

Willamette University Occupational Safety & Health Committee
October 21, 2009 Meeting Minutes



Keep until 10/21/2012

Members in Attendance

Rich Dennis, Facilitator-Campus Safety ext. 6907	Suzie Torre-Cross, Facilitator Elect, Human Resources ext 4043	Ramona Murtha, International Education ext. 5493
Mike Ryan, Facilities Services ext. 6802	Jim Ames, Facilities-Bldg Maintenance ext. 4287	Margaret Schue, College of Law ext. 6140
Jennifer Butler, Biology Dept. ext 6483	Alice French, Hatfield Library Ext. 6476	

Guests in Attendance

Skip Kenitzer, Athletics Dept. ext. 6257	Don Negri, Assoc. Dean, CLA, Professor of Economics ext. 6326	Karen Klimczak, Director Mktg/Communications ext. 6278
Chad Harvey, Loss Prevention, Empire Pacific	Chris Hernandez, Consultant w/OR OSHA	

Members in Absentia

Mary Ann Zielinski, Health Center ext. 4360	Linda Lombard, Financial Affairs ext. 6728	
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Old Business:

Item 1

Minutes from the September 23rd meeting were reviewed and approved. Suzie led the meeting with Ramona as acting Secretary.

Item 2: Sparks Interior steps to the office

Action: OSHA consultant, Chris Hernandez, will check these steps for hazard and possible mitigation.

Item 3: ART Building #204 temporary support for overhead beam (Jim Ames):

Issue: Art faculty asked the Safety Committee to follow up on getting the repair done since it did not happen in the expected timeframe (summer 2009). A structural engineer has since come to assess whether the temporary supports being used are necessary and, if so, what repair is needed.

Recommendation: The beam does need repair. The engineer recommends that it be injected with epoxy to lock down the separation that is occurring. Access from the topside is needed in addition to access from the underside. This means the room above (room 300) must be cleared in order to go through the floor.

Action: This places projected repair into summer 2010. Don Negri agreed to notify appropriate art faculty of the continued delay and will provide reassurance that this is expected to occur in summer 2010.

Item 4: Slick surface in Belknap/Matthews breezeway (Mike Ryan):

Issue: The covered breezeway is very slick when wet as the surface is smooth concrete.

Action: "Safety Step" has been applied to add traction to the surface. Mike will be checking it for effectiveness.

Item 5: Move crosswalk on Mill Street away from driveway (Jim Ames):

Issue: Planned relocation of walkway to align with central sidewalk up to U.C. was delayed due to funding questions.

Resolution: Project has been "reapproved" with funding. Timeline for completion hasn't yet been determined.

Item 6: Bikes locked to railings

Issue: The main areas of concern are: U.C., Eaton, Walton outside basement stairs (to LLC), and Collins.

Discussion: Have the Sustainability Group put a blurb in the newsletter encouraging bike use AND safely securing bikes. Can we have the Campus Safety Parking Lot attendants check their areas for bikes improperly secured and put notices on those? Hernandez (OSHA) suggested that, if signage is used, pictures convey the message more efficiently than text.

Resolution: None, ongoing concern.

New Business

Item 1: Numbering Campus Buildings

Issue: During recent Emergency Preparedness exercises, Salem Fire Department recommended to WU that each building be physically numbered in order that emergency response teams can easily identify their destination without having to have a map in hand or other verbal instructions. Currently the alarm system contractor has the physical addresses for each building but there is nothing physically on most buildings to correspond to that number. WU is interested in taking this recommendation. Should actual addresses be used or an arbitrary numbering system that we want to develop?

Discussion: OSHA consultant, Chris Hernandez- This is a good idea. Through his work with a Salem call center, he also recommends that doors be numbered. Because WU already has a building map that is widely disseminated, it would be sensible, if we so choose, to use an arbitrary system.

Resolution: Use actual address numbers on each building to align with alarm call center.

Item 2: OSHA Campus visit – Chris Hernandez

Issue 1: Campus walkthrough has, so far, identified two issues that are repeated:

1. Piggybacking of extension cords/power strips- This items can't be plugged in-line together.
2. "Zip" cords- These are the inexpensive lightweight extension cords commonly used in homes. They are not allowed in a business setting no matter what and he also doesn't recommend they be used in homes either.

Resolution: These will all have to be replaced to meet fire safety codes.

Issue 2: The biggest area of concern is Smith. The catwalks are not safe with the combination of height and being equipped with just one handrail. More passive fall protection is needed.

Resolution: This information will be included in his final report with recommendations for resolution.

