Overview

To achieve our University’s Strategic Priorities of Student Success, Research that has Impact and a Commitment to our Communities, we must continually focus on assessing and mitigating risks that impact the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and members of the public. Realizing a culture of safety through a well functioning Health and Safety Management System (HSMS), significantly contributes to achieving our University’s Vision of “…developing educated contributors, career-ready learners, and global citizens …”

This year’s report highlights health and safety accomplishments in 2016, as well as initiatives planned for 2017 according to the seven principle areas of our HSMS:

1. Management commitment and leadership
2. Hazard identification and control
3. Training
4. Communications
5. Inspections
6. Reporting and investigations
7. Emergency response

Maintaining a healthy and safe organization is a legislated requirement but more importantly, as an educational institution and steward of public resources, the University has a moral, ethical, and fiscal responsibility to provide leadership by advancing a culture of safety by leading safe work, teaching and research practices.

“To achieve our safety goals it is essential to create a corporate atmosphere or culture in which safety is understood to be, and is accepted as, the number one priority.”

(Cullen, 1990, p.300)

University of Regina Health and Safety Commitment

As a means to achieving our Mission and Vision, the University of Regina is committed to continually advancing its culture of health and safety through a comprehensive Health and Safety Management System.

University of Regina objectives:

Create a healthy and safe organization in which to learn, conduct research, work, study and live.

Maintain, as a minimum standard, compliance with all relevant statutes, regulations and standards of regulatory authorities representing health and safety applicable at the U of R.

Ensure through awareness, training, health promotion and the identification and mitigation of hazards, that health and safety is an integral part of our University’s culture.

Incorporate leading health and safety practices in all University activities including infrastructure planning, budgeting, teaching, athletics, research and public events.
2016 Achievements by HSMS Category
Management Commitment & Leadership

“In specifically, the stronger the commitment to safety at the executive level, the more engaged employees were with their work.”
(Tucker, June 2016, Leading to Safety: How Top Organizational Leaders Impact Safety.)

In 2016 the Deans of Science and Engineering continued to work with Health, Safety and Wellness (HSW) on implementing risk assessment tools within their respective faculties. U of R Senior Leaders continued to be engaged in health and safety. Our VP Administration Co-Chairs the University’s Occupational Health and Safety Committee. The Emergency Management Committee is comprised of a number of senior leaders including the VP Administration, Provost and VP Academic and VP Research. 2016 also saw our President incorporate her vision on safety for students, faculty and staff in some of her monthly campus addresses.

Our injury and incident experience in 2016 saw the U of R exceeding its target for WCB lost time claims by 40 %, but we experienced a reduction in our lost days by 27% below our target. Although there were more WCB claims in 2016 than 2015, the claims were less severe therefore resulting in less days lost. Analysis of reported injuries show that the overall number of reported incidents increased primarily due to an increase in near miss reporting. Increased near-miss reporting is a good indicator that more students, staff and faculty see safety as important and take the time to report things they feel need to be addressed, prior to an actual incident occurring.

Senior leaders continued to provide required one time funding for specific health and safety needs (e.g., radiation materials disposal, Norovirus outbreak, learning opportunities). This added funding shows the University’s commitment to sustaining a healthy and safe campus.

Hazard Identification & Control

Hazards and risks continue to be identified in a variety of ways at the U of R:

- In 2016, risk assessments in research and field work activities increased. This is a significant success in moving our culture of safety forward.
- 12 Pre-construction and renovation risk assessments with contractors were done with both large and small projects on campus.
- 3 formal risk assessments were done related to research proposals, specifically ones where the Research and Ethics Board is engaged. This again is significant as no formal process previously existed.
- 64 Ergonomic assessments were performed to lessen our incidence of repetitive strain injuries.
- In 2016 most faculties and departments completed Academic and Business Continuity Plans. These plans help ensure continued University operations when recovering from an emergency event.
As our university can be the size of a small city when the majority of our staff, faculty and students are on campus, we therefore need to manage our public health risks. To mitigate potential outbreaks such as our 2016 Norovirus incident, 7 additional portable waterless hand sanitizer stations were deployed in 2016 on our main campus. We also created standardized and conspicuous signage to demarcate all waterless hand antiseptic stations. We further partnered with RQHR Public Health and Alliance Medical to facilitate on campus Influenza clinics for students, faculty, staff and members of the public. Over 1,880 vaccinations were provided helping the U of R prevent influenza. This represents an increased uptake of 45% compared to our 2015 numbers.

