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Mission
The Department of Risk Management and Safety is committed to providing the necessary services and programs to the university students, faculty, staff, and visitors to help maintain a healthy and safe environment and to assist in the preservation of university assets, both physical and financial. Through the incorporation of risk management principles and best safety practices, the Department of Risk Management and Safety aggressively strives to take leadership in the protection of our university community.

Vision
The Department of Risk Management and Safety will establish and maintain exemplary services for our customers that meet or exceed institutional service standards, state and federal regulations, and university community expectations. The Department of Risk Management and Safety will provide excellent services through relationships built on trust, cooperation, teamwork, and education.

Responsibilities
The Department of Risk Management and Safety recognizes that the university’s greatest assets are the individuals making up our university community. It is the responsibility of the Department of Risk Management and Safety to provide the necessary tools to our community to meet our vision of exemplary service and success. The Department of Risk Management and Safety will accomplish this by:

- Preservation of Assets
- Minimizing Accidental Loss
- Program development
- Environmental Protection
- Continued Education Opportunities
- Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Response Assistance
- Regulatory Compliance

Core Values
The foundation of the Department of Risk Management and Safety is our belief and desire for success. Our Core Values, and responsibility to uphold them, result in excellent services and assistance in accomplishing the overall University Mission.

- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Dedication
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Service
- Commitment
- Environmental Care
- Social Awareness
- Communicating
- Training
1. Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMUC) would like to give appreciation to Texas A&M University, College Station, for allowing us to use their Safety Manual as a foundation in the development of our Safety Manual.

The TAMUC Safety Manual has been developed as a reference manual. It describes safe work practices, programs and procedures to be followed to help ensure a safe and healthy environment. It is the intent of the University to comply with all relevant occupational and environmental regulations and nationally recognized codes and standards. Using the manual's protocols will complement responsible efforts to foster safe work habits and to maintain safe work environments.

The TAMUC safety manual is expected to provide general safety guidelines and procedures for students, faculty, staff, visitors and contractors. TAMUC has further developed specific programs detailing procedures and regulations associated with different safety and health topics. For copies of, or questions regarding the TAMUC Environmental Health and Safety Programs, please contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

2. Responsibility

2.1. Department of Risk Management and Safety

The Department of Risk Management and Safety is responsible for:

- Developing and managing the TAMUC Environmental Health and Safety related programs and procedures
- The oversight and monitoring of departmental developed programs regarding Environmental Health and Safety
- Assist the university with compliance to state and federal regulations pertaining to environmental health and safety related regulations
- Accident and Injury investigations
- Environmental Health and Safety Inspections
- Evaluation of TAMUC facilities and grounds for safe working environments
- Management of chemical and biological waste
- Respond to emergencies such as fires and chemical spills
- Provide safety related training
- Participate in safety committees and teams
- Administer and perform tasks related to special programs such as asbestos abatement and air quality.
- Assist with emergency preparedness planning for major disasters and coordinate University plans with the local community
- Maintain a library of safety audiovisual programs and relevant safety regulations and nationally recognized codes and standards
- Maintain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) as an information resource on hazardous materials
- Measure environmental parameters such as vapors or noise

2.2. **Faculty – Staff – Students**
Employees and Students of TAMUC are responsible and accountable for:
- Safety performance
- Environmental protection
- To report any unsafe conditions or concerns regarding Environmental Health and Safety
- Working Safely
- Follow all department and university procedures

2.3. **Administration**
TAMUC administration is responsible for:
- Assuring the best conditions are provided for students, faculty, staff, visitors and surrounding community to work safely and effectively
- Reviewing and approving environmental health and safety policies and procedures
- Communicate to all faculty, staff, and students that health and safety is priority
- Monitor implementation of regulations, policies, procedures

2.4. **Supervisors, Department Heads and Directors**
TAMUC Supervisors, Department Heads and Directors are responsible for:
- Promoting safety and loss prevention
- Informing all employees of safety related procedures and policies
- Eliminating or controlling occupational hazards
- Periodically conducting safety and loss control evaluations
- Ensuring that employees are adequately trained in safety policies and protocols
- Ensuring that employees are provided with appropriate personal protective clothing and equipment for safe job performance

2.5. **TAMUC Contractors**
TAMUC contractors are responsible for:
- Following all TAMUC environmental health and safety procedures
- Notification of accidents or injuries to the project manager
- Informing employees of safety related policies and procedures of TAMUC
- Conducting work with safety as a priority

3. **Safe Work Practices**
Safe Work Practices establish the foundation of our safety environment at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Safe Work Practices are the general Do’s and Don’ts of work. Safe Work Practices must be incorporated into the university community belief and expectations to provide the safest environment for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors.
Safe Work Practices are expected to be followed by all university students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors. Along with Safe Work Practices, the university has established specific programs detailing more complex guidelines for different programs at the University. These include:

- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Confined Space
- Contractor Safety
- Hazardous Communication
- Hazardous Waste Management
- Hot Work
- Laboratory Safety
- Lock Out – Tag Out
- Fall Protection
- Vehicle Safety
- Excavations

4. Safety Inspections

4.1. The Department of Risk Management and Safety
The Department of Risk Management and Safety at Texas A&M University-Commerce will periodically conduct safety inspections of all university facilities, offices, classrooms, laboratories, and work sites. Inspections will include electrical, fire and life, signage, labeling, physical conditions, chemical hygiene practices, hazardous and non hazardous waste, personal protective equipment, waste disposal, and general safety and compliance practices.

4.2. University Departments
All university Departments are responsible for completing the necessary corrective actions assigned to that particular department at the time specified by the Safety Manager.

If an inspection is being performed in response to an accident, injury, or complaint, it is mandatory that a department representative be present during the inspection.

If a random inspection is being performed, a member of the department being inspected is welcomed to accompany the Department of Risk Management and Safety during the inspection.

Employees of the university are responsible for completing necessary response activities resulting from inspections that are assigned to them by the Department Head, Director, or supervisor of their department.

Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for information related to safety inspections.
5. General Safety

5.1. Accident Reporting
An accident is an unplanned occurrence that may result in damage to people, property, equipment, or the environment. When accidents are reported promptly, injured employees, students, and visitors receive timely medical care and unsafe conditions receive prompt corrective action. The Department of Risk Management and Safety investigates accidents to identify accident trends, determine the effectiveness of current safety programs, and prevent future accidents.

IMPORTANT: Report all accidents to your supervisor, the Department of Risk Management and Safety, or the University Police Department, as appropriate. If an injury or exposure occurs on-the-job, complete the DWCI Form, Employer's First Report of Injury or Illness.

EXAMPLE: Report hazards, such as missing manhole covers or chemical spills, to Environmental Health & Safety. Report accidents such as vehicle collisions to the University Police Department (UPD).

Report unsafe conditions or potentially hazardous situations to the Department of Risk Management and Safety as quickly as possible. The Office will then contact other departments and outside agencies as appropriate.

5.2. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Within the standards required by the ADA, TAMUC makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities so that they may more fully participate in programs and the benefits of employment. Safety is an important consideration in providing accommodations. Elevators, automated door openers, lifts, ramps, etc., facilitate access. Sometimes this equipment becomes damaged or does not function properly. Please promptly notify the Physical Plant for equipment repair.

Handicap parking, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, and building entrance areas may become blocked or congested with illegally parked bicycles, vehicles, or campus construction. Please contact the University Police Department to report vehicle related safety concerns. For construction related issues, please contact Physical Plant.

Many classrooms are equipped with wheelchair accessible desks or tables, sometimes with chairs that can be removed or replaced as needed. Wheelchairs or removable chairs that block aisles and exits create an unacceptable hazard. Please report instances to the person presenting the class or to the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

Braille signage assists persons with visual disabilities locate elevators, stairs, exits, classrooms, laboratories, restrooms, etc. The absence of signage could pose a safety
issue if a person is not able to locate a specific area, e.g., an emergency exit, or inadvertently enters an inappropriate area. Physical Plant prepares and installs Braille signage.

5.3. Crosswalk Safety

**Students**
As students, your life will be busy and sometimes pretty hectic. Sometimes, this busy lifestyle will lead to forgetting some necessary safety precautions. This could become a tragic occurrence. However, there are something’s you can do to avoid a potentially deadly situation.

- Stop Before You Cross and Look Both Ways
- Get Off Of The Phone
- Put Away The Books
- Cross Completely and Do Not Stop
- Do Not Horseplay In The Crosswalk
- Do Not Trust Traffic To Stop

**Drivers**
As drivers, it is very important to be alert when approaching pedestrian crosswalks. Slow down when approaching crosswalks and yield to the pedestrian. As a motor vehicle driver, there is something you can do to avoid a potential deadly situation.

- Slow down at crosswalks
- Yield to pedestrians
- Pay attention when turning corners
- Observe traffic signs and lights

5.4. Asbestos
Asbestos is a mineral fiber that causes cancer and various respiratory illnesses. Older buildings constructed prior to 1980 may contain asbestos. Asbestos is commonly found in older appliances, insulation, shingles, siding, putties, and caulking. Generally, it is not a problem unless the material that contains it crumbles or flakes.

The Texas Asbestos Health Protection Rules do not require building owners to conduct inspections and identify all asbestos locations. Inspections are required, however, prior to renovation or dismantling activities.

*NOTE:* Call the Physical Plant before performing work on campus that will disturb building fixtures, walls, or ceiling (e.g., installing computer cables in the ceiling). The Physical Plant will help ensure that the work does not affect asbestos containing materials.

*IMPORTANT:* Do not handle asbestos or suspected asbestos or try to remove it yourself.
Direct any questions about identifying or removing asbestos to the Physical Plant. Address any safety-related questions to the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

5.5. Appropriate Apparel
Dress in a manner that does not impair safety. Loose clothing, long hair, dangle jewelry, and sandals may be dangerous around moving equipment.

Always wear clothing that is appropriate for your job. Refer to the chapters on Personal Protective Equipment and Office Safety for more information.

5.6. Graphic Arts Media
The art supplies and chemicals associated with graphic media are often hazardous. Depending on the type of art supplies used, artists can develop the same types of occupational diseases as industrial workers. Studies show that people who work with hazardous graphic media chemicals improperly can develop a variety of ailments.

The risk of chemical hazards is directly linked to the following factors:
- Duration and frequency of exposure
- Chemical toxicity
- Chemical amount

Workers are exposed to graphic media hazards through skin contact, inhalation, and ingestion.

Follow these safety guidelines for working with graphic media materials:
- Wear protective clothing and follow MSDS, as appropriate.
- Use nontoxic or less toxic solvents and chemicals when possible.
- Eliminate toxic metals such as lead and cadmium. Instead, use cadmium-free silver solders and lead-free paint, glazes and enamels.
- Use water-based instead of solvent-based materials.
- Use liquid materials to replace powders.
- Use wet techniques (such as wet sanding) instead of dry techniques.
- Apply coatings by brushing or dipping instead of spraying.
- Eliminate cancer-causing chemicals.

