 2007. Bill Graffeo, EHSO at Queens College and Environmental Compliance Subcommittee Chair, provided a general update on the compliance calendar, other EMS issues, and a status report on Chem-Tracker implementation. Tom Briggs, Director of EH&S at the College of Staten Island (CSI), discussed the Health and Safety Subcommittee's plans to administer training for drivers of powered industrial trucks. Dr. Raj

Singh, Director of CUNY's Human Resources Management Services presented an overview of CUNY's Workplace Violence Policy and led a stimulating discussion on its ramifications.

The April meeting of the EHSO Council was held at CSI on April 12, 2007. Dan Amon, National Energy Manager, OARM/OA/FMSD/Sustainable Facilities Practices Branch, led a training on EPA's Labs 21 Program. Mr. Amon discussed the EPA's joint effort with the Department of Energy to improve environmental performance at U.S. laboratories.

The next EHSO Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 14, 2007

from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon, at the Kingsborough Community College. The meeting will include a briefing on the effort to phase artificial trans fat out of the city's food supply, and Bill Knoop will provide his annual summer safety training.

The upcoming NYCER meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 26, 2007 at the Rockefeller University from 12 pm to 2 pm. The March meeting of NYCER was held at the New School University. The meeting included a briefing by Sandy Camacho, Deputy Chief Inspector, on developments in the Lab Inspection Program and the anticipated changes to the New York City Fire Code.



Don't Motor Your Way To A Violation

By Michael Spath

By far, the most unusual violation I was ever faced with occurred outside of the CUNY borders. The violation was a combination DOT / FAA issue for failure to properly identify a hazardous material. The material was an internal combustion lawnmower engine. If you were unaware, anytime you ship any item that has an engine in it, the proper shipping name is:

Engines, internal combustion, flammable liquid (or gas) powered; 9, UN3166

Only engines that have NEVER held fuel are exempt. Once they have held fuel, even if the engine is completely drained of fuel, it must be shipped as a hazardous material. Internal combustion engines are also

prohibited from transport on passenger aircraft, so along with the usual markings required for a hazardous substance shipment, a "Banned from Passenger Aircraft" label must be affixed to the container. Shipping via UPS or Fed Ex does not guarantee that the package will not go on a passenger aircraft because many parcel delivery services buy unused space on passenger aircraft to move their packages.

The fine that was assessed for shipping one lawnmower engine improperly was \$24,000, but the fine was waived when a comprehensive DOT shipping policy was written and enacted.

Please remember that whoever signs hazardous waste manifests, or bills of lading

with hazardous materials listed must document training in DOT regulations every three years. Personnel who prepare hazardous materials for shipment, load them, or receive them must also have job-specific training every three years.

If you have any questions please contact CUNY EH&S at (212) 794 – 5630.



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Tier II Filing

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The online Tier II report also provides an online submission to the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) and the local fire department. The user is still responsible for printing a copy of the report and sending it along with hard copies of all MSDS to the New York State Emergency Response Commission (SERC).

Visit the DEP's Tier II website for more information at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/tier2.html>.

"Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life."

Rachel Carson



LAGCC Celebrates Earth Day

By Judi O'Toole

The week following Earth Day was a special one at LaGuardia Community College. For the first time, a series of environmental awareness events had been planned and implemented jointly by the faculty, staff and students. LaGuardia's first Earth Day celebration will be remembered as a marked success.

The festivities included a series of speakers, movies, raffles, and giveaways during the week of April 22nd, 2007. It was set in motion with a screening of Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" at the school's Mainstage Theater. Some faculty members offered students extra credit for attending the film; others brought their entire classes to the show. During the production, representatives from the Green Apple Corps (Queens Division) talked to students about their organization and discussed job opportunities that can be found through the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. Behind their table hung a four foot by 6 foot mural by students of the International High School outlining causes, effects, and reactions to global warming.

The main events followed on Wednesday April 25th, a full day of information and activities for students and employees. The atrium was filled with tables and media displays arranged so that onlookers could walk around freely and see what various groups had to offer. A wide range of departments (Mathematics, Art, Creative Writing, Occupational Therapy and Dietetics) and programs within LaGuardia (e.g., the United Nations

Club, Phi Theta Kappa, NY Designs, and even a nascent Environmental Club) made appearances. Some outside organizations were also represented, such as the Green Apple Corps, Corning Community College, New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling (NYSAR³) and the Council on the Environment of New York City (CENYC), sharing a common goal of promoting environmental awareness.

