Health and Safety

Purpose

This policy affirms Stephen F. Austin State University's commitment to protect the health and safety of its employees, students, and the general public, as well as the university's physical and financial assets. This document establishes the authority and responsibility for the proper management of the university's health and safety program, which is achieved through appropriate compliance with university policies, procedures, and applicable laws and regulations. It also intends to create an awareness of and a commitment to an effective safety program among all members of the university community.

UTS 174 Environmental Health and Safety along with the related *Risk Assessment Guidelines* are the primary program documents for the university's safety and health program.

Persons Affected

This policy affirms the commitment to its employees, students, physical and financial assets, and the general public.

Definitions

Environmental Health and Safety Peer Review (EH&S Peer Review) - a process to identify safety and environmental compliance issues, as well as finding possible methods to improve the effectiveness and efficiency within established programs. Peer reviews are conducted at each institution every three years.

Environmental Health and Safety Risk Assessment - an initial and ongoing audit process or review of activities at each institution for potential exposure to hazards, threats, and environmental pollutants based on probability of occurrence and magnitude of potential loss or harm. Each institution shall have the authority to determine the appropriate EH&S risk assessment methodology, policies, and procedures for its respective institution.

Policy

The primary concern of the health and safety program is the safety and well-being of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) program at SFASU seeks to maintain a campus that is free of recognized hazards and in compliance with applicable institutional, local, state, and federal environmental, health, and safety requirements and best practices. The program is promoted through safety procedures, hazard identification, training, and loss-control measures focused on the reduction of accidents and risk. This policy applies to all university employees, students, university affiliates, visitors, and owned or leased facilities, buildings, or property.

Responsibility and coordination of various aspects of the university's health and safety program is vested in the Environmental Health, Safety, & Risk Management (EHSRM) Department that reports to the vice president for finance and administration of the university. EHSRM will ensure

the university is compliant with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations relating to health and safety. While health and safety compliance rests primarily with EHSRM, it is also the responsibility of all university members to comply with the health and safety policy, procedures, trainings, and inspections.

Responsibilities are assigned to individuals at appropriate levels of authority and expertise as follows:

The responsibility for physical safety, fire and life safety protection and emergency protocols, occupational health and safety, risk management, safety training and inspections, workers' compensation, acquiring adequate property insurance coverage, environmental safety, hazardous and radioactive materials, asbestos management, laboratory safety, and accident prevention and investigation is assigned to the director of environmental health, safety, and risk management (EHSRM), who reports to the vice president for finance and administration. The director of EHSRM also serves as the official university contact for federal and state agencies regarding environmental and occupational safety and health.

- The responsibility for campus security, emergency procedures, traffic control, criminal investigation, and civil order is assigned to the chief of university police who reports to the vice president for finance and administration.
- The responsibility for the maintenance of the health of students is assigned to the director of university health services, who reports to the vice president for student affairs.

Providing a Safe Workplace

Facilities will be designed in a manner consistent with health and safety regulations and standards of good design. University departments responsible for the design, construction, and/or renovation of facilities shall consult in a timely manner with EHSRM to ensure that there is appropriate health and safety review of facility concepts, designs, fire protections, and plans.

Faculty and staff supervisors, in coordination with EHSRM, shall ensure that personnel receive proper safety training as required by their job task or by result of hazard identification. SFASU encourages employees and students to report health and safety hazards to their supervisors or EHSRM. Employees and students shall not be retaliated against in any manner for bona fide reporting of health and safety hazards to SFASU.

Faculty and staff supervisors, in coordination with EHSRM, shall ensure that regular, periodic inspections of workplaces are conducted to identify and evaluate workplace hazards and unsafe work practices. Means of correcting discovered hazards and/or protecting individuals shall be determined and implemented appropriately and in a timely manner. Unsafe conditions which cannot be corrected by the supervisor must be reported to department management and EHSRM.

Any individual who becomes aware of a situation immediately dangerous to health or safety shall promptly report the danger to EHSRM and to the faculty, staff, and students who may be affected. The director of EHSRM has the authority to intervene or shut down any university activity considered to present a clear and imminent danger to health or safety. This shall remain in effect until the danger has passed or been mitigated to the extent that the imminent danger no longer exists.

Support

In addition to these specific responsibilities, it shall be the general responsibility of all SFASU employees and students to keep themselves informed of conditions affecting their health and safety; to comply with SFASU health and safety policies, programs, procedures, and practices; to participate in training and inspection programs provided by their supervisors and EHSRM; and to adhere to healthy and safe practices in their workplace, classroom, and laboratories.

Management and supervisors are responsible for protecting the health and safety of employees and students under their supervision by implementing SFA health and safety policies, practices, and programs; ensuring all laboratories, workplaces, and equipment are safe and well maintained; and by ensuring that workplaces or laboratories comply with federal, state, and local regulations. Supervisors are also responsible for the education of their employees and students concerning proper job procedures and recognized hazards before making task assignments.

Procedures

Implementation

1. In all university activities and endeavors, safety is the first concern. The members of the university community shall comply with all federal, state, and local statutes, rules, regulations, and codes by which the university is bound. They shall also attempt to comply with the spirit of any known non-binding requirement which would further the university's intent to provide and maintain a safe and healthful environment in which to work, study, and live.

Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards

Texas Health & Safety Code Ch. 502

28 Tex. Admin. Code Ch. 34
30 Tex. Admin. Code Part 1
25 Tex. Admin. Code Ch. 96, 289, 295

UTS 174 Environmental Health and Safety
UTS 174 Risk Assessment Guidelines
UTS 135 Fire and Life Safety

SFA HOP 05-515 Risk Management

Responsible Executive

Vice President of Finance and Administration
Director of Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management

Forms

None

Revision History

September 1, 2023 (original)