5.6.1. Solvents
Solvents are used to dissolve oils, resins, varnishes, and inks. They are also used to remove paint and lacquer. Due to their common usage, solvents are one of the most underrated media hazards. Most organic solvents are poisonous if swallowed or inhaled in sufficient quantities. They also cause dermatitis and narcosis.

Use the least toxic solvent possible. Denatured or isopropyl alcohol, acetone, and odorless mineral spirits are less toxic than solvents such as chloroform or ethylene.
5.6.2. Aerosol Sprays
Aerosol sprays, such as fixatives, paint sprays, and adhesive sprays, are extremely dangerous if someone inhales the fine mists produced by these products. Air brushes and spray guns are equally hazardous. Use aerosol sprays in a well-ventilated area and wear a dust/vapor mask to protect you from the hazardous vapors.

5.6.3. Acids and Alkalis
The acids and alkalis used in ceramics, photo chemicals, paint removers, and similar materials can be very caustic to the skin, eyes, respiratory system, and gastrointestinal system. Likewise the acids and alkalis used to etch metals and glass can be very dangerous. Strong acids, such as hydrochloric, sulfuric, and perchloric acid, require special handling as outlined in the MSDS. Alkalis, such as caustic potash, caustic soda, quicklime, and unslaked lime, also require special treatment. Remember to add acid to water, not water to acid, when mixing chemicals.

5.6.4. Paints and Pigments
Many paints and color pigments contain hazardous chemical compounds. Lead paint, for example, is extremely dangerous, and should never be used in its powder form. Other paint components, such as chromate, cadmium, and cobalt pigments, are equally hazardous. Do not inhale powdered paint or spray paint vapors or accidentally ingest pigment by placing the brush tip in your mouth. In addition, do not eat, drink, or smoke while painting. Any of these activities could result in chronic poisoning.

5.6.5. Photography
Many of the chemicals used for photographic processing can cause severe skin and lung problems. The greatest hazards associated with photography include the preparation and use of concentrated chemical solutions. Never touch chemical powders or solutions with unprotected hands. In addition, take care not to stir up and inhale chemical dusts.

IMPORTANT: Good ventilation is essential when working with photographic chemicals.

The following are common photographic agents and their hazards:

- **Developer:** May cause skin irritation and allergic reactions.
- **Stop-bath:** May cause burns and throat irritation.
- **Fixer:** Highly irritating to lungs.
- **Intensifier:** Very corrosive and may cause lung cancer.
- **Reducer:** Contact with heat, concentrated acids, or ultraviolet radiation produces poisonous gas.
- **Toners:** Highly toxic.
- **Hardeners and stabilizers:** Often contain formaldehyde which is poisonous, a skin irritant, and a known carcinogen.
5.6.6. Plastics, Acrylics, Epoxy Resins
Plastic hazards result from making plastic and working with finished plastic. The greatest hazards associated with making plastic come from the monomers, solvents, fillers, catalysts, and hardeners that are commonly toxic. The hazards involved with finished plastics result mainly from the methods used to work the plastic. For example, overheating or burning plastic produces toxic gases. Polishing, sanding, and sawing plastic produces harmful dusts.

Certain types of plastics, such as acrylics and epoxy resins are also hazardous. The components in acrylic, for example, include irritants, explosives, and flammables. The main hazard associated with acrylic compounds, however, is inhalation. Always maintain good ventilation when working with acrylic.

The epoxy resins used in laminating, casting, glues, and lacquer coatings, are also skin irritants, sensitizers, and suspected cancer-causing agents. Avoid skin contact and inhalation when working with epoxy resins.

5.6.7. Pottery and Ceramics
Pottery clay contains silicates that can be hazardous if inhaled. Many low-fire clays and slip-casting clays also contain talc, which may be contaminated with asbestos. Long-term inhalation of asbestos can cause cancer and respiratory diseases. When mixing clay dust or breaking up dry grog, use exhaust ventilation and/or wear a toxic dust respirator. Work with wet clay when possible.

Pottery glazes also contain free silica, including flint, feldspar, and talc. Wear a toxic dust respirator when mixing or spraying glazes.

Toxic fumes and gases are often produced during the firing process. Ensure that all kilns are ventilated. In addition, use infrared goggles or a shield to look in the kiln peep hole. Proper eye protection will help prevent cataracts.

5.6.8. Woodworking
The hazards associated with woodworking include sawdust inhalation, exposure to toxic solvents and adhesives, and excessive noise from woodworking tools. Long term inhalation of sawdust can cause chronic respiratory diseases. Depending on the type of wood, short term sawdust inhalation may also produce allergic reactions. Toxic preservatives, such as arsenic compounds and creosote, may cause cancer and reproductive problems. Epoxy resins and solvent-based adhesives, also pose potential hazards. Use dust collectors around woodworking machines, ensure proper ventilation, and wear personal protective equipment, as appropriate.

5.7. Hearing Conservation
Excessive noise levels may permanently damage a person's hearing. Whenever possible, employees should avoid noise exposure or reduce noise to an acceptable
level. At no time should any exposure to continuous, intermittent, or impact noise in excess of 140dB be allowed. Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for concerns related to Hearing Protection.

5.8. Hearing Loss
Hearing loss can be permanent — wear protective equipment when noise levels are high.

Before using personal protective equipment, such as ear plugs or muffs, to reduce noise exposure, try to reduce noise levels by changing work procedures. Maintenance practices such as the following can reduce noise levels:
- Replacing worn or loose machine parts
- Performing high-noise operations during hours when people are less likely to be affected
- Maintaining and lubricating equipment to eliminate rattles and squeaks

Engineering controls, such as the following, can also reduce noise levels:
- Replacing noisy materials
- Using large, low speed fans
- Considering the noise level of new equipment or processes before purchasing or implementing
- Placing heavy machines on rubber mountings
- Using sound-absorbing acoustical tiles or baffles
- Placing noisy machinery or operations in a separate area or room
- Enclosing noisy conveyors
- Provide and maintain signage at entrances to high noise areas

Areas that may require hearing protection include machine shops, the boiler rooms, landscape maintenance, etc. Supervisors should insure that a variety of hearing protection is provided to allow employees sufficient choice. Observe all warning signs and wear hearing protection whenever necessary. Do not interfere with, remove, or modify noise abatement equipment. Keep all equipment properly maintained, and report any malfunctions immediately.

The Department of Risk Management and Safety will conduct noise monitoring of equipment and work areas to aid in determining potential noise exposure.

Refer to the chapter on Personal Protective Equipment for more information on hearing protection. Direct all questions regarding hearing conservation to the Department of Risk Management and Safety

5.9. Heat Stress and Heat Strain
People may suffer from heat related illnesses at any time of the year but particularly during hot, humid conditions. Because the climate at TAMUC is conducive to these
conditions, people must take preventive measures to reduce their risk. To prevent heat related illness, supervisors must assist workers in acclimating to conditions which could cause heat related illness. Employees should limit strenuous physical activity during the hottest portion of the day, wear a brimmed hat when in the sun, take frequent breaks, and drink plenty of fluids.

Examples of heat related illnesses are heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat cramps, dehydration and heat rash.

5.10. Heat Exhaustion
Heat exhaustion is usually caused by strenuous physical activity and hot, humid conditions. Because heat exhaustion is the body's response to insufficient water and salt, it should be treated as quickly as possible.

Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include the following:
- Exhaustion and restlessness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Cold, clammy, moist skin
- Pale face
- Cramps in abdomen and lower limbs
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Falling body temperature
- Fainting

Take the following steps to administer first aid for heat exhaustion:
- Have the victim lie down in a cool or shaded place.
- If the victim is conscious, have him/her slowly sip cool water.
- If the victim is unconscious or is conscious but does not improve, seek medical aid as soon as possible.
- If the victim is sweating profusely, have him or her sip cool water that contains one teaspoon of table salt per pint of water

5.11. Heat Stroke
Heat stroke is usually caused by exposure to extreme heat and humidity and/or a feverish illness. Heat stroke occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature by sweating. Heat stroke is extremely dangerous and may be fatal if not treated immediately.

The signs and symptoms of heat stroke include the following:
- Hot, dry skin
- Headache
- Dizziness
- High temperature
- Strong pulse
- Noisy breathing
- Unconsciousness

Immediately take the following steps to administer first aid for heat stroke:
- If possible, move the victim to a cool place.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Remove the victim’s clothing.
- If the victim is conscious, place him in a half-sitting position and support the head and shoulders.
- If the victim is unconscious, place him on the side with the head facing sideways.
- Fan the victim and sponge the body with cool water.

Environmental factors
- Air temperature
- Humidity
- Radiant heat source
- Air circulation
- Work related factors
- Work load

Clothing
- Weight (heavy vs. breathable)
- Color (dark vs. light)
- Personal protective equipment and clothing

Personal factors
- Age
- Weight/fitness
- Use of drugs, alcohol, caffeine, medication
- Prior related illness

Prevention
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Acclimatization: adjust to the heat
- Choose proper clothing
- Take heat into account when scheduling tasks
- Implement work/rest cycles
- Eat properly
- Sleep and rest
5.12. Housekeeping
Good housekeeping skills are essential for personal safety. TAMUC employees are responsible for reducing potential hazards and keeping their work areas safe and clutter-free. Good housekeeping guidelines include keeping aisles and stairways free from clutter, cleaning spills, minimizing combustibles in workplace and storage areas, and keeping all exits free from obstructions.

Maintain clear and unobstructed access to emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers, pull stations, eye wash units, showers, etc.

For more specific information on housekeeping, refer to the section in this manual that corresponds to your workplace (i.e., Laboratory Safety, Office Safety, Shop Safety, etc.)

5.13. Indoor Air Quality
Indoor air quality refers to the condition of air within an enclosed workplace. The indoor environment of any building is based on several factors including location, climate, building design, construction techniques, building occupant load, and contaminants.

Four key elements are involved in the development of poor indoor air quality:
- Outside contaminant sources
- Poor ventilation systems
- Pollutant pathways
- Building usage and occupant load

Outside sources for indoor air contaminants include pollen, dust, mold, industrial pollutants, vehicle exhaust, and unsanitary debris near outdoor air intake vents. Other outdoor agents, such as underground storage tanks or landfills, may also affect indoor air quality.

Indoor contaminants are classified according to these categories:
- Combustion products (e.g., smoke and exhaust fumes)
- Volatile organic compounds (e.g., solvents and cleaning agents)
- Respiratory particulates (e.g., dust, dirt, and pollen)
- Respiratory byproducts (e.g., carbon dioxide)
- Microbial organisms (e.g., mold, mildew, fungi, and bacteria)
- Radionuclides (e.g., radon)
- Odors (e.g., perfume, smoke, mold, and mildew)

Additional examples of indoor contaminants include dust, dirt or microbial growth in ventilation systems, emissions from office equipment, and fumes or odors from any source.

