Welcome Note

Dear Readers,

I am pleased to introduce you to the first issue of EHSRM’s safety newsletter, “Stay Safe”.

We, at AUB, consider the safety of everyone on campus a paramount concern and strive to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our community, thus the name of our newsletter “Stay Safe”.

In each issue, we will be briefing you on new topics related to EHSRM activities and we will be giving you some important and useful tips to Stay Safe.

We count on your support and collaboration to maintain AUB a safe environment and hope you enjoy reading and benefitting from our newsletter in your daily life at AUB.

Farouk Merhebi - EHSRM Director

Article of the month EHSRM: Who we are?

By Dr. Raja Abdallah, Environmental Safety Engineer, EHSRM

AUB’s Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management (EHSRM) department is responsible for environmental protection and pollution control, health and safety and risk management. The predecessor of EHSRM was the Safety Center which was established in 1968. This center operated till 1976 and its functionality was discontinued upon the outbreak of the civil war (1975-1991) in Lebanon. In 1996, Safety was revitalized at AUB through the EHSRM department. As indicated by the AUB President’s policy, EHSRM services include protection of human health, the environment, University operations and property. Protection of human health represents EHSRM’s highest priority. The EHSRM department is headed by a Director and is divided into six units: Health Physics Services, Life and Fire Safety, Environmental and Safety, Occupational Safety (at the Medical Center), Sanitation and Biosafety and Risk Management. EHSRM has adopted the usage of the National & US Standards for its routine activities and work is performed accordingly.

Due to the diligence of AUB to protect the environment, EHSRM has initiated a program to manage all types of generated hazardous material. To date, EHSRM has concluded 4 shipments of hazardous chemical wastes to Europe to be disposed of/destroyed as per United Nations and International Standards. EHSRM is involved in bio-hazardous wastes management by monitoring and auditing the flow process of these wastes and ensuring their proper and safe disposal. Another major achievement by EHSRM’s Health Physics Services (HPS) is the agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to remove unwanted radioactive sources that have been safely stored in the University premises for decades. EHSRM has one of the only two fire protection engineers in the Region and has the only National Sanitation Foundation (NSF International) Accredited Class II Biosafety Cabinet Field Certifier in Lebanon to follow on life, fire and biosafety standards implementation at AUB.

We cannot talk about EHSRM without referring to the dedicated Emergency Response Team (ERT) led by EHSRM. ERT responds promptly to reported emergencies ranging from fire alarms, fires, to chemical, radioactive and biological spills. In addition, EHSRM along with the Emergency Response Team handled, on several occasions, potentially explosive chemicals from laboratories and destroyed them safely. For instance, on Independence Day in 1999, EHSRM successfully managed a serious chlorine gas leak. In 2011, ERT responded to a total of 127 various emergencies at AUB.

Finally, EHSRM staff are present to make sure you Stay healthy and Safe or as we say in Arabic سلامتك.

Think Safe

1. Does a person who got exposed to X-Ray radiation “carry” the radiation with him/her?
   a) Yes  b) No

2. Perishable food like meat and poultry should not be left at room temperature for more than:
   a) 2 hrs  b) 5 hrs

3. When the safety belt of a car seat is rubbing the neck of a kid, it will be acceptable to put it under the kid’s arm or behind the back:
   a) True  b) False

Answers are on page 2

Safety Tip

Incident Reporting

At AUB, incident reporting is an important standard procedure to document necessary details after the incident to identify problem areas that need special attention and ultimately to promote safety. Reporting of incidents is in no way used to place blame or to take punitive actions against any individual. For information about incident reporting rules and regulations or for additional inquiries or suggestions, please visit:

www.aub.edu.lb/vpff/EHSRM

IncidentReporting.aspx

Stay Safe
During the past 9 months, there was a total of 375 incidents at AUB that resulted in 278 personal injuries and 97 property damage incidents. The personal injuries included 37% trauma injuries, 39% biological exposures, and 24% falls & back injuries while property damage accounted for 26% of the total incidents.

Answers to “Think Safe”

1: (b) The energy of the X-Ray radiation emitted by a radiographic unit only lasts for few milliseconds and it is either absorbed by, scattered from, or transmitted through the body of the patient.

2: (a) This is as per the “Two-Hour Rule” since bacteria can grow in many foods within 2 hours unless they have been refrigerated.

3: (b) The safety belt should be positioned away from the neck and belly. However, it should best hold the strong bones of the hips and shoulders to avoid injuries to internal organs and spine. Younger kids may need booster.

For more information, we invite you to take a look at EHSRM’s website:
www.aub.edu.lb/vpff/EHSRM

EHSRM in Action

The Health Physics Services Unit issued radiation safety requirements and reviewed the shielding design for new radiological equipment (cyclotron), performed laboratory surveys and inspections, implemented the radioactive waste management program, reported the individual yearly radiation exposure, received and checked radioactive materials for contamination.

The Life and Fire Safety Unit reviewed the sprinkler flow calculation for the Faed and Irani Oxy Engineering Complex (FIOEC) project, the door and hardware schedule of the Issam Fares Institute (IFI) project.

The Environmental and Safety Unit concluded an agreement with Veolia Environmental Services to properly pack, ship and dispose of AUB’s hazardous chemical wastes generated in laboratories according to UN and international regulations.

The Occupational Safety Unit reviewed the JCI Facility Management and Safety requirements compliance statement, tested fume hoods in the chemistry and neuromuscular laboratories at AUBMC, provided Emergency Preparedness Plan training to pathology and laboratory medicine department staff.

The Risk Management Unit renewed the University insurance portfolio and awarded the contract to Bankers Assurance, provided training sessions on incident reporting and attended / followed up on incidents claims reimbursement.

The Sanitation and Biosafety Unit tested AUB beach water for microbiological contamination levels, tested/recertified the biosafety cabinets located at the Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Department at AUBMC, followed up on the renewal of the medical waste treatment contract with Arc en Ciel, scheduled and conducted N95 respirator fit testing for the nursing staff.

In the spotlight

Farouk Moustafa El Merhebi

BS in Chemistry in 1991, BS in Agricultural Engineering in 1993
ME in Water Resources and Environmental Engineering in 1995

Mr. Merhebi joined AUB in August 2012 with 18 years of solid experience in environmental management and in the implementation of complex projects and programs. His experience extends to fields related to integrated solid waste management, water supply and wastewater management, industrial waste management, medical and hazardous waste management, strategic and environmental impact assessment, air quality management, risk and safety assessment, renewable energy, environmental legislation and environmental auditing.

Mr. Merhebi is currently managing a team composed of 11 dedicated and specialized professionals in safety and risk management. Besides maintaining a healthy and safe environment for AUB community, his priorities include the improvement of the management of all types of wastes and chemicals at AUB and the evaluation of the carbon footprint resulting from AUB activities.