For Earth Day there were free fruit and grain samples alongside Kashi's "Whole Health Guides" and sustainable eating tips at the Dietetics table. There were raffles and giveaways at the Environmental Club table, a global warming reaction quilt from the International High School Art program (created by students handcrafting squares of cloth and piecing them together), an "Earthbox" display promoted by members of Phi Theta Kappa from Corning Community College, and various poster boards, models and other projects.

Throughout the day, listeners at any one of four conference rooms heard a variety of speakers discuss different approaches to ecological problems. President Gail Mellow discussed some environmental literature and LaGuardia's role in environmentalism. LaGuardia's Vice President of Academic Affairs Peter Katopes, spoke of LaGuardia's "greener" future. Paul Arcario, Dean of Academic Affairs, opened the panel with a discussion of next semester's common reading, Al Gore's An Incon-

venient Truth: The Crisis of Global Warming to promote a better understanding of the global warming phenomenon and related environmental concerns. He also spoke about Project Quantum Leap and the importance of making small changes in our everyday lives for a healthier and more viable campus and community.

Dr. Richard E. Quest, from Corning Community College, discussed a strategic plan for developing practices of sustainable agriculture in areas with limited funds and space. His presentation included an introduction of the "Earthbox," a quick, easy, and portable way to grow vegetables without a garden. Kate Zidar, from the Lower East Side Ecology Center, discussed the NYC Green Roofs Project, and spoke about the impacts of water pollution.

Students moved between the atrium and the conference room to hear their favorite speakers. There were raffle drawings (raffle prizes were donated by the Bumblebar Company, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and Ecosoft Recycled Paper Products), movies about waste reduction, pollution prevention and tips for everyday living that will help decrease human impacts on the environment, and a discussion on the importance of keeping students and the community attuned to their natural surroundings.

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Students and faculty were also given the opportunity to sign up for various outreach and volunteer opportunities with the Green Apple Corps, who returned to LaGuardia on May 2nd for a free “Trees for Public Health” workshop.

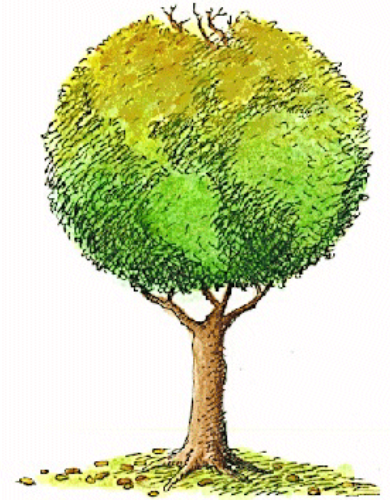
In addition to internal support, LaGuardia received a grant from the Go Green Initiative to help fund its Earth Day efforts. LaGuardia Community College is also registered with the Go Green Initiative as a “Going Green” institution. Other

groups such as the CENYC shared flyers, brochures and pamphlets.

Earth Day was also an opportunity to announce two exciting additions to our environmental awareness campaign: the implementation of an enhanced recycling program; and the introduction of an Environmental Health and Safety webpage. This site outlines environmental health and safety guidelines and programs, including a page dedicated to Earth Day and another on global warming. Students will be able to ac-

cess this webpage through the school website.

Overall, Earth Day at LaGuardia allowed us to think about the future of our planet in a fun and captivating way. LaGuardia has many environmental projects planned and we hope that this is just the beginning of a long green road ahead.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtfully committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

CUNY Commits to GHG Reductions

By Brian Cabezas

CUNY took on a leadership role in environmental sustainability as it joined eight other colleges in accepting Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's challenge of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 30% over the next ten years. Barnard, Columbia, Cooper Union, Fordham, New York University, Pratt, St. John's University, The New School and CUNY (at all 23 campuses) - designated as the 2030 Challenge Partners - announced their commitments during a press conference held at Brooklyn's Pratt University on Wednesday,

June 6th, 2007.

The commitment accelerates the PlaNYC goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions citywide 30% by 2030. Mayor Bloomberg's sweeping PlaNYC sets ambitious goals for air, water, transportation and energy to be achieved by 2030. The commitment that the 2030 Challenge Partners made on June 6th exceeds the target established in PlaNYC ramping up the deadline to 2017, or 10 years.

Combined, the nine universities in the "30 in 10" Challenge account for over 38

million square feet of building space citywide — equivalent to 43 Yankee stadiums. Through retrofitting buildings and making new structures more energy efficient, the reductions "... will make a sizable dent in the city's overall emissions," Mayor Bloomberg said.

CUNY Vice Chancellor Iris Weinshall said, "For us, environmental sustainability is as much about leadership as it is about stewardship. And the CUNY community of 450,000 students, faculty and staff will help us define and exercise both."

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