

April/May 2008



Upcoming Events:

EHSO Meeting
Kingsborough Community
College
June 19, 2008
11:00 am to 2:00 pm

NYCER Meeting
Columbia University
Medical Campus
July 29, 2008
12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

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CUNY EHS News

ARE YOU PREPARED? BE "RED CROSS READY" FOR EMERGENCIES

By Mike Virgintino

When we see media and internet coverage about fires, flooding and major storms that cause injuries and significant property damage, we always wonder what would happen to us if that disaster occurred closer to home. Every time we learn about a disaster, we immediately should ask if we are prepared to adapt and react to protect ourselves during an emergency.

Now is the time for you and your family to prepare for a minor inconvenience such as a power outage, or a larger incident that could separate the family. Disaster will strike quickly and often without warning. It can force you to evacuate your school or neighborhood or confine you to your home for several days.

The people you most care about could be anywhere when an emergency occurs. How will you find each other? What will you do if basic services – water, electricity, telephone – are suddenly cut off?

Three simple steps provided by the American Red Cross in Greater New York will help you **Be Red Cross Ready** if you are at home, at work, at school, or elsewhere.

1. Get a kit

Have at least three days worth of supplies for every person (and pet) in the household. Place them in easy-to-carry evacuation kits, such as backpacks. Store additional supplies for the home should you need to shelter at your location for a few days.

Supplies should include water, non-perishable food, flashlight, radio, batteries, change of clothing, personal hygiene items, medical prescriptions and a small amount of cash. Crank flashlights and radios should be packed, because they do not require batteries to operate.

Also think ahead when packing for a trip away from home. Include a few simple items that you can place in a school backpack, sports bag, or briefcase, such as a small water pouch, first aid kit and 12-hour light stick -- all lightweight items that can be used during any emergency.

2. Make a plan

Planning ahead will help you have the best possible response to an emergency. Discuss with family the kinds of disasters that could occur in your area. Fires are the most common. Other emergencies include flooding, power outages, a building col-

lapse and construction/transportation accidents. Establish responsibilities for each member of the household – who ensures that everyone is out of the home, who maintains phone contact, who is responsible for the family pets?

Plan what you will do if you must evacuate your home or your community. Choose two places to meet. One can be a location across the street from your home. The second should be a short distance away from the area that may be affected. Maybe it's the home of a friend or relative, a neighborhood store, or the nearest school.

Know how to remain in contact with everyone should you become separated, especially if phone lines are down. Determine a time and place to meet. If you can't make local phone calls due to service outages, you may still be able to call long distance and reach someone in another state. Therefore, have a relative or family friend who resides in another state as your emergency contact to accept everyone's calls and keep all family members informed.

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Red Cross Ready

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3. Be informed

Understand that most emergencies occur without warning. Find out what emergencies are most likely to occur in your neighborhood.

Does your neighborhood easily flood after heavy rain? Are you near railroad tracks where freight trains carry dangerous cargo that can spill? Are you near a construction site that may have dangers?

Learn about your community's warning signals. Do sirens sound regularly for testing, or do they sound only for certain emergencies? What should you do when you hear them?

If you have pets, determine who can take care of them if you are forced to evacuate. Discuss possibilities with a local veterinarian, animal shelter, or boarding facility. Some shelters for people do not permit animals due to health and safety concerns, so remember to include care for the family flock in your disaster plan.

Find out how to get help quickly for elderly or disabled people in your household or neighborhood. Make sure local authorities know if someone relies on oxygen, must be transported with a wheelchair, or is bedridden.

Know how to contact local authorities. Listen to news reports and follow instructions provided by authorities. Learn about disaster plans at school and how you will be reunited with family.

Final Tips

There is a lot to do and a lot to remember. Take it one step at a time and have everyone in your home participate. Remember to practice evacuating your home twice a year and regularly discuss your communications plan.

Preparedness information guides, safety tips, assistance in assembling an emergency "go bag," class schedules (CPR, first aid), and readiness materials and supplies can be found at www.nyredcross.org.

Sustainable Architecture in Affordable Housing

By Ariana Tobias

The growing national population and an increasing concern over climate change are presenting cities across the country with the difficult task of providing safe and affordable housing while simultaneously reducing their carbon dioxide emissions. New York City's population is expected to increase by a million people by 2030, triggering a drastic need for additional residential development. Attention to sustainable building has traditionally been focused on the commercial sector, but the residential sector already accounts for a significant 21 percent of the nation's carbon dioxide emissions, according to the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). With expanding residential development, attention must be refocused. Such a shift is already present in New York City's PlaNYC, a 25-year plan to increase sustainability and combat global warming, which emphasizes the need for residential green building.

"The buildings in which we live our lives can nurture instead of harm; can restore instead of consume; can inspire instead of constrain," says Gail Vittori, co-director of the Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems. This is the sentiment behind the sustainable architecture movement, a shift in building practices towards higher efficiency and lower environmental impact in a building's design, construction, use, maintenance, and demolition. Benefits of sustainable architecture include reduced operating costs and improved public and environmental health.

