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# PPD ES&H Newsletter

December 2010

## Snow Removal

As we enter the winter season, it is important to know the snow removal plan for your building or area. Your building managers can remove snow from many of the walkways with snow blowers, but will not necessarily have the means to get to the stoops or porches to apply salt on icy patches in a timely manner. Please contact your building manager to ensure there is adequate snow removal coverage for your building, and that there will be buckets of salt available for areas that can become icy.



Your supervisor may ask you to contribute a small amount of time in the morning to help salt the stoops/porches of your building. Performing any snow removal duties that are more strenuous than spreading salt (e.g. shoveling) will require clearance from Medical. If you anticipate performing those snow removal duties for Fermilab you must complete and submit a [snow removal questionnaire](#).

If you spot an icy or slippery area that needs more attention than just some salt thrown down, please contact your building manager for assistance.

To learn more about shoveling safety, check out [this archived article](#) from Fermilab today.

## Fermilab Test Beam Facility (FTBF) Hazard Awareness Training

With the influx of new experiments coming into the FTBF, a hazard awareness training has been developed to help employees become familiar with the various hazards of the area.

Any employees who will be working in the Fermilab Test Beam Facility (formerly known as Meson Test Beam Facility) should complete the hazard awareness training as soon as possible. You can locate this online training [here](#). If you have completed the course online, you do not need to submit a hard copy of the signature page. Contact your supervisor if you are unsure of your need for this training.

## FTBF Lighting Upgrades

Recent upgrades to the lighting system of the Fermi Test Beam Facility (FTBF) are considered major improvements on two important ES&H fronts: workplace safety and energy conservation. The reason for upgrading the lighting system of the MTest target areas stemmed from the basic necessity of experimenters and employees to see what they are working on. Previously, the MTest target areas were lit with standard 96 watt lamps. After the upgrade, the area is now illuminated with 86 watt, high-output lamps. Don't be confused by the lower wattage: the high-output lamps provide significantly more effective lighting. The difference is extraordinary. By improving from what was notoriously dim lighting to the current system, workers in the area are better suited to avoid the every-day hazards associated with a target area. In addition to the extra light output, the installation included the consolidation of electrical panels and clearance of conduit and wiring from commonly used walk-ways.



Not only does the upgrade reduce safety concerns in the area, a positive side-effect of the project is one which reduces energy consumption and saves the lab money. In addition to the 10 watts per bulb reduction in energy, motion-sensor switches were installed in the target area. This amends a situation of running the lamps 24 hours per day to one in which the lamps are only illuminated as workers are in the area. Also, the new lamps require replacement roughly every three years. That is three times the length a standard lamp lasts. Factoring in the price of the bulbs, this equates to the high-output lamps costing roughly half of what the standard lamps cost. Add in the cost of labor required for switching out each lamp and significant savings occur.

## Compressed Gas Safety

Some basic compressed gas cylinder safety guidelines include:



Chrome-plated wrench being used in a flammable gas shed. Non-sparking tools must be used around flammable gases.

- Only trained personnel should connect or disconnect compressed gas cylinders. Training classes can be located [here](#).
- Always transport cylinders with the safety cap on and using a cylinder cart. Do not roll them by hand or transport them on a forklift.
- Cylinders should always be stored upright, and held secure so they will not tip.
- Use the correct pressure regulator for the specific gas.
- Do not store cylinders or lecture bottles with the regulator in place (if the regulator fails, the entire contents could be discharged.)
- Make sure the regulator and valve fittings are compatible. CGA fittings will differ for inert gases, flammable gases and oxidizers and are not necessarily interchangeable.
- All compressed gas cylinders must be marked with the correct chemical name.
- All cylinders need to be labeled whether the container is full or empty.

Further guidance regarding the safe handling, use and storage of compressed gases can be found in the [Compressed Gas Cylinder Safety](#) training booklet in ESH DocDB.

## Save on Holiday Lighting Electricity Costs

A simple way to save money this holiday season is to use [Energy Star qualified LED holiday lights](#). LEDs often consume 70% less energy than the traditional incandescent lights, and LED lights can last up to 10 times longer! Another advantage - they generate less heat and are less of a fire risk.



A quick online search for LED holiday lights results in several options. However, if you are a ComEd customer, you can receive a \$2 discount when you purchase LED holiday light strands from their online store.

## Winter Safety

Safe [winter road travel](#)—make sure to always clear your windshield, and do your best to clear the snow off the top of your vehicle. Keep a [roadside emergency kit](#) with survival gear in your vehicle.



Before any road travel, use the [Illinois DOT Winter Road Conditions Map](#) to determine your best route, and read the Weather Channel's [Driving In Snow and Ice](#) tips to learn more about safe winter driving.

Since this is the Midwest, it is always best to prepare for winter storms ahead of time. Review the [Winter Storm Safety Checklist](#), available from the American Red Cross, to help ensure you have enough supplies should you be trapped at home during a winter storm. You can find additional information from the New York State Office of Emergency Management; or you can get tips for preparation [before](#), [during](#) and [after](#) a winter storm; and the National Weather Service has a [winter storm preparedness pamphlet](#) with additional safety information.

## January is National Radon Action Month



[Radon](#) is a naturally occurring, colorless and tasteless radioactive gas that can enter homes and businesses through cracks in floors or walls, gaps around surface pipes, etc. If the gas cannot be ventilated, it can build up within homes and other buildings.

It is uncertain exactly what levels of radon are dangerous, but radon is known to cause lung cancer. The EPA has set a recommended maximum concentration of 4 pCi/L (this value should be compared to your home's annual average level for radon). If your home has radon levels above that amount, it is recommended that you take some corrective actions to reduce that level.

Many homeowners can install a vent pipe system and fan that pulls the radon gas from the soil underneath the home and vents it outdoors. Sealing any cracks and openings in your home is also an effective way to reduce radon levels. Please check out the EPA's [Citizen's Guide to Radon](#) if you would like more information. You can also check out this [county map](#) which provides radon levels in various Illinois counties. To find a low-cost radon measurement detector/lab, click [here](#). Lastly, to calculate your potential radon exposure level, use this [Radon Individual Dose Calculator](#) (contact PPD RSO [Nathan Duff](#) for assistance with the calculator or for more information).

## Energy Star Home Insulation



It's never too late to [air seal and insulate](#) your home. Consider sealing/insulating your home's outer walls, ceiling, windows, doors, etc.; you can often save up to 20% on heating and cooling costs.

To learn more about the benefits of and how to get started sealing and insulating your home, check out EPA's [Seal and Insulate with Energy Star](#) and [Duct Sealing](#) brochures.

## Bed Bugs!

[Bed bugs](#) have made quite a resurgence within the past year, and have been showing up in office spaces as well as hotels and personal residences.



Bed bugs feed on the blood of animals, including humans. They do search for new hosts if their habitat has been disturbed (and can survive up to 18 months without feeding), which is why they will hitch a ride in your luggage, purse, backpack, secondhand furniture, bedding or clothing looking for their next host.

Signs of bed bug infestation include:

1. Spots of blood left on bed sheets may indicate bed bug biting
2. Brownish-black specks (feces) and the exoskeletons
3. A peculiar musty raspberry odor from bed bug secretions may be noticed when many bed bugs are present

If you have reason to believe you may have brought bed bugs into your home, you can [prevent](#) them from "climbing into bed with you" by wrapping duct tape (sticky side out) around the legs of your bed. Keep the bed away from the wall and bedding from touching the floor (remove bed skirts). Check out the [EPA's Bed Bug page](#) for more prevention and treatment information.

## The "Doh!" Photos of the Month



## PPD November Injuries

No injuries!