Our work with external regulators on hazard assessment in 2016 saw the U of R successfully pass an onsite Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission inspection. Passing this inspection allowed the U of R to continue to use radioactive materials in our research. The U of R again in 2016 worked with the Regina Fire and Protective Services to train 30 of their staff to respond competently to the multitude of hazards present on both our campuses. This partnership ultimately will lessen the potential human impact and property damage should they need to respond to an emergency at the U of R.

Training

Health and safety training facilitated for students, staff and faculty reached an all-time high in 2016. 3,562 various safety related training courses were provided. Many of these courses are facilitated in an online format allowing the user to partake in the course at their convenience. This represents an increase of 18.7% in training uptake since 2015. In 2016 health and safety information was presented in numerous orientations for students (e.g., Teaching Assistant orientations, Kinesiology student pre-internship orientations, and new student orientations). Focused training was also provided for our Facilities Management staff to help reduce the amount of musculoskeletal injuries occurring and also how to work safely with and around asbestos containing materials.

Communications

10 “Safety Advisories and 5 “Sixty Second Safety Talks” were created and distributed to hundreds of staff, faculty and students in 2016. Topics included vehicle safety, ergonomics, safe storage and movement of materials, working with specific hazardous chemicals and preventing fires when using research equipment. As well, the need for an easy to read emergency poster was identified by U of R Executive of Counsel. Through collaborations with numerous faculty, staff and students, a new highly visible Emergency Poster was created. The poster is now displayed in numerous locations at the U of R and provides simple and concise instructions to help individuals react appropriately in case of an emergency.

Once again our 5 Local Occupational Health and Safety Committees celebrated North American Occupational Safety and Health week in May through a variety of activities. These activities enhanced communications regarding health and safety and engage staff and faculty to recognize the importance of this week and its significance in our emerging safety culture.
Inspections

The U of R Local Occupational Health and Safety Committees continued to inspect work, leisure and study areas at the U of R within their respective jurisdictions. Each year these inspections continue to provide less items that need to be resolved displaying that we are moving in the right direction regarding ensuring safety in our physical spaces. We also paid specific attention to our spaces containing higher levels of hazards such as labs containing biological, chemical or radioactive materials. A new piece of equipment (fog generator) was added to our inspection routine this year allowing us to show personnel within labs the importance of storing materials safely in our numerous chemical fume hoods.

As required for our CNSC license, 11 areas containing radioactive materials were inspected quarterly.

As a large number of U of R staff and faculty use computers, 64 ergonomic evaluations were completed in 2016. These evaluations fixed existing issues or supplied new equipment to ensure staff and faculty will not experience musculoskeletal issues. Of note, ten standing desks were deployed in 2016. Standing desks allow the users to change positions frequently to avoid ergonomic injuries.

Reporting & Investigations

365 actual and 97 near miss incidents were reported to HSW in 2016. 95% of these incidents are investigated by HSW in partnership with key stakeholders with mitigation measures implemented and monitored for effectiveness.

The U of R did incur a very high potential situation in 2016 in which a medium pressure natural gas line was contacted during a construction project. The incident was investigated in partnership with all the contractors involved, mitigation measures have been implemented and this incident was reported to our Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety.

Emergency Response

In February 2016, the U of R had an outbreak of Norovirus on both campuses. In total, 100 cases were confirmed by RQHR Public Health. The U of R managed this outbreak using our standard practiced emergency response procedures thereby stemming the potential number of infected staff, faculty and students. The U of R was acknowledged by Public Health for our quick actions and comprehensive communications.

To continue to hone our emergency response abilities, 2 table top exercises were held with the U of R Emergency Management Committee (EMC) in 2016. Those serving as alternates for EMC committee members also attended the exercises. The exercises require committee members to address mock situations such as an active shooter on campus, a severe weather emergency with loss of building capacity, a hijacking of our computer infrastructure with a financial demand, and student unrest with a potential bomb threat. In our continued efforts to partner with other emergency responders, we invited the City of Regina’s Emergency Planner to sit in on and critique one of our exercises.

