



8.5.5 Environmental Protection

Chapter 8 - Health & Safety	Original Effective Date: June 2000
Section: 8.5 Environmental Health and Safety Office	Date Last Reviewed: May 2021
Responsible Entity: Vice President for Facilities and Capital Planning	Date Last Revised: May 2021

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline UT Health San Antonio's Environmental Protection Program and responsibilities of employees (faculty and staff) and students in implementing a model environmental protection program.

II. Scope

This Policy applies to all UTHSA employees (faculty and staff) and students who work with or may have exposure to hazardous materials.

III. Policy

It is the expectation of the University of Texas System that all wastes generated as a result of UT Health San Antonio (UTHSA) activities (including but not limited to infectious medical, hazardous and radioactive wastes) be managed in a manner that will maximize protections of human health and the environment (Institutional Handbook of Operating Policies [8.4.1 Environmental Policy Statement](#)).

UTHSA has established an occupational safety and health program for the protection of life and property and for maintenance of a healthful environment conducive to the accomplishment of the goals of the University.

A. Responsibilities

Each of the following have responsibilities in implementing a model environmental protection program.

1. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department

The EH&S Department is responsible for establishing safety standards, regulations, guidelines, and programs designed to assure compliance with federal, state, and local rules and regulations. Environmental Health and Safety encompasses radiological, chemical, biological, physical safety and environmental protection.

8.5.5 Environmental Protection

2. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department, Environmental Protection Division
 - a. Provide technical assistance to supervisors and workers concerning Hazardous Waste management and disposal.
 - b. Provide general and specialized Hazardous Waste management training upon request.
 - c. Monitor Environmental Releases in the form of air, water, Hazardous Wastes, facility wastes and other UTHSA assets.
 - d. Make routine, as well as, special environmental assessments in support of the various safety advisory committees.
 - e. Promote pollution prevention techniques and waste minimization procedures.
 - f. Provide technical assistance on Environmental Release evaluation and control.
 - g. Review and analyze UTHSA Environmental Releases for the purpose of managing future releases.
 - h. Remain current on rules and regulations concerning environmental monitoring, environmental protection, and hazardous management.
 - i. Coordinate proper chemical and radioactive waste pick-up.
 - j. Conduct Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) assessments.
3. Faculty and Staff in charge of supervising laboratories
 - a. Inform and train employees concerning Environmental Releases and Hazardous Waste as required by the [Radiation Safety Handbook](#), [Chemical Safety Handbook](#), [Biological Safety Handbook](#), or [Physical Safety Handbook](#).
 - b. Retain all training records and documentation.
 - c. Implement and enforce rules and standards concerning Hazardous Waste and effluents generated under the supervisor's jurisdiction.
 - d. Ensure compliance of workers with UTHSA policies.
 - e. Ensure the availability and enforce the use of appropriate waste containers, waste labels, adequate and appropriate storage of waste and use of spill containment, as necessary.
 - f. Remain cognizant of Environmental Releases associated with work under the supervisor's jurisdiction.
 - g. Conduct internal inspections of the workplace for health and safety concerns.
 - h. Request assistance from the EH&S Department when environmental protection environments are not fully understood.
4. Employees (faculty and staff) and Students
 - a. Follow all environmental protection and Hazardous Waste standards and rules.

8.5.5 Environmental Protection

- b. Report all hazardous conditions and Environmental Releases to the supervisor or advisor.
- c. Wear or use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) while handling waste materials.
- d. Refrain from disposal or disposition of waste materials without proper instruction and authorization.
- e. Ask questions to the supervisor or advisor if the safe use of equipment or operating procedures are unclear.
- f. Remain aware of the Environmental Releases occurring in the scope of work.
- g. Request information and training when unsure how to handle Hazardous Wastes.

IV. Definitions

When used in this document with initial capital letter(s), the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

Environmental Release – any spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, discharging, injecting, escaping, leaching, dumping, disposing or migration into the indoor or outdoor environment.

Hazardous Waste – a waste with properties that make it dangerous or capable of having a harmful effect on human health or the environment.

V. Related References

[Environmental Health and Safety \(EH&S\) Department](#)

[EH&S Plans and Resources site](#) with hazard specific safety handbooks, safety fact sheets, guidance documents, plans, policies, and standard operating procedures.

VI. Review and Approval History

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Date Approved
06/2000	Policy Origination		
09/2018	Policy Revision		

8.5.5 Environmental Protection

05/2021	Policy Revision, discretionary edits		
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