Item 3: Test and Map Campus Doors

Test and Map Campus Doors

ISSUE: This project involves mapping out all building doors and identifying magnetic fire doors and card lock doors. We need to verify that doors do remain accessible via card swipe for a full 90 minutes after alarm is activated.

Resolution: Perform mapping/testing over Winter Break (student break) while staff that can help (Safety Committee members, building captains) are available. This is preferable to summer when there are many summer conferences/other users on campus. This means activating the system and checking after 90 minutes for door status.

Item 4: Required Fire Drills

Issue: Fire drills are required on a quarterly basis in every building. The most difficult attitude to combat is the perception that the drill doesn't require evacuation. In reality, there isn't really a way to "know" when it is a drill and when it is the real thing. Fire drills must be unannounced in order to best replicate an emergency situation. **ALL** students, faculty, and staff are required to evacuate. Jim also suggested that students receive an email after a drill to remind them to "remember that sound" as they may not recognize it if they can't identify what it is. Per Rich, the biggest student issue are those students who sleep through.

Recommendation: Commencement of unannounced drills. Jim Ames suggested that alarms be tripped at elevators so they will cease operation as they would in a fire. Rich will do so where appropriate. Associate Dean Don Negri will remind faculty, via email, of mandatory evacuation despite perceived inconvenience. RA training needs to continue to include the practice of keying in to a room when there is an alarm to ascertain that everyone has evacuated. We want to be as prepared as we can possibly be should a real emergency occur.

Item 5: Visible ID cards

Issue: This issue has been discussed previously. No policy has been put in place because of issues related to enforcement. Currently, there are a few work groups (Facilities) that require their employees to wear their ID. This topic has resurfaced again in conjunction with Emergency Preparedness. In particular, when there are emergency personnel on campus and the need to

assist them in determining who has legitimate need to be on campus. Main discussion revolved around the following:

1. The number of legitimate, casual visitors from off campus seems to make visible ID meaningless.
2. Sparks recently implemented a process that requires users to have a swipe card to access the lockers and Fitness Room. Per Skip Kenitzer, the results have been positive. He has not had any genuine complaints, only questions. There have been no thefts since the locks have been activated. The doors to the Fitness Room have not been propped open as feared. The use of the Fitness Room has evened out such that it doesn't get overloaded the way it used to in the past. Sparks issues cards for authorized, non-Willamette users (including groups).
3. We should explore the possibility of giving casual visitors with business on campus, such as contractors, some kind of temporary ID.
4. When employees are easily identified, this can promote customer service since prospective students and parents or other visitors can see who belongs here. This helps if they need assistance or just to have a sense of how many people are part of Willamette and available.
5. If a policy is added to require visible ID for all Willamette community members, a successful implementation will influence the need for and style of enforcement. Gradual implementation that targets more public and iconic areas such as the U.C. and Waller Hall as well as key groups around campus such as Safety Committee, etc. could make a difference.
6. Visitors who use the Guest Lot could be given some kind of ID.

Ultimately, the question is: Is this a Safety Issue? Although the Safety Committee cannot initiate a policy on this manner, it should continue to evaluate the possibilities to determine if a recommendation can be made on this topic.

Item 6: Injury Log

Two corrections, no description of injury was included for:

- 8/17 sprain of arm
- 8/19 sore knee

Discussion: There has been an increase in frequency and severity of injuries. There have been six in the past couple of months and our yearly usual is 20. The increases are observed in two work groups: faculty and housekeeping. There have also been a few student worker injuries which is of concern as well. This is problematic due to increased amount of training made available. Suzie has also encountered faculty who are completely unaware of worker's compensation.

Causes could be: Opening of new building causes more movement of people and things as does the beginning of academic year when people are rearranging. Another possibility is that better training is leading to better reporting. Faculty also develop a deep sense of personal space in regards to their office and tends to forget that they should use the assistance of support departments to do certain kinds of jobs.

Ideas for improving this record are:

- injury-free incentives: this can be problematic as it may push people to NOT report injuries;
- are there "tests" at the end of trainings to reinforce the training material?: yes to some;
- create a flyer "WC 101": best posted where most employees will see it, as in departmental office areas by copiers, recycle bins, etc.
- address the issue of accessibility of help, appropriate tools (step stools, simple tools, etc), and perceived cost of help.

Final note:

Chad Harvey (Empire Pacific) noted that he is impressed with the culture of the Committee and the discussions that occur.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Suzie Torre-Cross GBA, Human Resources Analyst

Next meeting

Date: Friday November 20, 2009

Place: Smith Gallery, Smith Auditorium

Time: 9:00 AM