TAMUC follows recognized guidelines for new building ventilation systems and air quality control; however, employees are also responsible for the quality of their indoor air. Because indoor air often contains a variety of contaminants at levels far below most
exposure standards, it is difficult to link specific health problems with known pollutants. Employees must minimize all contaminants to reduce the low-level pollutant mixtures that commonly cause health problems.

The following practices will help ensure optimum indoor air quality:
- Fix leaks and drips. (Moisture promotes microbial [i.e., mold and mildew] growth.)
- Report unusual odors to the Department of Risk Management and Safety. Do not use air fresheners to cover the smell.
- Ensure that indoor ventilation filters are changed regularly and regular maintenance occurs.
- Keep laboratory doors closed.
- Minimize chemical and aerosol usage. Ventilate your area when chemical or aerosol usage is required. (These compounds include paint, cleaning agents, hairspray, perfume, etc.)
- Do not block air ducts to control the temperature in your office.
- Avoid smoking or cooking in enclosed areas. (Smoking is strictly prohibited within University facilities and vehicles.)

5.14. Lead Paint

According to the Centers for Disease Control, lead poisoning is a leading environmental health risk. Lead accumulation in a person’s system may lead to fatigue, sudden behavioral change, abdominal pain, anorexia, chronic headaches, joint aches, depression, anemia, impotence, and severe fetal damage in unborn infants.

Assume buildings that were constructed or painted prior to 1978 may contain lead paint. Because common sources of lead exposure include ingestion (lead paint) or inhalation (lead-containing dust), it is important to identify all areas that contain lead paint. If lead paint flakes or chips, it must be encapsulated or removed by qualified persons.

The following locations should also be inspected for lead paint:
- Areas where young children or pregnant women are present
- Areas with flaking or deteriorating paint
- Areas that were built or painted prior to 1978

NOTE: Lead testing is particularly important before beginning renovation on older buildings.

Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety if you have any questions about lead paint hazards.

5.15. Lifting

All employees must use proper lifting techniques to avoid injury when lifting heavy objects. In general, employees should seek assistance when lifting objects that weigh 50
pounds or more. Use your good judgment to determine if you need assistance, a dolly, back support belt, or other tool to safely lift an object.

The back supports the weight of the entire upper body. When you lift objects or move heavy loads, your back has to support even more weight. If you exceed your body's natural limits, your back cannot support both your body and the extra load. The excess, unsupported pressure is transferred to the lower back, where injury is imminent. By using the muscles in your arms and legs and exercising proper lifting techniques, you can move loads safely and protect your back from possible injury.

Follow these guidelines to help avoid back injuries:

- Avoid moving objects manually. Plan jobs and arrange work areas so that heavy items may be moved mechanically.
- Keep in good physical condition. If you are not used to lifting and vigorous exercise, do not attempt difficult lifting tasks.
- Think before you act. Use proper lifting techniques and lifting aides such as back support belts, dollies, etc. Get help if you need it.

When lifting heavy objects, follow these steps and refer to the illustration below:

- Test the object's weight before handling it. If it seems too heavy or bulky, get assistance.
- Face the object, place one foot behind the object and one foot along its side.
- Bend at the knees.
- Get a firm, balanced grip on the object. Use the palms of your hands, and use gloves if necessary.
- Keep the object as close to your body as possible. (Pull the load in close before lifting.)
- Lift by straightening your legs and slightly unbending your back.
- If the object is too heavy or bulky, get help.
- Do not twist the back or bend sideways.
- Do not perform awkward lifts.
- Do not lift objects at arm's length.
- When moving objects, proceed with caution through doors and around corners.

5.16. Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)
PCBs are found in many oil-based items, electrical fluids, capacitors, light ballasts, and transformers. PCBs are known carcinogens that are toxic to humans through skin exposure, inhalation, and ingestion. PCBs cause skin disorders and they irritate the eyes, ears, nose, and throat.

Before shipping, handling, or disposing of oil-based products, TAMUC employees must determine if their products contain PCBs. Common trade names for PCBs include the following:

- Aroclor and Aroclor B
Owners are specifically responsible for properly handling any equipment containing PCBs. For example, PCB transformers must meet the following requirements:

- PCB transformers and owners must be registered with the local Fire Department.
- The PCB transformer and access to the PCB transformer (fences, doors, etc.) must be plainly marked with a PCB label.
- Combustible materials may not be stored within five meters of a PCB transformer or enclosure.
- If a transformer is involved in a fire-related incident, the National Response Center must be notified.
- Radial PCB transformers must be equipped with high current fault protection. Units with secondary voltage of 480 volts or greater must be equipped with low current fault protection.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) considers PCBs to be special waste. Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for disposal procedures.

**IMPORTANT: Report all PCB leaks (e.g., transformer leaks) to the Department of Risk Management and Safety immediately.**

### 5.17. Preventing Slips and Falls

It is easy to prevent falling accidents. Employees should always follow good housekeeping practices and pay attention to their environment to avoid slips and falls.

In addition, employees should follow these guidelines:

- Turn on office lights. Ensure that passageways are adequately lighted.
- Avoid horseplay.
- Avoid unnecessary haste. Do not run in work areas.
• Use ladders or step-stools to reach high places. Never climb onto chairs, tables, drawers, or shelves.
• Keep hallways and stairwells neat and free of obstacles.
• Remove items that may pose a potential slipping hazard.
• Clean up spills as soon as they occur.
• Never obstruct your view when walking.
• Do not wear clothing that is too long or shoes that have slippery heels or soles.
• Hold the handrail when using stairs.
• Be careful when walking on wet surfaces or when entering a building while wearing wet shoes.
• Report uneven surfaces, such as loose or missing floor tiles, to the Physical Plant for repair.
• Wear the proper Person Protective Equipment on your feet when working in, around or on slippery/slick surfaces.

5.18. Smoking
The United States Surgeon General and the Environmental Protection Agency have determined the following:
• Breathing secondary smoke causes various diseases and allergic reactions in healthy non-smokers.
• Separating smokers and non-smokers within the same air space does not eliminate exposure to environmental tobacco smoke for non-smokers.
• Tobacco smoke and secondary tobacco smoke are Class A carcinogens.

To promote a safe, healthy, and pleasant environment for employees, students, and visitors, TAMUC has instituted a smoke-free policy (University Rule 34.05.99.R1).

SMOKING POLICY: All University facilities, buildings, and vehicles, regardless of location or ownership, must be entirely smoke-free. This includes all foyers, entryways, classrooms, restrooms, offices, athletic facilities (indoor and outdoor), eating areas, and university-owned/leased housing.

5.19. Visitor Safety
Employees must take special care to ensure visitor safety. This is particularly important when bringing visitors to potentially hazardous areas such as construction sites or laboratories.

IMPORTANT: Office visitors should be escorted; worksite visitors should be escorted, supervised, and monitored. Do not bring children to the workplace.

If a visitor is injured, be sure to report the occurrence to the Department of Risk Management and Safety after attending to the injury.
6. Office Safety

6.1. General Office Safety
A large percentage of workplace accidents and injuries occur in office buildings. Like the shop or laboratory, the office requires a few preventive measures to ensure a safe and healthy environment. Common causes of office accidents include the following:

- Slipping, tripping, and falling hazards
- Burning, cutting, and pinching hazards
- Improper lifting and handling techniques
- Unobservant and inattentive employees
- Improper office layout and arrangement
- Dangerous electrical wiring
- Exposure to toxic substances
- Horseplay

The following sections address several office safety practices. Other preventive measures not mentioned here may also be necessary.

REMEMBER: The office building is not a sterile working environment; common workplace hazards can be dangerous when you ignore them.

Refer to other chapters in this manual, such as Electrical Safety, General Safety, Fire Safety, and others for more information on workplace safety. Always use common sense when safety is a concern.

6.2. Good Housekeeping Practices
Many office accidents are caused by poor housekeeping practices. By keeping the office floor both neat and clean, you can eliminate most slipping, tripping, and falling hazards. Other good housekeeping practices include the following:

- Ensure that office lighting is adequate and available. Replace burned out light bulbs, and have additional lighting installed, as necessary.
- Ensure that electrical cords and phone cords do not cross walkways or otherwise pose a tripping hazard. If you cannot move a cord, have a new outlet installed or secure the cord to the floor with cord covering strips. Do not tape cords down as a long-term solution or run them underneath carpet.
- Report or repair tripping hazards such as defective tiles, boards, or carpet immediately.
- Clean spills and pick up fallen debris immediately. Even a loose pencil or paper clip could cause a serious falling injury.
- Keep office equipment, facilities, and machines in good condition.
- Store items in an approved storage space. Take care to not stack boxes too high or too tight. Ensure that boxes are clearly labeled with their contents.
6.3. **Hazardous Objects and Materials**

Hazardous objects such as firearms are not permitted in the workplace. In addition, hazardous chemicals and materials should not be stored in the general office. Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Carcinogens
- Combustibles
- Flammables
- Gas cylinders
- Irritants
- Oxidizers
- Reactives

6.4. **Preventing Cuts and Punctures**

Cuts and punctures happen when people use everyday office supplies without exercising care. Follow these guidelines to help reduce the chance for cuts and punctures:

- When sealing envelopes, use a liquid dispenser, not your tongue.
- Be careful when using kitchen knives, scissors, staplers, letter openers, paper cutters and box openers. Any of these items could cause a painful injury.
- Avoid picking up broken glass with your bare hands. Wear gloves and use a broom and a dust pan.
- Place used blades or broken glass in a rigid container, such as a box, before disposing in a wastebasket.

6.5. **Preventing Machine Accidents**

Only use machines that you know how to operate. Never attempt to operate an unfamiliar machine without reading the machine instructions or receiving directions from a qualified employee. In addition, follow these guidelines to ensure machine safety:

- Secure machines that tend to move during operation.
- Do not place machines near the edge of a table or desk.
- Ensure that machines with moving parts are guarded to prevent accidents. Do not remove these guards.
- Unplug defective machines and have them repaired immediately.
- Do not use any machine that smokes, sparks, shocks, or appears defective in any way.
- Close hand-operated paper cutters after each use and activate the guard.
- Take care when working with copy machines. If you have to open the machine for maintenance, repair, or troubleshooting, remember that some parts may be hot. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for troubleshooting.
- Unplug paper shredders before conducting maintenance, repair, or troubleshooting.