The U of R Hazardous Materials Spill Response Team conducts spill remediation for hazardous material spills/ releases. Thankfully only one large spill occurred this past year.
Data

2016 Total of 3,562 Safety Training Courses Completed

Aerial Lift (22)
Animal and Zoonotic Disease Awareness (12)
Asbestos Awareness (70)
Autoclave Workshop (132)
Biomedical Safety (10)
Biosafety (79)
Chemical and Lab Safety (206)
Confined Space (16)
Due Diligence (3)
Emergency Warden Training (161)
Fall Protection (22)
Fire Safety (407)
First Aid - 3rd Party (24)
FM Lab Safety (13)
General Safety (385)
H2S Awareness Online (18)
Infection Control (246)
Ladder Safety (13)
Lockout Tagout Online (39)
Office Ergonomics Online (9)
Radiation Awareness (30)
Radiation Safety Online & Workshops (27)
Respirator Fit Test (19)
Teaching Assistant Safety Training (171)
Transportation of Dangerous Goods Online (13)
WHMIS (1515)

Total Safety Training Course Numbers
Reported Data for U of R WCB lost time and medical aid injuries
(Faculty and students excluded as they are not covered by WCB)

A ‘lost time claim’ is a workplace injury that is significant enough to make the worker lose time at work beyond the initial day of injury. A ‘medical aid claim’ is a workplace injury where the worker sees a medical practitioner but does not lose time at work.

Please note that all claims related to the 2016 Norovirus outbreak at the U of R have been removed to allow for accurate period over period data comparison. The U of R went over our 2016 target by 40%. 10 of the 14 lost time claims were preventable with proper interventions.

Reported Data for U of R WCB lost time days
(Faculty and students excluded)

All days lost for the 2016 Norovirus outbreak have been removed from the data to allow for accurate annual comparisons. The U of R out performed our 2016 target for lost days by 27%. Contributing to this success is minimizing the severity of injuries through prevention measures and proactive claims management.
The culture of safety at the UofR continues to need attention as 118 of our reported 2016 incidents can be linked to “complacency” related causality. Reducing or eliminating our complacency related incidents will assist us to achieve the ideal goal of zero preventable harm for all students, faculty and staff.

**Definitions of Root Cause Categories**

**Equipment failure**
An incident that has occurred due to the lack of ability to utilize equipment or machinery resulting in an incident.
- Elevator malfunction
- HVAC issues
- Power outage

**Environment**
An incident in which the environment contributed to the incident occurring
- Slips, trips, falls – During the winter months or freeze thaw seasons
- Sports activities
- Smoke alarms set off by residence cooking processes
- Pest issues
- Insect bites
- Lightning strike

**Complacency / Inattention**
An incident that has occurred due to the lack of attention, distraction or failure to identify your surroundings
- Distracted walking/driving resulting in an incident
- Motor vehicle incidents
- Failure to follow manufacturers recommendations which may have resulted in an incident
- Rushing/In a hurry

**Communication**
Any incident that has occurred as a result of failing to communicate pertinent information.
- Failure to communicate potential hazards which may lead to an incident
- Failure to communicate, leading to misaligned expectations ultimately resulting in an incident

**Poor engineering controls**
An incident that has occurred due to the lack of control(s) that are designed to reduce exposure to a chemical, or physical hazard.
- The lack of ventilation which may possibly lead to a potential exposure
- Missing guardrail on an elevated platform
- Missing guard on moving machinery

**Compliance to procedures / practices**
An incident in which a personal decision was made to not comply with applicable procedures and practices which have been implemented to eliminate and/or reduce risk of injury.
- Failure to don appropriate PPE
- Deciding to not ask for assistance when lifting a heavy object
- Failure to lockout a piece of energized equipment before working on it.
Incidents Reported to Campus Security

This data has been provided by Campus Security. Campus Security investigates those incidents reported to them directly and works with stakeholders to resolve issues and implement remedial preventative measures. Campus Security indicates the increase in incidents categorized as “Violence” in the 4th quarter is related to a variety of issues including disturbances (noise issues) and alcohol causing fights to happen at the Lazy Owl and/or in our residences. This may be partially influenced by new management in the Owl as well as new influences by the Community Safety Officers in residence. Increased attention may lead to increased reporting.
2017 Initiatives by HSMS category

Management Commitment & Leadership

An area identified for 2017 where the University can enhance our Health and Safety Management System is in training front line leaders. In partnership with HR Organizational Development and People Programs, we will be creating a program for leaders on how to effectively manage all aspects of student, staff and faculty health and safety.