Sustainable building must be integrated into a building's complete life cycle. Choosing a construction site, using environmentally-friendly construction materials, instituting efficient recycling and waste management procedures, developing policies to reduce resource consumption, maintaining utilities so they perform at the highest efficiency levels, and deconstructing buildings so materials can be recycled are all sustainable techniques used over the course of a building's life cycle.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Homes is a green building rating system recently developed by the USGBC. New York City can use LEED for Homes sustainability standards to promote green building and affordable housing, and, as NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg asserts, "Affordable housing can also be sustainable housing." The Morrisania Homes provides a successful example of using sustainable architecture to build residential buildings in NYC. The Morrisania Homes is a sixty-four unit development in the South Bronx that includes 16 three-family and eight two-family homes. The development is New York's first affordable housing project to

LEED® Facts

Morrisania Homes
New York, NY

LEED for Homes
Certification awarded October 1, 2007

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Silver | 62* |
| Sustainable Sites | 9/14 |
| Water Efficiency | 4/12 |
| Energy & Atmosphere | 13.5/29 |
| Materials & Resources | 12.5/24 |
| Indoor Environmental Quality | 10/14 |
| Locations and Linkages | 10/10 |
| Awareness & Education | 2/5 |
| Innovation & Design | 1/4 |

*Out of a possible 108 points

This is the LEED scorecard for the urban, affordable housing project Morrisania Homes, which received 62 out of 108 LEED points, qualifying for LEED Silver certification.

receive certification under USGBC's LEED for Homes Pilot Program, and the homes are the first LEED for Homes Certified residences in New York City.

Green building features added about \$700,000 to the cost of constructing the \$14.5 million community. City and state officials steered millions toward the project, including \$1.9 million in subsidies from the city, a \$1.5 million grant from the New York State Affordable Housing Corp., and \$435,000 from Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion. Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Donovan praised the project, stating, "The Morrisania Homes represent a significant step forward in integrating affordable housing with environmental sustainability. As New York's population grows, integrating these two concepts will be crucial to the well-being of the City, its residents, and the environment we all share."

Meeting Updates

By Sheryce Woolery

NYCER

January NYCER Meeting

The January NYCER meeting was held at Cooper Union on January 29, 2008. The meeting began with a welcome by Jody Grapes, Administrator for Facilities Operations at Cooper Union.

EPA audits are still being conducted at a number of NYCER institutions. Other institutions that have completed the EPA audits are working on sustaining their success and are preparing for anticipated EPA inspections. Several of our NYCER institutions expressed concern regarding increased enforcement by EPA, the DEC, and other regulatory agencies.

The meeting continued with a presentation by **Samantha MacBride, Deputy Director, Department of Sanitation, Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling**, on “**University Recycling in New York City: What DSNY Can Do To Help.**” Ms. MacBride reviewed the many recycling opportunities readily available to colleges and universities, and the support that the Sanitation Department can offer.

March NYCER Meeting

The March NYCER meeting was held at St. John’s University’s Manhattan campus on March 25, 2008. The meeting began with a welcome by Colleen Greaney, Director of Environmental Health and Safety.

Several institutions that participated in the EPA audit initiative have instituted the practice of internal audits to maintain compliance standards. Surprise internal audits

are especially valuable, as they prepare campuses for success in the event of an unscheduled EPA or other regulatory visit.

The meeting continued with a presentation by representatives from the Disaster Planning and Response department of the American Red Cross in Greater New York. **Robert Wilson, David Dunn, and Jeanine Pekkarinen**, presented on “**Emergency Preparedness and Response: What do you do when disaster strikes?**” The presentation focused on educating communities about emergency preparedness using the formula “Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed” (refer to “Are You Prepared...” article on page 1). Extensive discussion about emergency preparedness plans for universities and volunteer opportunities available to faculty and students followed the presentation.

EHSO

February EHSO Meeting

The February meeting of the Environmental Health and Safety Officers was held at Hostos Community College on February 14, 2008. The meeting began with greetings from Diahann McFarlane, EHSO at Hostos Community College.

CUNY has no further obligations to disclose findings of audits to the EPA and is likewise no longer shielded from EPA inspections and resulting fines and penalties.

Internal audits will be conducted at Queens College, Brooklyn College, Lehman College and a surprise audit will be conducted at one school this semester. As has been the practice, EH&S Officers from other campuses volunteer to serve on these internal

audits. This practice provides added value to all involved. Anyone wishing to volunteer for an upcoming audit should contact Michael Spath at michael.spath@mail.cuny.edu

Bill Graffeo, Director of Environmental Health and Safety at Queens College, stated that a Compliance Calendar will be distributed upon its completion. The Environmental Compliance Subcommittee is drafting a survey for chemical inventory to help with the implementation of ChemTracker. The Health and Safety Subcommittee has initiated a violation database management system to tackle Notices of Violation (NOVs) issued by regulatory enforcement authorities.