Some items can be very dangerous when worn around machinery with moving parts. Avoid wearing the following items around machines within unguarded moving parts:
- Loose belts
- Jewelry
- Long, loose hair
- Long, loose sleeves or pants
- Scarves
- Ties

6.6. Preventing Slips and Falls
As outlined in the General Safety chapter of this manual, the easiest way to avoid slips and falls is to pay attention to your surroundings and to avoid running or rushing. To ensure safety for others in the office, however, follow these guidelines:
- Arrange office furnishings in a manner that provides unobstructed areas for movement.
- Keep stairs, steps, flooring, and carpeting well maintained.
- Ensure that glass doors have some type of marking to keep people from walking through them.
- Clearly mark any difference in floor level that could cause an accident.
- Secure throw rugs and mats to prevent slipping hazards.
- Do not place wastebaskets or other objects in walkways.
- Always pay attention and be aware of your surroundings

6.7. Preventing Stress
To reduce stress and prevent fatigue, it is important to take mini-breaks (not many breaks) throughout the day. If possible, change tasks at least once every two hours. Stretch your arms, neck, and legs often if you do the same type of work for long periods of time. Tip for healthy eyes use the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes look away from your monitor, and stare at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. For a quick pick-me-up, breathe deeply several times by inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth. In addition, always try to eat your lunch somewhere other than your desk.

Other examples of stress-relieving exercises that can be done at your desk include the following:
- Head and Neck Stretch: Slowly turn your head to the left, and hold it for three seconds. Slowly turn your head to the right, and hold it for three seconds. Drop your chin gently towards your chest, and then tilt it back as far as you can. Repeat these steps five to ten times.
- Shoulder Roll: Roll your shoulders forward and then backward using a circular motion. Repeat in each direction five to ten times.
- Upper Back Stretch: Grasp one arm below the elbow and pull gently towards the other shoulder. Hold this position for five seconds and then repeat with the other arm.
- Wrist Wave: With your arms extended in front of you, raise and lower your hands several times.
• Finger Stretch: Make fists with your hands and hold tight for one second, then spread your fingers wide for five seconds

6.8. Equipment and Furniture Safety
As mentioned earlier, common office machines, such as the following, require special safety consideration: copiers, microwaves, adding machines, typewriters, and computers. If there is ever any question of how to properly use a piece of equipment or furniture, always refer to the manufacturer's guidelines for further instruction. If you notice a piece of equipment is damaged or working improperly, unplug the machine, do not use the damaged equipment, and refer to manufacturer's guidelines. All equipment should only be repaired by a certified repairperson.
• Other office equipment that requires safety consideration includes furniture such as file cabinets and shelves, desks, and chairs.

6.9. File Cabinets and Shelves
Because file cabinets and shelves tend to support heavy loads, treat them with special care.

Follow these safety guidelines for file cabinets:
• Secure file cabinets that are not weighted at the bottom. Either attach them to the floor or to the wall.
• Ensure that file cabinet drawers cannot easily be pulled clear of the cabinet.
• Do not block ventilation grates with file cabinets.
• Open only one drawer at a time to keep the cabinet from toppling.
• Close drawers when they are not in use.
• Do not place heavy objects on top of cabinets. Be aware that anything on top of a cabinet may fall off if a drawer is opened suddenly.
• Close drawers slowly using the handle to avoid pinched fingers.
• Keep the bottom drawer full. This will help stabilize the entire cabinet.

In addition, follow these safety guidelines for office shelves:
• Secure shelves by attaching them to the floor or wall.
• Place heavy objects on the bottom shelves. This will keep the entire structure more stable.
• Ensure that there is at least 18 inches between the top shelf items and the ceiling. This space will allow ceiling sprinklers (if present) to function properly if a fire occurs.
• Do not block ventilation grates with shelves.
• Never climb on shelves (even lower shelves). Use an approved ladder.

6.10. Desks
Follow these safety guidelines for office desks:
• Keep desks in good condition (i.e., free from sharp edges, nails, etc.).
• Ensure that desks do not block exits or passageways.
• Ensure that glass-top desks do not have sharp edges.
• Ensure that desks with spring-loaded tables function properly. The table should not spring forth with enough force to cause an injury.
• Do not climb on desks. Use an approved ladder.
• Keep desk drawers closed when not in use.
• Repair or report any desk damage that could be hazardous.

6.11. Chairs
Safety guidelines for office chairs include the following:
• Do not lean back in office chairs, particularly swivel chairs with rollers.
• Do not climb on any office chair. Use an approved ladder.
• Office desk chairs should have adjustable back supports and seat height. Make sure that your chair's back support position and seat height are comfortable.
• Take care when sitting in a chair with rollers. Make sure it does not roll out from under you when you sit down.
• Repair or report any chair damage that could be hazardous.
• Do not roll chairs over electrical cords.

6.12. Ladders and Stepstools
Always use an approved ladder or stool to reach any item above your extended arm height. Never use a makeshift device, such as a chair, desktop, file cabinet, bookshelf, or box, as a substitute for a ladder.

Follow these guidelines when using ladders:
• Do not load a ladder above its intended weight capacity.
• Place ladders on slip-free surfaces even if they have slip-resistant feet. Secure the ladder if a slip-free surface is not available.
• Avoid placing ladders in walkways. Secure a ladder if its location could cause an accident.
• Keep areas around ladders clean and free of debris.
• Do not use a ladder in front of a door unless the door is locked and barricaded.
• Refer to the Shop Safety chapter in this manual for more information on ladder safety.

6.13. Work Station Arrangement
With the extensive use of computers and other automated desk devices in the workplace, employees must take special care to ensure proper work station arrangement. For the purpose of this manual, a work station consists of the equipment and furniture associated with a typical desk job (i.e., desk, chair, and computer components).

In recent years, computer screens or Video Display Terminals (VDTs) have received much attention concerning non-ionizing radiation levels. Tests prove, however, that
VDTs do not emit harmful levels of radiation. Improper work station arrangement combined with repetitive motion, however, may contribute to visual and musculoskeletal fatigue.

Cumulative trauma disorders, such as carpal tunnel syndrome may result from the stress of repetitive motion. Therefore, it is very important to arrange your work station properly and to take breaks frequently.

Ergonomic surveys/reviews of the work station arrangement can be requested from Environmental Health and Safety.

Your seating position at work is important to your comfort and safety. To reduce the painful effects of repetitive motion, follow these guidelines when working with computers or typewriters:

- Always sit up straight. Make sure your chair is adjusted to provide adequate support to your back.
- Place your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest. Lower legs should be approximately vertical, and thighs should be approximately horizontal. The majority of your weight should be on the buttocks.
- Ensure that there is at least 1 inch of clearance between the top of your thighs and the bottom of the desk or table.
- Keep your wrists in a natural position. They should not rest on the edge of the desk.
- Keep the front edge of your chair approximately 4 inches behind your knees.

6.15. Equipment Arrangement
By properly arranging your equipment, you can also help reduce the harmful effects of repetitive motion. Follow these guidelines for arranging office equipment:

- Lighting: Lighting around computer work stations should illuminate the work area without obscuring the VDT or causing glare. Position computer screens, draperies, blinds, and pictures to reduce glare during work hours (e.g., place the VDT screen at a right angle to the window).
- VDT Screen: VDT images should be clear and well-defined. Adjust the screen's brightness, contrast and display size to meet your needs. If a screen flickers or jumps, have it repaired or replaced. Place the VDT 20-28 inches away from your face. The center of the VDT should be approximately 15 to 25 degrees below your line of vision.
- Keyboards: Position computer keyboards so that the angle between the forearm and upper arm is between 80 and 120 degrees. Place the keyboard in an area that is accessible and comfortable.
- Wrist Support: Use wrist supports made of padded material. The support should allow you to type without bending your wrists.
Document Holders: Keep documents at approximately the same height and distance from your face as the VDT screen.

Telephones: Neck tension is a common problem caused by holding the telephone between the head and neck. Use a headset or speakerphone if you use the telephone for extended periods of time.

Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety if you have any questions regarding your work station arrangement. If you develop pain that you believe arises from work you do at the office, please contact your supervisor.

7. Shop Safety

7.1. General Shop Safety

The hazards associated with shop work require special safety considerations. Whether you work in a metal shop, wood shop, automotive shop, glass shop, or electrical shop, the potential hazards for personal injury are numerous. This chapter highlights essential safety information for working in a TAMU shop. Refer to other chapters in this manual, including General Safety, Electrical Safety, and Fire/Life Safety, for more information on handling many shop situations. The following table highlights common shop hazards:

<table>
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<th>Hazard Sources</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>- Compressed air/gases</td>
<td>- Oxygen, acetylene, air</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Flying debris</td>
<td>- Grinders, saws, welders</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Noise</td>
<td>- Any power tool</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pinching, cutting, amputation</td>
<td>- Vises, power tools, hand tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Slipping, tripping</td>
<td>- Wood/metal chips, electrical cords, oil, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- UV radiation</td>
<td>- Welding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electrical:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Overload</td>
<td>- Too many cords per outlet</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fire</td>
<td>- Frayed, damaged cords</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shock</td>
<td>- Ungrounded tools, equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Flammable chemicals</td>
<td>- Gasoline, degreasers, paint thinners, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sparks</td>
<td>- Welders, grinders</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Static sparks</td>
<td>- Ungrounded tools or solvent containers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Uncontrolled fire</td>
<td>- Lack of appropriate fire extinguishers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemical:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Toxic liquids</td>
<td>- Cleaning solvents, degreasers, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Toxic fumes, gases, dusts</td>
<td>- Welding, motor exhaust, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is not possible to detail all the risks involved with shop work. However, it is possible to foresee many hazards by carefully planning each job. To prevent accidents, utilize your knowledge, training, and common sense. Evaluate potential sources of injury, and attempt to eliminate any hazards.

7.2. Personal Protection
There are several measures you must take to protect yourself from shop hazards. For example, do not wear the following when working around machinery:

- Loose fitting clothing
- Neckties
- Jewelry
- Long loose hair

*If you must wear a long sleeved shirt, be sure the sleeves are rolled down and buttoned. Snug fitting clothes and closed toe shoes are essential safety equipment in the shop.*

Always wear safety glasses with side shields when working with shop equipment. Anytime there is question regarding required wardrobe for personal protection, refer to respective departmental requirements. Additional protection using goggles or face shields may be necessary for the following types of work:

- Grinding, Chipping, Sandblasting
- Welding
- Glass working

Wear approved hard hats whenever there is a chance of objects falling from above. In addition, wear suitable gloves for the job at hand when working with the following:

- Scrap metal or wood
- Sharp-edged stock
- Unfinished lumber

For glove selection and requirement assistance contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety. Refer to the Personal Protective Equipment chapter in this manual for more information.

7.3. Job Safety
Before beginning work in a shop, be sure you are authorized to perform the work to be done and inspect your tools and equipment. If a procedure is potentially hazardous to others in the area, warn fellow workers accordingly. Use warning signs or barriers, as necessary.

Notify your supervisor if you notice any unsafe conditions such as the following:

- Defective tools or equipment
- Improperly guarded machines
- Oil, gas, or other leaks
- Any other condition that you feel may jeopardize you or your co-worker’s safety

Inform other employees if you see an unsafe work practice; however, be careful not to distract a person who is working with power tools.