Funding in 2017 and for the next several fiscal periods for health and safety initiatives will present a challenge. All financial commitments to health and safety projects will need to be carefully monitored to ensure we have the greatest impact to growing the University of Regina’s culture of safety.

Workplace accommodations are increasing both in numbers and complexity. Leaders continue to be challenged with accommodations that deal with physical disabilities, psychological disabilities, familial and religious issues. To address this, accommodation presentations are planned for all leaders.

Finally, in 2017, the College and University Safety Association (CUSA) 2017 annual conference will be hosted by the U of R held from June 7 – 9, 2017. This conference is a gathering of safety professionals from across Canada and provides a place for comparing best safety practices, bringing in new state of the art equipment for review, showcasing new ideas and bringing in guest speakers. The conference expects to attract 40 - 50 participants who have a range of safety and health expertise in academic settings. Several speakers including faculty from the U of R will be speaking at this conference.

Hazard Identification & Control

Continued work in 2017 will prioritize the implementation of integrating formal risk assessment processes to ensure that risks or hazards at the U of R are assessed and documented (i.e., research activities, teaching activities and sporting events).

Work will also focus more closely on the U of R Travel and Fieldwork process. Our Executive of Counsel, along with academic leaders has asked that the process of assessing the risks of travel for students and faculty, which includes completing the correct document, be simplified. 2017 will also see the renewal of our 5-year CNSC license. This renewal will allow us to continue using radioactive substances in our teaching and research.

Training

In 2017 we will continue to monitor and implement as required, leading practice health and safety training. Training will be provided in the most appropriate method (e.g., online, in person, third party).

Our focus will also be to ensure those who have been previously trained have their health and safety training refreshed as required (e.g., Fall protection, WHMIS, Confined Space Entry). There are currently hundreds of staff, faculty and students who require refresher training.
Communications

2017 strategic communications will continue to target the University’s evolving Health and Safety Management System. Part of this strategy will be to have the President ensure health and safety is mentioned in several of her 2017 monthly messages to our campus community. Monthly “Safety Talks” will also continue to be produced by Health, Safety & Wellness and distributed to applicable audiences.

Inspections

As paper overloading in offices continues to be identified on inspections, a fire load policy or procedure will be developed in 2017 to address excessive paper and stored materials. Assistance with inspections will continue to be provided to our Local Occupational Health and Safety committees in 2017 so all areas at the U of R will be inspected.

Frequent safety inspections will be needed with a number of large ongoing construction projects in 2017 (e.g. College West, Lab Building, College Avenue Campus). These inspections will be a cooperative effort in conjunction with our facilities staff and external contractors.

Reporting & Investigations

Student, faculty and staff incident and near-miss reporting will require a continued focus in 2017 as many students, faculty and staff do not know how to or when to report an incident or near miss. When incidents or near-misses are reported, they should be captured within 1 comprehensive and inclusive database. Work will focus on developing a more efficient recording and reporting system, through a central and all-inclusive database, allowing us to continually analyze and proactively intervene in health and safety issues.

Emergency Response

2017 will see the addition of a “Panic Button” feature to our Emergency Notification System. Panic buttons allow users to get emergent responses when required (e.g., if a student began to act violently while meeting with a Student Counselor, a local panic button could be activated to ensure proper authorities were notified immediately and could respond).

Work will also continue in 2017 on refining our Active Shooter Protocols as well as the creation and implementation of a main campus evacuation plan. We are targeting 2017 to finalize all Faculty and Department level Academic and Business Continuity Plans and once these are complete, an organizational level plan will be constructed.

“…the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture…”