The training portion of the February Council meeting consisted of a presentation by **Marty Costello, of Woodard and Curran** on “**Managing EHS at a Great Educational Institution: What CUNY Can Learn From Yale and Vice Versa.**”

Environmental Health and Safety Officers are encouraged to sign up for the CUNY A!ert, to receive text or voice notifications of campus emergencies or weather related closings. For more information, please visit www.cuny.edu/alert.

March EHSO Meeting

The March meeting of the Environmental Health and Safety Officers was held at Bronx Community College on March 13, 2008. The meeting began with greetings from Andre Hurni, Director of Campus Planning, along with a brief welcome by Martin Pulver, EHSO at Bronx Community College.

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Get Involved with the Red Cross

To provide humanitarian services after a disaster and to offer emergency preparedness programs, the Red Cross needs New Yorkers to become involved. Financial donations always are needed. So are volunteers. Visit the Red Cross website or call the chapter’s local offices to learn how you can become part of the Red Cross family in New York City.

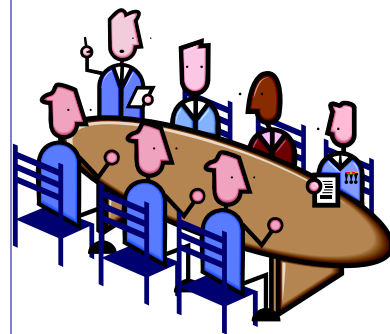
Manhattan headquarters: 520 West 49th Street (between 10th and 11th Avenues) 1-877-REDCROSS (1-877-733-2767)

Brooklyn: new office location will be opened and announced during June, 718-330-9200

Queens: 138-02 Queens Boulevard, Briarwood, 718-558-0053

The Bronx: 2082 White Plains Road, 718-823-1418

Staten Island: 1424 Richmond Avenue, 718-983-1600



Meeting Updates (continued)

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Abner Felix, EHSO at Hunter College, reported that an oil spill had occurred on the campus while oil was being pumped by a vendor. The spill was said to be non-reportable and is subsequently under control.

Peter Jayasekara, EHSO at Laguardia Community College, informed the Council that a set of windows had blown out from one of the buildings landing on the street and damaging a truck that was parked below. There were no reported injuries and the college is currently repairing approximately twenty five windows on that building.

Also, Bill Graffeo, EHSO at Queens College, reported that forty gallons of oil were released from an elevator piston. The cleaning was performed by Triumvirate Environmental.

Internal audits have been completed at Queens College and Lehman College. The next audit is planned for Brooklyn College on March 17, 2008. It

will be followed by a surprise audit.

Michael Spath, Environmental Compliance Manager at CUNY Central, emphasized that all audits will be conducted according to the guide of the Environmental Management System (EMS). Officers are therefore encouraged to visit the EHS website, to review the EMS and submit all queries and completed forms to mi-chael.spath@mail.cuny.edu.

The Environmental Compliance Subcommittee updated the Council on the survey it is developing for chemical inventory to help with the implementation of ChemTracker.

Peter Jayasekara, chair of the Health and Safety Subcommittee, indicated that the subcommittee will be focusing its efforts on safety trainings. As a result, the subcommittee is currently reviewing a training schedule template, which will be distributed at our meeting in May. The subcommittee is also reviewing several training software package.

The training portion of the March Council meeting consisted of a presentation by **Scott Metzger of Clean Harbors Environmental Services** on “**Avian Influenza Update and Bio-Security Concerns.**” Scott shared with us the many concerns of Avian Influenza as well as various bio-security practices. We thank Scott for an informative and interesting presentation.

Note: There was no EHSO Council meeting conducted in April and the minutes for the May meetings of the EHSO Council and NYCER were not completed when this newsletter was finalized.

Get Involved with the Red Cross

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Safety in the Hood - BMPs

By David Wilson

Fume hoods are an integral part of a laboratory environment. A comprehensive health and safety program requires appropriate use and maintenance of fume hoods. OSHA identifies performance-oriented requirements for the operation of fume hoods and a number of other professional organizations have also published guidelines for fume hood performance and use, such as the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (www.acgih.org), the American Industrial Hygiene Association (www.aiha.org), and

the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-conditioning Engineers (www.ashrae.org).

Fume hood operation to provide an uninterrupted and laminar airflow into the hood structure is critical to prevent worker exposure to volatile substances within the hood. The following practices will help optimize fume hood performance:

- Ceiling-mounted, makeup air ducts should not be directed toward the hood face opening.
- Floor fans or other

personal cooling devices should not be in a location to disrupt the fume hood inlet airflow.

- Personnel foot traffic close to the fume hood opening may disrupt the inlet airflow.
- In-hood work activities should be conducted 8 inches or more from the hood opening.
- Do not place containers or equipment against the rear baffles of the hood.
- Do not remove or modify any hood components.

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