7.4. Safety Guidelines
Follow these guidelines for general shop safety:
- Know the hazards associated with your work. Be sure you are fully educated on the proper use and operation of any tool before beginning a job.
- Always wear appropriate safety gear and protective clothing.
- Wear nitrile gloves when cleaning with degreasers or ferric chloride.
- Ensure that there is adequate ventilation to prevent exposure from vapors of glues, lacquers, paints and from dust and fumes.
- Maintain good housekeeping standards.
- Keep the work area free from slipping/tripping hazards (oil, cords, debris, etc.).
- Clean all spills immediately.
- Remove sawdust, wood chips, and metal chips regularly.
- It is recommended that electrical cords pull down from an overhead pulley rather than lying on the floor.
- All containers must be labeled with its contents.
- Leave tool and equipment guards in place.
- Leave in place and utilize all shielding on tools and equipment.
- Know where fire extinguishers are located and how to use them.
- Make sure all tools and equipment are properly grounded and that cords are in good condition.
- Double-insulated tools or those with three-wire cords are essential for safety.
- Use extension cords that are large enough for the load and distance.
- Secure all compressed gas cylinders. Never use compressed gas to clean clothing or skin.
- Always use flashback arrestors on cutting/welding torches.
- Take precautions against heat stroke and heat exhaustion.
- Wear infrared safety goggles when appropriate, e.g. when operating brazing or cutting torch.

The Department of Risk Management and Safety periodically inspects all TAMUC shops. Refer any questions regarding shop safety to the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

7.5. Hand Tools
Hand tools are non-powered tools. They include axes, wrenches, hammers, chisels, screw drivers, and other hand-operated mechanisms. Even though hand tool injuries tend to be less severe than power tool injuries, hand tool injuries are more common.
Because people take everyday hand tools for granted, they forget to follow simple precautions for safety. The most common hand tool accidents are caused by the following:

- Failure to use the right tool
- Failure to use a tool correctly
- Failure to keep edged tools sharp
- Failure to replace or repair a defective tool
- Failure to store tools safely

**IMPORTANT: Use the right tool to complete a job safely, quickly, and efficiently.**

Follow these guidelines for general hand tool safety:

- Wear safety glasses whenever you hammer or cut, especially when working with surfaces that chip or splinter.
- Do not use a screwdriver as a chisel.
- Do not use a chisel as a screwdriver.
- Do not use a knife as a screwdriver.
- Never carry a screwdriver or chisel in your pocket. If you fall, the tool could cause a serious injury. Instead, use a tool belt holder or tool box.
- Replace loose, splintered, or cracked handles. Loose hammer, axe, or maul heads can fly off defective handles.
- Use the proper wrench to tighten or loosen nuts.
- When using a chisel, always chip or cut away from yourself. Use a soft-headed hammer or mallet to strike a wooden chisel handle. A metal hammer or mallet may cause the handle to split.
- Do not use a wrench if the jaws are sprung.
- Do not use impact tools, such as chisels, wedges, or drift pins, if their heads are mushroom shaped. The heads may shatter upon impact.
- Direct saw blades, knives, and other tools away from aisle areas and other employees.
- Keep knives and scissors sharp. Dull tools are more dangerous than sharp tools.
- Iron or steel hand tools may cause sparks and be hazardous around flammable substances. Use spark-resistant tools made from brass, plastic, aluminum, or wood when working around flammable hazards.

Improper tool storage is responsible for many shop accidents. Follow these guidelines to ensure proper tool storage:

- Have a specific place for each tool.
- Do not place unguarded cutting tools in a drawer. Many hand injuries are caused by rummaging through drawers that contain a jumbled assortment of sharp-edged tools.
- Store knives or chisels in their scabbards.
- Hang saws with the blades away from someone's reach.
- Provide sturdy hooks to hang most tools on.
• Rack heavy tools, such as axes and sledges, with the heavy end down.

7.6. **Insulation**

Asbestos, fiberglass, man-made mineral fibers, PVC, and urethane foam can be extreme respiratory hazards. To protect yourself from these and other respiratory hazards, minimize your exposure to particulate matter from insulation, fumes, dusts, and aerosols. Refer to the General Safety chapter for more information on asbestos.

7.7. **Ladders**

Refer to Construction Safety, Fall Protection/Ladders

7.8. **Power Tools**

Power tools can be extremely dangerous if they are used improperly. Each year, thousands of people are injured or killed by power tool accidents. Common accidents associated with power tools include abrasions, cuts, lacerations, amputations, burns, electrocution, and broken bones. These accidents are often caused by

• Touching the cutting, drilling, or grinding components
• Getting caught in moving parts
• Suffering electrical shock due to improper grounding, equipment defects, or operator misuse
• Being struck by particles that normally eject during operation
• Touching hot tools or work pieces
• Falling in the work area
• Being struck by falling tools

When working around power tools, you must wear personal protective equipment and avoid wearing loose clothing or jewelry that could catch in moving machinery. In addition to general shop guidelines, follow these guidelines for working with power tools:

• Use the correct tool for the job. Do not use a tool or attachment for something it was not designed to do.
• Select the correct bit, blade, cutter, or grinder wheel for the material at hand. This precaution will reduce the chance for an accident and improve the quality of your work.
• Keep all guards in place. Cover exposed belts, pulleys, gears, and shafts that could cause injury.
• Always operate tools at the correct speed for the job at hand. Working too slowly can cause an accident just as easily as working too fast.
• Watch your work when operating power tools. Stop working if something distracts you.
• Do not rely on strength to perform an operation. The correct tool, blade, and method should not require excessive strength. If undue force is necessary, you may be using the wrong tool or have a dull blade.
• Before clearing jams or blockages on power tools, disconnect from power source. Do not use your hand to clear jams or blockages, use an appropriate tool.
• Never reach over equipment while it is running.
• Never disable or tamper with safety releases or other automatic switches.
• When the chance for operator injury is great, use a push stick to move material through a machine.
• Disconnect power tools before performing maintenance or changing components.
• Keep a firm grip on portable power tools. These tools tend to "get away" from operators and can be difficult to control.
• Remove chuck keys or adjusting tools prior to operation.
• Keep bystanders away from moving machinery.
• Do not operate power tools when you are sick, fatigued, or taking strong medication.
• When possible, secure work pieces with a clamp or vise to free the hands and minimize the chance of injury. Use a jig for pieces that are unstable or do not lie flat.
• Inspect wiring and mechanisms before operating.
• All machinery repairs must be completed by a certified repair person.

7.9. Guards
Moving machine parts must be safeguarded to protect operators from serious injury. Belts, gears, shafts, pulleys, fly wheels, chains, and other moving parts must be guarded if there is a chance they could injure an employee.

Hazardous areas that must be guarded include the following:
• Point of operation
• Area where the machine either cuts, bends, molds, or forms, the material
• Pinch/nip point: Area where moving machine parts can trap, pinch, or crush body parts (e.g., roller feeds, intermeshing gears, etc.).
• Sharp edges
• Stored potential energy

There are three types of barrier guards that protect people from moving machinery. They consist of the following:
• Fixed guards
• Interlocked guards
• Adjustable guards

A fixed guard is a permanent machine part that completely encases potential hazards. Fixed guards provide maximum operator protection. Interlock guards are connected to a machine’s power source. If the guard is opened or removed, the machine automatically disengages. Interlocking guards are often preferable because they provide adequate protection to the operator, but they also allow easy machine maintenance. This is ideal for problems such as jams.
Self-adjusting guards change their position to allow materials to pass through the moving components of a power tool. These guards accommodate various types of materials, but they provide less protection to the operator.

**IMPORTANT:** Guards must be in place. If a guard is removed to perform maintenance or repairs, follow lockout/tagout procedures. Replace the guard after repairs are completed. Do not disable or move machine guards for any reason. If you notice that a guard is missing or damaged, contact your supervisor and have the guard replaced or repaired before beginning work.

**NOTE:** Hand-held power tools typically have less guarding in place than stationary power tools. Use extreme caution when working with hand-held power tools and always wear a face shield.

### 7.10. Drill Press Safety

Follow these safety guidelines when using drill presses:

- Securely fasten work materials to prevent spinning. Never use your hands to secure work materials.
- Use a center punch to score the material before drilling.
- Run the drill at the correct speed. Forcing or feeding too fast can break drill bits.
- Never attempt to loosen the chuck unless the power is off.
- Lower the spindle before removing a chuck.
- Never use a regular auger bit in a drill press.
- Frequently back the drill out of deep cuts to clean and cool the bit.

### 7.11. Grinder Safety

Follow these safety guidelines when working with grinders:

- Ensure that no combustible or flammable materials are nearby that could be ignited by sparks from the grinder wheel.
- Ensure that a guard covers at least 270 degrees of the grinding wheel on bench-mounted machines.
- Place the grinder tool rest 1/8 inch from the wheel and slightly above the center line.
- Allow the grinder to reach full speed before stepping into the grinding position. Faulty wheels usually break at the start of an operation.
- Unless otherwise designed, grind on the face of the wheel.
- Use a vise-grip plier or clamp to hold small pieces.
- Slowly move work pieces across the face of wheel in a uniform manner. This will keep the wheel sound.
- Do not grind non-ferrous materials.
- Periodically check grinder wheels for soundness. Suspend the wheel on a string and tap it. If the wheel rings, it is probably sound.
- Replace wheels that are badly worn or cracked.
- Never use a wheel that has been dropped or received a heavy blow, even if there is no apparent damage.
- Before using a new wheel, let it run a few seconds at full speed to make sure it is balanced.

7.12. Jointer and Shaper Safety
Follow these safety guidelines when using jointers and shapers:
- Ensure that jointers are equipped with cylindrical cutting heads.
- Use a push stick, as necessary.
- Do not use single cutter knives in shaper heads.
- Ensure that knives are balanced and correctly mounted.
- Adjust cut depth before turning the machine on.
- Do not use the jointer for strips that are less than 1 inch wide.

7.13. Lathe Safety
Follow these safety guidelines when working with wood lathes:
- Examine wood for knots and other defects before placing it in the lathe. Use caution when working with wood that has knots.
- Ensure that glued materials are set before placing them in the lathe.
- Before turning the lathe on, slowly turn rough materials a few times to ensure they will clear the tool rest.
- Keep hands off the chuck rim when the lathe is moving.
- Hold all wood cutting tools firmly with two hands.
- Start all jobs at the lowest speed. Ensure that materials are in a cylindrical form before advancing to higher speeds. Never turn large diameter materials at a high speed.
- Firmly screw faceplate work to the faceplate. Take care to avoid cutting too deep and hitting the screws.
- Do not cut too deep or scrape too long.
- Remove the "T" rest when sanding or polishing.

Follow these safety guidelines when working with metal lathes:
- Make sure that all gear and belt guards are in place.
- Never leave a chuck wrench in a chuck.
- Keep your hands off chuck rims when a lathe is in operation.
- Do not attempt to screw the chuck onto the lathe spindle with the power on, as it may get cross-threaded and cause injury. Stop the machine, place a board under the chuck, and then screw on by hand.
- Steady rests should be properly adjusted to conform to the material being worked on.
- When filing work in a lathe, always face the head stock and chuck.
- See that tailstock, tool holder, and work are properly clamped before turning on power.
- Never attempt to adjust a tool while the lathe is running.
Never apply a wrench to revolving work or parts.
Always use a brush to remove chips; never your hands.
When possible, use pipe sleeves to cover work protruding from the end of the lathe.
Before removing your work from the lathe, remove the tool bit.

