

Agriculture and Natural Resources Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Office Activities July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006

Overview

During the past year the EH&S Office assumed increased responsibilities to provide EH&S resources for the entire ANR system. Accordingly, personnel from the EH&S Office began establishing contacts and meeting with staff at Cooperative Extension (CE) offices and facilities, in addition to maintaining contacts with Research & Extension Centers (RECs). These meetings and contacts identified areas of concern and conveyed information about special needs at offices and facilities

ANR Guidelines / Policies

A new ANR Administrative Guideline was developed for Fieldwork in Forested, Brush-Covered, Grassland, and Wetland Areas. The document gives health and safety advice and describes prudent practices for employees that work in remote field locations.



Field Research Area

The REC Policy and Procedure entitled Storage and Removal of Regulated Waste was revised to accommodate changes in the regulations that address disposal of Universal Waste such as batteries and electronic waste.



Storage & Removal of Regulated Waste Policy and Procedure

An advisory memo and subsequent updates were prepared to inform ANR staff and supervisors about a new emergency regulatory standard for heat illness prevention. The advisory included a summary of the regulation, a written program to append to each unit's Injury and Illness Prevention Program, and information for training employees on how to recognize and prevent heat illness.

Cooperative Extension

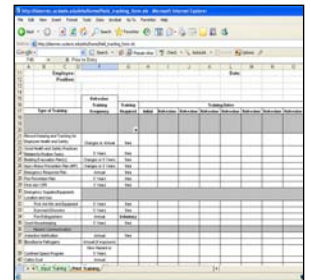
EH&S staff visited 10 CE locations this year, providing training, increasing general EH&S awareness, learning more about CE programs and assessing CE needs in health and safety areas. The EH&S Program Coordinator also attended several meetings with Regional Directors and County Director work groups to discuss EH&S topics and get input on plans to improve the program.

Safety Contacts

A survey was conducted to identify Safety Contacts for every County CE office. Safety Coordinators are already in place at each REC. We now have a total of 61 Safety Contacts/Coordinators at the various ANR locations. The CE Safety Contact will be the primary point of contact with EH&S and will ensure each office's Injury and Illness Prevention Program is implemented and up-to-date. The Safety Contact will also maintain postings of safety information and coordinate safety training efforts. We are planning training for the new Safety Contacts in fall 2006, with periodic meetings to follow to ensure the Safety Contacts receive the support they need to make safety programs a success.

EH&S Plans and Forms

A variety of plans and forms were derived and posted on the EH&S web site. The plans and forms were formatted to allow online compilation followed by downloading into a user's directory on their personal computer. A suite of training tracking and planning forms were developed for field, laboratory, operations and maintenance, and office employees and subsequently, posted on the web site. Likewise, template forms for Injury and Illness Prevention Programs (IIPPs), Building Evacuation Plans, and Chemical Hygiene Plans were also generated and posted on the web site.



Employee Health & Safety Training Tracking Form

Program Reviews and Inspections

Program reviews were performed at nine RECs and Hansen Agricultural Learning Center during 2005 – 2006. Results of the program reviews indicate an 18% decrease in serious deficiencies and a 9% increase in moderate deficiencies from the previous year. During 2005 – 2006 five RECs were inspected by county Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs), Air Pollution Control and Management Districts, the Department of Health Services Drinking Water Field Operations Branch, and Environmental Protection Agency. To date, no violations or fines have been issued as a result of these inspections.



Chemical Containers in a REC Lab

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Drinking Water System Compliance

The drinking water system compliance program continued to provide site-specific water sampling and analyses schedules, spreadsheets for recording required data, quarterly and annual water system reports, and



DREC Drinking Water Storage

Consumer Confidence Reports. Elevated levels of disinfection byproducts were identified in drinking water at Desert REC. As a result, Desert REC was required to provide notification to drinking water consumers. The EH&S Office assisted DREC with deriving the disinfection byproducts notification and recommended lowering the use of chlorine and moving the chlorine injection point to resolve this problem. Recent drinking water laboratory data indicate these strategies have worked to reduce disinfection byproducts to the extent where the notification is no longer required. Following a regulatory inspection of the drinking water system at Elkus Youth Ranch, the EH&S Office coordinated installation of a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system to remotely monitor treated water turbidity and water use from the office located in Davis.

Safety Notes

Fifty new Safety Notes were developed during the past year to bring the total number of Safety Notes posted on the EH&S web site to 110. More than 20 of the new Safety Notes were developed at the request of Cooperative Extension offices. Examples of the types of topics requested for Safety Notes included safe field practices, workplace violence, pesticide application equipment, and tsunamis.



Poisonous Snake

EH&S Training

EH&S Office staff have continued to provide training at ANR facilities and offices, including respirator fit testing and training and presentations on heat stress, material safety data sheets (MSDSs), safe fueling practices, skin protection from ultraviolet radiation, IIPPs, farm machinery hazards, top 10 agricultural violations cited by Cal/OSHA, annual workplace fatalities, and managing waste in California. Over 250 persons were trained by ANR EH&S staff, including REC staff, UC departmental staff and students, USDA personnel, and Cooperative Extension employees. Review of written evaluations of EH&S training and presentations indicates attendees have an overall approval rating of 94%.

EH&S Website

Improvements to the EH&S Website continued this year. The look of the home page was updated and new pages added, including pages for Contacts, Plans, Forms and Templates and EH&S Links to other ANR, UC Campuses and regulatory agency websites. Use of the website continued to grow, increasing from about 5,000 "hits" per month in June 2005 to almost 9,000 "hits" per month in June 2006. The trend of website usage has been steadily upward over the past 2 years.

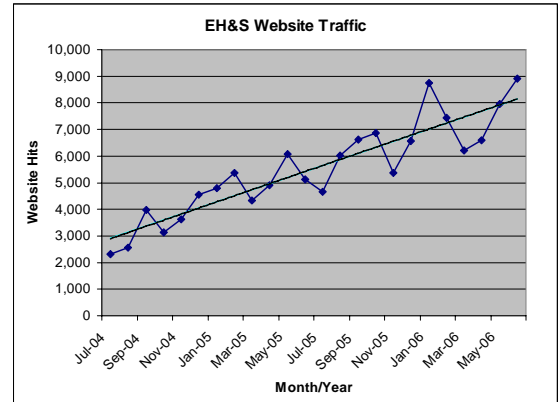


Chart of Website Usage

Recently we have noticed marked increase in activity following e-mail correspondence to ANR safety contacts, indicating that our clients are interested in finding out about new information on the EH&S website.

Professional Presentations

A paper authored by EH&S Office personnel and entitled Achieving and Maintaining Safe Work Environments at Remote University Locations was accepted for presentation at the 2006 Campus Safety Health Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA) national meeting. The paper describes the EH&S resources that have been developed and are available to assist ANR offices and facilities establish and sustain safe work environments.



Map of ANR Locations