

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH GUIDELINES

APPLICABLE TO STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, AND OTHERS WORKING WITH CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOACTIVE, AND/OR POTENTIALLY HARMFUL PHYSICAL AGENTS

The University of Alaska values its students and employees and strives to provide a safe and healthy environment. However, sometimes our work and learning entails the use of, or potential exposure to, hazardous chemical, biological, radioactive, or physical agents. The purpose of this guideline is to increase awareness and outline the responsibilities of the various parties regarding the issue of exposure to reproductive health hazards, which includes hazards to potential future offspring. Each party's roles and responsibilities are independent of the others'.

Reproductive health hazards are defined as chemical, physical, radiological or biological agents that can cause either reproductive impairment or adverse developmental effects. Agents for which recommended exposure limits, such as permissible exposure limits (PELs), threshold limit values (TLVs) or the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommended exposure limits (RELs) must be evaluated from the standpoint of protecting reproductive health. When reviewing material safety data sheets (MSDSs) for issues related to reproductive health, be sure that the referenced exposure limit have been evaluated to determine whether the basis for those exposure limits were established with a consideration of protecting against reproductive toxicity. Many exposure limits are based upon protection of some other toxicity end point, such as systemic toxicity, neurotoxicity, sensory irritation, or other health effects.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

1. Maintain a working and learning environment where information regarding resources and methods to protect individual reproductive health when working with hazardous chemicals or materials is readily accessible to students and employees;
2. Adhere to applicable regulatory requirements for work around hazardous chemicals and materials;
3. Provide information to faculty, students, and employees about reproductive hazards that may be associated with their working environment. Various approaches and sources may include, as appropriate:
 - Course curriculum
 - Posted warnings
 - Direct communication
 - Material Safety Data Sheets

- Consultation with the University's Environmental, Health and Safety officer(s) and/or Risk Management professionals
 - Reputable and reliable internet websites and publications
 - Chemical hygiene publications
 - Training
 - On-site hazard analysis
 - Consultation with medical or other professionals
4. At their request, assist and advise faculty, students, and employees in identifying feasible alternatives and safer means to accomplish work and educational objectives.

RISK MANAGEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Serve as the body through which health and safety policy decisions are made;
2. Coordinate with the Office of Sponsored Programs, or equivalent office, individual supervisors, departments, institutes, and other committees or offices to ensure that faculty, students and employees are informed regarding potential reproductive health hazards in the university environment;
3. Provide direction, guidance, and training to involved parties regarding ways to minimize exposure to reproductive health hazards in the university environment;
4. Provide on-site hazard analysis as appropriate, and assist in determining appropriate methods to minimize exposure to within acceptable limits;
5. Provide, or arrange for, exposure testing and monitoring as appropriate;
6. Consult with physicians or other professionals, as necessary, to ensure that exposure to hazardous environments is within acceptable limits to safeguard reproductive health.

STUDENT/EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. If willing, formally declare your pregnancy or other reproductive health issues to your instructor/supervisor as soon as you become aware of it, and request modifications to work or classroom assignments, if needed;
2. Take due care not to expose yourself to any unnecessary chemical, biological, radioactive, or hazardous physical agents;
3. Follow all recommended work practices and wear appropriate personal protective equipment;
4. Report all unintended or improper exposure incidents to your instructor/supervisor;
5. Attend all required safety training and seek additional training or information if you become aware of a reproductive health issue that applies to you;
6. Be aware that the University endeavors to provide information regarding relevant facts and safety issues involving reproductive health. However, there are circumstances and situations that may not pose a clear threat or are not specifically identified by regulatory guidance as a reproductive threat. In these cases, you, not the University, must make the ultimate decision whether to accept a risk to you or to an unborn fetus.
7. Be sure to consult with your personal physician about all potential hazards and your decision whether to confront them;
8. For Employees: Work with your supervisor to identify possible alternate job duties or temporary reassignment within the department. If alternate duties cannot be provided, consult with Human

Resources for job placement assistance and/or counseling in regard to sick leave, family medical leave, or any other options that may be available to you;

9. For Students: Identify means to safely complete your coursework within the current laboratory setting, in an amended setting, or at a future date. If modifications cannot be made, see your academic advisor for counseling.

INSTRUCTOR/SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Perform hazard analyses of your work and/or instructional areas, seeking assistance from your campus Environmental, Health and Safety and/or Risk Management office, as needed;
2. Understand and communicate, through all appropriate approaches, the reproductive hazards associated with chemical, biological, radioactive, or physical agents being used in your classroom or workplace;
3. Ensure that all laboratories fully participate in the University's chemical hygiene plan and have been approved for their intended use by the campus Environmental, Health and Safety and/or Risk Management office;
4. Ensure that the appropriate compliance or safety committee has reviewed and approved all protocols prior to obtaining hazardous agents and starting any work;
5. Provide all job candidates with a written job description outlining all chemical, biological, radioactive, or physical agents with which they will be working (chemical hygiene plan) so the candidate can make an informed decision;
6. Provide all necessary and appropriate training and personal protective equipment for individuals in your work areas, labs, or classrooms and ensure that students and employees use the proper personal protective equipment and adhere to other control measures;
7. For Supervisors: When notified of a pregnancy or other reproductive health concern, coordinate with HR to attempt to identify feasible alternate job duties or temporary reassignment within the department. If alternate duties cannot be provided, formally warn the employee in writing of the reproductive health hazard and recommend that the employee consult Human Resources for job placement assistance and/or counseling in regard to sick leave, family medical leave, or any other options available to the employee. Make it clear that the employee must be involved in making the ultimate decision of whether to confront the reproductive health hazard;
8. For Instructors: When notified of a pregnancy or other reproductive health concern, identify means to complete coursework either within the current laboratory setting, in an amended setting, or at a future date. If alternative arrangements cannot be made, refer the student to their academic advisor for counseling. Consult Risk Management (who will consult legal counsel) if after being advised of the risk, the student plans to confront the hazard.

RESOURCES

The Center for Disease Control maintains a web page specifically related to reproductive health issues. This page can be viewed at <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/>.

The State of California publishes an annual list of chemicals known to the State of CA to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity. It is known as the Proposition 65 list and can be found at the following link: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/files/P65single120304.pdf