Nail guns and air guns are powered by compressed air. The main danger associated with pneumatic fastening tools is injury from one of the tool’s attachments or fasteners.

Follow these safety guidelines for working with pneumatic tools:

- Ensure that pneumatic tools which shoot nails, rivets, or staples are equipped with a device that keeps fasteners from ejecting unless the muzzle is pressed against a firm surface.
- Never point a tool at items you do not want to fasten.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to begin work. Most pneumatic tools have a hair-trigger that requires little pressure to activate the gun.
- Treat air hoses with the same care as an electrical cord.
- Do not drive fasteners into hard, brittle surfaces or areas where the fastener may pass through the material and protrude on the other side.

7.15. Planer Safety
Follow these safety guidelines for working with planers:

- Examine wood for knots and other defects before placing it in the planer.
- Do not plane against the grain of the wood.
- Let go of the materials as the feeder rolls catch. Do not follow the work with your hands.
- Do not run boards that are more than 2 inches shorter that the distance between the in-feed and out-feed rolls.
- Use a push stick if a board stops with its end on the in-feed table.
- If a board sticks under the cutter head, turn off the machine to keep from burning the cutter knives.

7.16. Forging Machines
Once punchers, shears, and benders are activated, it is impossible to stop them until the end of a cycle. Use extreme care when working with these tools.

**Inspection and maintenance:**
All forge shop equipment must be maintained in a condition which will ensure continued safe operation.
Hammers and presses:
All hammers must be positioned or installed in such a manner that they remain on or are anchored to foundations sufficient to support them according to applicable engineering standards.

Hammers:
Die keys and shims must be made from a grade of material that will not unduly crack or splinter.

Presses:
All manually operated valves and switches must be clearly identified and readily accessible.

Power-driven hammers:
Every steam or air hammer must have a safety cylinder head to act as a cushion if the rod should break or pull out of the ram.

Gravity Hammers:
Air-lift hammers must have a safety cylinder head.

Forging and trimming presses:
When dies are being changed or maintenance is being performed on the press, ensure the following:
- The power to the pressure is locked out.
- The flywheel is at rest.
- The ram is blocked with a material of the appropriate strength.

Upsetters:
All upsetters must be installed so that they remain on their supporting foundations.

7.17. Sander Safety
Follow these safety guidelines for working with circular and belt sanders:
- Ensure that sanding belts are not too tight or too loose. Never operate a sanding disk if the paper is too loose.
- Use the correct grade of abrasive material.
- Ensure that the distance between a circular sander and the edge of the table is not greater than 1/4 inch.
- Do not push materials against sanders with excessive force.
- Sand only on the down stroke side of a disk sander.
- Do not hold small pieces by hand. Use a jig for pieces that are difficult to hold securely.
7.18. Saw Safety
There are numerous types of power saws, such as band saws, circular saws, radial arm saws, saber saws, and table saws. Regardless of the type of saw you use, never reach over the sawline to position or guide materials.

Follow these safety guidelines for working with band saws:
- Set the blade evenly with the proper amount of tension.
- Keep your hands on either side of the cut line. Never reach across the cut line for any reason.
- Do not stand to the right of the band saw.
- Be sure the radius of your cutting area is not too small for the saw blade.
- If you hear a rhythmic click, check the saw blade for cracks.

Follow these safety guidelines for working with circular saws:
- Do not raise the saw any higher than absolutely necessary.
- Fasten a clearance block to the fence when cutting off short pieces.
- Never attempt to clear away scraps with your fingers.
- Do not cut thin tubular materials with a circular saw.
- Ensure that the fence is not in the cut line of the saw.
- Take care when working with warped or twisted lumber.

Follow these guidelines when working with a radial arm saw:
- Push the saw blade against the stop before turning on the power.
- Never place one piece of wood on top of another when using this saw. The top piece may kick over.
- This saw pulls itself into wooden materials. It may be necessary to hold the saw back to prevent it from choking.
- Never leave the saw hanging over the end of the arm.

Follow these guidelines when working with table saws:
- Circular table saws must have a hood over the portion of the saw above the table. The hood must automatically adjust to the thickness of, and remain in contact with, the material being cut.
- Circular table saws must have a spreader aligned with the blade. The spreader must be spaced no more than 1/2 inch behind the largest blade mounted in the saw. Providing a spreader while grooving, dadoing, or rabbeting is not required.
- Circular table saws used for ripping must have non-kickback fingers or dogs.
- Feed rolls and blades of self-feed circular saws must be protected by a hood or guard to prevent the operator's hand from coming in contact with the in-running rolls.

7.19. Spray Paint Booths
When working with paint or painting equipment, it is important to have adequate ventilation and to avoid flames or other sources of ignition. Because most paints,
varnishes, and thinners are flammable, spray paint jobs should be conducted in a well-ventilated enclosure such as a spray paint booth. Spray paint booths minimize toxic vapors and flammable fumes while providing adequate ventilation. Always wear personal protective equipment when working with paint. In addition, clean the booths, filters and ventilation ducts frequently to avoid heavy accumulations of paint, dust, and pigment.

7.20. Welding and Cutting
Welding and cutting are two forms of hot work that require special safety considerations. Unless they are done in a designated shop area, welding and cutting are strictly prohibited without proper authorization.

Before conducting welding or cutting operations, inspect your equipment for the following:
- Welding leads must be completely insulated and in good condition.
- Check all other cords for frays and damages
- Cutting tools must be leak-free and equipped with proper fittings, gauges, regulators, and flashback devices.
- Oxygen and acetylene tanks must be secured in a safe place.

In addition, follow these guidelines for most welding and cutting procedures:
- Conduct welding and cutting operations in a designated area free from flammable materials. When welding or cutting is necessary in an undesignated or hazardous area, have someone nearby act as a fire attendant.
- Periodically check welding and cutting areas for combustible atmospheres.
- Take care to prevent sparks from starting a fire.
- Remove unused gas cylinders from the welding and cutting area.
- Keep hoses out of doorways and away from other people. A flattened hose can cause a flashback.
- Mark hot metal with a sign or other warning when welding or cutting operations are complete.

Refer to Hot Work Permitting Plan through the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

7.21. Welding Guidelines
Proper selection of personal protective equipment is very important when welding; make sure your welding helmet visor is dark enough to provide adequate protection. Wear fireproof apron and gloves. In addition, take care to protect other people from the hazards of welding. For example, use a welding curtain to protect other employees from UV radiation.
There are three types of welders:
- **AC welders**: These welders are used for standard welding procedures; AC welders are powered by an electrical cord.
- **DC welders**: These are portable welders that are commonly used in manholes. DC welders have their own power supply.
- **Wire-feed welders**: These welders use inert gas for light metal work (e.g., stainless steel, aluminum, etc.).

Common hazards associated with welding include the following:
- Electrocution
- Burns
- UV radiation exposure
- Oxygen depletion
- Sparking

In addition to the general guidelines for welding and cutting, follow these specific guidelines for safe welding operations:
- Make sure the welding area has a non-reflective, noncombustible surface.
- Ensure that adequate ventilation and exhaust are available.
- Be aware of electrocution hazards, particularly in damp conditions. Be sure that electrical cords are properly grounded. It is advisable for cords to pull down from an overhead pulley.

### 7.22. Cutting Guidelines

Gas welding and cutting tools are often powered by oxygen or acetylene gas cylinders. These tanks require special safety precautions to prevent explosions and serious injuries. Follow the safety guidelines below, and refer to the Laboratory Safety chapter in this manual for more information on gas cylinders safety:
- Ensure that acetylene/oxygen systems are equipped with flame or flashback arrestors attached to the regulators.
- Store acetylene bottles upright and secured.
- Keep cylinder fittings and hoses free from oil and grease.
- Repair or replace defective hoses by splicing. Do not use tape.
- Do not tamper or attempt to repair cylinders, valves, or regulators.
- Do not interchange regulators or pressure gauges with other gas cylinders.
- Carefully purge hoses and torches before connecting a cylinder.
- Set acetylene pressure at or below 15 psig. Always use the minimum acceptable flow-rate.
- Never use a match to light a torch. Use an approved lighter.
8. Electrical Safety

8.1. General Electrical Safety
The danger of injury through electrical shock is possible whenever electrical power is present. When a person's body completes a circuit and thus connects a power source with the ground, an electrical burn or injury is imminent. Most fatal injuries result from high-voltage exposure; however, people can sustain severe injuries from low voltage power if it has a high current flow. Electrical safety is important in every work environment. The following sections cover circuit breaker loads, electrical grounding, electrical safety guidelines, and electrical emergency response.

8.2. Definitions
The following definitions help clarify general electrical safety:
- **Amps**: The standard unit for measuring electrical current.
- **Watt**: A unit of electrical power, equal to the power developed in a circuit by a current of amp flowing through a potential difference of one volt.
- **Voltage**: Electromotive force expressed in volts.
- **Circuit Breaker**: A device that automatically interrupts the flow of an electrical current.
- **Breaker Box**: An insulated box on which interconnected circuits are mounted.
- **Electrical Panel**: An insulated panel on which electrical wires are mounted.
- **Current Flow**: The rate of flow of an electrical charge, generally expressed in amps.
- **Electrical Load**: The amount of power delivered by a generator or carried by a circuit. A device to which the power is delivered.
- **Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI)**: A GFCI detects grounding problems and shuts electricity off to prevent a possible accident.
- **High Voltage**: The term high voltage applies to electrical equipment that operates at more than 600 Volts (for terminal to terminal operation) or more than 300 Volts (for terminal to ground operation). Low voltage, high current AC or DC power supplies are also considered to be high voltage.
- **Hazardous Energy Sources**: This term applies to stored or residual energy such as that in capacitors, springs, elevated machine members, rotating flywheels, hydraulic systems, and air, gas, steam, or water pressure.
- **Lockout**: The placement of a lock on an energy-isolating device. This act prevents workers from operating a piece of equipment until the lock is removed.
- **Tagout**: The placement of a tag on an energy-isolating device. A tagout device is a prominent warning device of a lockout.
- **Energy-Isolating Device**: A mechanical device that prevents the transmission or release of energy. Examples include the following:
  - Manually operated circuit breakers
  - Disconnect switches
  - Line or block valves
- **Pushbuttons, selector switches, and other control circuit devices do not isolate energy. Energy-isolating devices should be lockable by means of a hasp or other**
type of attachment. It should not be necessary to dismantle or reassemble a device to lock it.

- Authorized Employee: A person who locks out or tags out equipment for service or maintenance. Authorized employees have been formally trained in proper lockout/tagout procedures.

8.3. Circuit Breaker Loads
Most office and laboratory locations have 20 amp circuit breakers that serve two or more outlets. These breakers can handle most office equipment; however, the widespread use of personal computers and associated hardware can create an electrical overload. To determine your current electrical load, follow these steps:

- Check office/laboratory equipment for a manufacturer's rating label that indicates total watts or amps. Take special care to check appliances that use electricity to generate heat.
- Convert the watts rating to amps: 
  \[
  \text{Amps} = \frac{\text{Watts}}{\text{Voltage}} \quad (\text{typically 120 Volts})
  \]
- Total the amps for each circuit.
- If the total equals more than 15 amps per 20 amp circuit, you may be overloading the circuit. Move enough equipment to a different circuit to reduce the circuit load; otherwise, have the Physical Plant inspect the circuit wiring.

8.4. Electrical Grounding
Proper electrical grounding can help prevent electrical injury. Most electrical equipment is grounded with either a three-prong plug or a two-prong plug and insulation. Because a grounding system may be defective without your knowledge, use a GFCI to ensure electrical safety. GFCIs are required in moist or potentially damp environments, near water sources, etc. Contact Physical Plant for assistance if a GFCI may be needed.

8.5. Electrical Panels
Electrical panels or breaker boxes require special safety considerations, including the following:

- Know where your panel box is located.
- Do not tape circuit switches to keep a breaker from tripping.
- Ensure that breaker circuits are accurately labeled within panel boxes.
- Ensure that panel box doors are securely attached.
- Do not block panel boxes. There should be at least 30 inches of clear space in front of a panel box.
- Make sure there are no missing pop-outs on the electrical panel.

Reports tripped breakers and refer any electrical questions to the Physical Plant.

8.6. Electrical Safety Guidelines
Follow these guidelines for general electrical safety:
• Be familiar with the electrical hazards associated with your workplace.
• Unplug electrical equipment before repairing or servicing it.
• If a prong breaks off inside an outlet, do not attempt to remove it yourself. Call the Physical Plant for assistance.
• Ensure that outlets are firmly mounted. Report loose outlets to the Physical Plant.
• Report all electrical problems, including tripped breakers, broken switches, and flickering lights, to the Physical Plant.
• All appliances used in TAMU buildings must be UL or FM (Factory Mutual) labeled.
• Do not use an appliance that sparks, smokes, or becomes excessively hot, unless the appliance is specifically designed to exhibit these characteristics.
• Portable electrical heaters are discouraged for reasons of energy conservation. However, if approved by a supervisor, they must be placed to avoid causing a trip hazard and must be kept away from combustible material. Never leave a heater unattended. Unplug the heater at the end of the day or when not in use.
• Keep electrical equipment away from water, unless the appliance is specifically designed for use around water, such as a wet-dry shop vacuum.
• Use GFCIs whenever possible.
• Be aware of overhead power lines when working with tall equipment (e.g., grain augers, cranes, sailboats, etc.).
• Follow lockout/tagout procedures, as appropriate.

Follow these guidelines for electrical plug and cord safety:
• Do not remove the prongs of an electrical plug. If plug prongs are missing, loose, or bent, replace the entire plug or the cord and plug.
• Do not use an adapter or extension cord to defeat a standard grounding device. (i.e., only place three-prong plugs in three-prong outlets; do not alter them to fit in a two-prong outlet.)
• Use extension cords only when necessary and only on a temporary basis. Do not use extension cords in place of permanent wiring. Request new outlets if your work requires equipment in an area without an outlet.
• Use extension cords that are the correct size or rating for the equipment in use. The diameter of the extension cord should be the same or greater than the cord of the equipment in use.
• Do not run electrical cords above ceiling tiles or through walls.
• Keep electrical cords away from areas where they may be pinched and areas where they may pose a tripping or fire hazard (e.g., doorways, walkways, under carpet, etc.)
• Avoid plugging more than one appliance in each outlet. If multiple appliances are necessary, use an approved power strip with surge protector and circuit breaker. Do not overload the circuit breaker.
• Discard damaged cords, cords that become hot, or cords with exposed wiring.
• Never unplug an appliance by pulling on the cord; pull on the plug.
• Always unplug and secure an extension cord when not in use.
8.7. Electrical Emergency Response
The following instructions provide guidelines for handling three types of electrical emergencies:

Electric Shock:
When someone suffers serious electrical shock, he or she may be knocked unconscious. If the victim is still in contact with the electrical current, immediately turn off the electrical power source. If you cannot disconnect the power source, try to separate the victim from the power source with a nonconductive object, such as a wood-handled broom.

*IMPORTANT: Do not touch a victim that is still in contact with a power source; you could electrocute yourself.*

Have someone call for emergency medical assistance immediately. Administer first-aid, as appropriate.

Electrical Fire:
If an electrical fire occurs, try to disconnect the electrical power source, if possible. If the fire is small, you are not in immediate danger, and you have been trained in fighting fires, use any type of fire extinguisher except water to extinguish the fire.

*IMPORTANT: Do not use water on an electrical fire. Instead use a fire extinguisher approved for electrical fire use.*

Power Lines:
Stay away from live power lines and downed power lines. Be particularly careful if a live power line is touching a body of water. The water could conduct electricity. If a power line falls on your car while you are inside, remain in the vehicle until help arrives.

8.8. Lockout/Tagout Procedures

Preplanning for Lockout (Preparation for Shutdown)
An initial survey shall be made to determine which switches, valves, or other energy isolating devices apply to the equipment being locked out. More than one energy source (electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, thermal, or others) may be involved. Any questionable identification of sources shall be cleared by the employees with their supervisors. Before lockout commences, job authorization should be obtained from the supervisor.

Only supervisors or authorized individuals shall prescribe the appropriate duties and responsibilities relating to the actual details of affecting the lockout/tag-out. Energy isolating devices shall be operated only by authorized individuals or under the direct
supervision of authorized individuals. Where high voltages greater than 480V are involved the supervisor electrician shall be responsible for turning off the main power controls.

All energy isolating devices shall be adequately labeled or marked to indicate their function. The identification shall include the following:
• Equipment supplied
• Energy type and magnitude

Where system complexity requires, a written sequence in checklist form should be prepared for equipment access, lockout/tag-out, clearance, release, and start-up.

Lockout/Tag-out Procedures preparation
• Notify all affected employees/ building occupants that a lockout is required and the reason therefore.
• Contact necessary departments and personnel
• Only authorized personnel are to secure lockout/tag-out device. Authorized personnel include managers, shop supervisors, area maintenance supervisors.

Machine or Equipment Shutdown
• If the equipment is operating, shut it down by the normal stopping procedure (depress stop button, open toggle switch, etc.). Disconnect switches should never be pulled while under load, because of the possibility of arcing or even explosion. Personnel knowledgeable of equipment operation should be involved with shut down or re-start procedures.

Machine or Equipment Isolation
• Operate the switch, valve, or other energy-isolating device so that the energy source(s) (electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, etc.) is (are) disconnected or isolated from the equipment. Stored energy, such as that in capacitors, springs, elevated machine members, rotating flywheels, hydraulic systems, and air, gas, steam, or water pressure, etc., must also be dissipated, disconnected, or restrained by methods such as grounding, repositioning, blocking, bleeding-down, etc. Pulling a fuse is not a substitute for locking out. A pulled fuse is no guarantee the circuit is dead, and even if it were dead, there's nothing to stop someone from inadvertently replacing the fuse.

CAUTION: Intermittently operating equipment such as pumps, blowers, fans, and compressors may seem harmless when dormant. Don't assume that because equipment isn't functioning, it will stay that way.

Application of Lockout/Tag-out
• Lockout and tag the energy isolating device with an assigned individual lock, even though someone may have locked the control before you. You will not be protected
unless you put your own padlock on it. For some equipment it may be necessary to construct attachments to which locks can be applied. An example is a common hasp to cover an operating button. Tags shall be attached to the energy isolating device(s) and to the normal operating control and shall be attached in such a manner as to preclude operation.

Verification of Isolation

- After ensuring that no personnel can be exposed and as a check on having disconnected the energy sources, operate the push button or other normal operating controls to make certain the equipment will not operate.
- If there is a possibility of re-accumulation of stored energy to a hazardous level, verification of isolation shall be continued until the maintenance or repair is completed, or until the possibility of such accumulation no longer exists.

CAUTION: Return operating controls to neutral position after the test. A check of system activation (e.g. use of voltage indicator for electrical circuits) should be used to assure isolation.

The equipment is now locked out.

Release from Lockout/Tag-out

- Before lockout or tag-out devices are removed and energy is restored to the machine or equipment, inspect the work area to ensure that nonessential items have been removed and to ensure that machine or equipment components are operationally intact.
- Check work area to ensure that all employees are in the clear. Notify affected employees that lockout/tag-out devices have been removed.
- The employee who applied the device shall remove each lockout/tag-out device from each energy-isolating device. The energy isolating devices may be opened or closed, to restore energy to equipment.
- Contact authorized personnel when energy is restored and return lockout/tag-out device. (Proper Documentation Required)

Lockout/Tag-out Interruption (Testing of Energized Equipment)

- In situations where the energy isolating device(s) is lockout/tagged and there is a need for testing or positioning of the equipment/process, the following sequence shall apply:
  - Make sure to Clear equipment and/or process of tools and materials.
  - Make sure all personnel are clear of danger.
  - Remove the control of locks/tags according to established procedure.
  - Proceed with test, etc.
  - De-energize all systems and re-lockout /re-tag-out the controls to continue the work.
Procedure Involving More Than One Person

- In the preceding steps, if more than one individual is required to lock out equipment, each shall place a personal lock and tag on the group lockout device when he/she begins work, and shall remove those devices when he/she stops working on the machine or equipment. The supervisor, with the knowledge of the crew, may lock out equipment for the whole crew. In such cases, it shall be the responsibility of the supervisor to carry out all steps of the lockout procedure and inform the crew when it is safe to work on the equipment. Additionally, the supervisor shall not remove a crew lock until it has been verified that all individuals are clear.

- Scheduled Leave
  If the owner of the device (owner being the person who installed the lockout/tag-out device) is going on scheduled leave and someone else may need to work on the locked out unit, they must remove their lock and have it replaced by a new owner who is on regular duty.

Conditions for lockout/tag-out removal by Authorized Personnel

- Only the owner of the device shall remove lockout/tag-out devices.
- Exceptions to the conditions of removal:
  — Owner incapacitated by illness or injury then his/her supervisor shall remove the lockout/tag-out devise.
  — Owner is no longer is employed by Texas A&M University-Commerce, then his/her supervisor shall remove the lockout/tag-out devise.
  — If Authorized Personnel determines that circumstances warrant removal of a lockout/tag-out device, every effort must be made to contact the owner of the device. After the above conditions have been met the Authorized Personnel may remove device.

8.9. High Voltage Procedures

In addition to the guidelines associated with general electrical safety and lockout/tagout procedures, there are more stringent safety requirements for high voltage procedures.

The following list provides high-voltage safety tips. For more information, please refer to Title 29 Section 1910.269 of the Code of Federal Regulations or NFPA 70 (National Electric Code).

- Ensure that only authorized employees work around high voltage equipment.
- Label entrances with a High Voltage Sign.
- Ensure that terminal voltage ratings can withstand surges caused by electrical faults or switching transients.
- Be careful around output circuits even when the input power is off. Parallel power sources and energy storage devices can still be dangerous.
- Be careful when working with power supplies that serve more than one area.
• Before working in a high voltage area, inspect the power supply and check all protective devices.
• Do not work alone near high voltage.
• Label equipment to identify power sources. Label input power sources to identify connected power supply loads.
• Attach emergency shutdown instructions and phone numbers to equipment that is remotely controlled or unattended while energized.

Before entering a power supply or associated equipment enclosure to work on hazardous energy sources, complete the following:
• De-energize the equipment.
• Open and lockout the main input power circuit breaker.
• Check for auxiliary power circuits that could still be energized.
• Inspect automatic shorting devices for proper operation.
• Short the power supply with grounding hooks.

8.10. Minimum Clear Working Space
The following table from the National Electric Code provides minimum depth of clear working space in front of electrical equipment:

• Where conditions (i), (ii), and (iii) are as follows:
  i. Exposed live parts on one side and no live or grounded parts on the other side of the working space, or exposed live parts on both sides effectively guarded by suitable wood or other insulating materials. Insulated wire or insulated bus bars operating at not over 300 volts shall not be considered live parts.
  ii. Exposed live parts on one side and grounded parts on the other side. Concrete, brick, or tile walls will be considered as grounded surfaces.
  iii. Exposed live parts on both sides of the workspace [not guarded as provided in condition (i)] with the operator between.

9. Construction

9.1. General Construction Guidelines
Construction work can be particularly hazardous. Personal protective equipment, fire safety, electrical safety, confined space entry, emergency preparedness, biological safety, chemical safety, hazardous waste disposal, vehicle safety and other precautions are essential for safe construction work. Refer to other chapters in this manual for more information. Follow these guidelines when visiting or working at construction sites:
• Do not walk, stand, or work under suspended loads. If you raise a load, be sure to crib, block, or otherwise secure the load as soon as possible.
• Avoid placing unusual strain on equipment or materials.

Be prepared for unexpected hazards. BE ALERT!
9.2. Barriers and Guards

University employees must use barriers and guards as necessary to protect employees, students, contractors, and visitors from physical hazards. If you suspect a hazard is not sufficiently protected, notify the attending workers or Environmental Health & Safety immediately.

*NOTE: Barriers, guards, and warning signs are required to ensure safety against existing hazards.*

Types of Barriers and Guards

Standard types of barriers and guards include the following:

- Guardrails and handholds
- Saw horses
- Tape
- Toeboards
- Cones
- Other physical barriers and solid separators (dust barriers, hazard barriers, temporary walkways, etc.)

*NOTE: Signs that state DANGER, WARNING, or CAUTION are also important when barriers or guards are necessary. Remember to make signs legible, visible, and brief.*

Areas that Need Barriers or Guards

Any area that poses a physical threat to workers and/or pedestrians requires barriers or guards. Areas that typically require permanent or temporary protection include the following:

- Stairways
- Hatches
- Chutes
- Open Manholes
- Elevated platforms
- Areas with moving machinery
- Excavation sites
- Construction sites
- Temporary wall or floor openings

Using Barriers and Guards

The following list provides guidelines for using barriers and guards:

- When necessary, reroute pedestrian and vehicular traffic to completely avoid a construction site.
- Guard any permanent ground opening into which a person could fall with a guardrail, load-bearing cover, or other physical barrier.
• Ensure that temporary floor openings, such as pits and open manholes, are guarded by secure, removable guardrails. If guardrails are not available, have someone guard the opening.
• Ensure that all stairways, ladderways, hatchways, or chute floor openings have handrails or hinged covers.
• Ensure that enclosed stairways with four or more steps have at least one railing, and that open stairways with four or more steps have two railings.
• Ensure that all platforms and walkways that are elevated or located next to moving machinery are equipped with handrails, guardrails, and toeboards.
• Barricade any wall openings through which a person or tools could fall. Use gates, doors, guardrails, or other physical barriers to block the opening.
• Mark and guard any excavation that is deeper than 12 inches.
• Mark and/or guard potholes and sidewalk damage as appropriate.
• Protect smoke detectors with some type of cover when construction work, such as dust or fume producing activities, may affect smoke detectors. Remove protectors immediately at the end of the activity or at the end of the each day.

9.3. Heavy Equipment Safety
When using heavy equipment, there are five basic guidelines that employees must always follow to ensure safety:
• Know how to properly operate the equipment you are using. Training on proper operation shall be documented.
• Do not use heavy machinery when you are drowsy, intoxicated, or taking prescription medication that may affect your performance.
• Use only equipment that is appropriate for the work to be done.
• Inspect your equipment to ensure that it is in good working condition before beginning a job. In addition, ensure that regular inspections and maintenance are conducted as appropriate.
• Do not stress or overload your equipment.

Accidents do not just happen, they are caused. Therefore, employees should also follow these guidelines:
• All buckets, blades, etc. are on the ground.
• Transmission is in neutral.
• Engine is off.
• Equipment is secure against movement.
• Never get on or off moving equipment.
• Do not attempt to lubricate or adjust a running engine.
• Turn the engine off before refueling.
• Keep all shields and safety guards in place.
• Avoid underground utilities and overhead power lines.
The following sections provide basic guidelines for working with forklifts, front-end loaders, and backhoes. Refer to the product documentation that accompanied your equipment for more information and specific instructions.

9.4. Forklifts

Only authorized employees may operate forklifts. The following list provides general safety guidelines:

- Do not allow riders.
- Do not raise people on a forklift.
- Always wear your safety belt.
- Never leave keys in an unattended forklift.
- Do not speed.
- Drive up and back down ramps.
- Do not walk, stand, or work under the elevated portion of a forklift (even if it is not loaded).
- Ensure that the forklift has an overhead barrier to protect the operator from falling objects.

In addition, follow these guidelines for safe forklift operation:

- Always work within the capacity limits of your forklift. Consult with the manufacturer before modifying the operation or capacity limits of a forklift.
- Do not operate a forklift in areas with hazardous concentrations of acetylene, butadiene, hydrogen, ethylene, or diethyl ether, or other explosive environment.
- Never lift a load while moving. Wait until you are completely stopped before raising the mast.
- Be sure the top load sits squarely on the stack. An uneven load could topple.
- Travel with loads slightly tilted back to provide stability.
- Travel with loads at the proper height. A stable clearance height is usually 4 to 6 inches at the tips and 2 inches at the heels of fork blades.
- Lift stacked loads in the same manner as loads on the floor.
- When preparing to leave the forklift unattended, lower the mast, neutralize the controls, shut the power off, and set the brakes. The forklift is "unattended" when the operator is more than 25 feet away or the forklift is out of view.
- When ascending or descending a grade in excess of 10 percent, drive the forklift with the load upgrade.
- If you cannot see over a load, drive in reverse. Do not try to look around a load and drive forward.

Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for Forklift training and certification information.
9.5. Backhoes
Only authorized employees may operate backhoes and front-end loaders. The following list offers general safety guidelines for both types of machinery:

- Always operate at a safe speed.
- Travel with the bucket low to the ground.
- Always lower the bucket before servicing the equipment or leaving the loader unattended.
- Use a rigid-type coupler when towing loads.
- Always check with the utility company before digging.
- Be extremely careful when operating near banks and slopes.
- When cutting a bank, be careful not to cause a cave-in. Do not drive on an overhang.

9.6. Hoists
Only authorized employees may use hoists to move heavy objects and equipment. When using hoists, remember to follow the five safety guidelines for working with heavy equipment. (Refer to the section on heavy equipment for more information.) In addition, follow the guidelines in the following sections.

Hoisting Guidelines
The following are general guidelines for working with hoists:
- Never walk, stand, or work beneath a hoist.
- Isolate hoisting area with barriers, guards, and signs, as appropriate.
- Never exceed the capacity limits of your hoist.
- Wear gloves and other personal protective equipment, as appropriate, when working with hoists and cables.
- Ensure that hoists are inspected regularly before each use.
- Ensure that hoists are inspected annually by a certified inspector through the Department of Risk Management and Safety.
- Always hold tension on the cable when reeling it in or out.
- When the work is complete, always rig the hoist down and secure it.
- When the load block or hook is at floor level or its lowest point of travel, ensure that at least two turns of rope remain on the drum.
- Be prepared to stop operations immediately if signaled by the safety watch or another person.

Picking Up Loads with Hoists
- Ensure that the hoist is directly above a load before picking it up. This keeps the hoist from becoming stressed. Picking up loads at odd angles may result in injury to people or damage to the hoist.
- Do not pick up loads by running the cable through, over, or around obstructions. These obstructions can foul the cable or catch on the load and cause an accident.
Avoiding Electrical Hazards with Hoists
- Do not hoist loads when any portion of the hoisting equipment or suspended load can come within 6 feet of high-voltage electrical lines or equipment.
- If you need to hoist near high-voltage electrical lines or equipment, obtain clearance from your supervisor first.

Inspecting Hoists
- Hoists should be inspected daily. If there is any question about the working condition of a hoist, do not use it.
- Hoist inspectors should note the following:
  - The hooks on all blocks, including snatch blocks, must have properly working safety latches.
  - All hooks on hoisting equipment should be free of cracks and damage.
  - The maximum load capacity for the hoist must be noted on the equipment.
  - Cables and wiring should be intact and free of damage.

9.7. Mobile Crane Safety
In the initial survey of crane operations, look for crane stability, physical obstructions to movement or operation, and proximity of electrical power lines, as well as the following:
- Leveling Has the crane operator set the crane up level and in a position for safe rotation and operation?
- Outriggers Are the outriggers, where applicable, extended and being used in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations?
- Stability The relationship of the load weight, angle of boom, and its radius (the distance from the crane’s center of rotation to the center of load) to the center of gravity of the load. Also, the condition of crane loading where the load moment acting to overturn the crane is less than the moment of the crane available to resist overturning.
- Structural Integrity The crane’s main frame, crawler, track and outrigger supports, boom sections, and attachments are all considered part of structural components of lifting. In addition, all wire ropes, including stationary supports, help determine lifting capacity and are part of the structural elements of crane operations.
- Access to Job Site The site must be secured by barricades (caution tape or fencing) to prevent unauthorized entry to the area by: Faculty, Staff, Students, Visitors, and Construction Personal. The barricades must encompass the length the boom is extended and the area the boom will swing.

Crane operators and personnel working with cranes need to be knowledgeable of basic crane capacities, limitations, and specific job site restrictions, such as access restrictions to job site, location of overhead electric power lines, and high wind conditions. Personnel working around crane operations also need to be aware of
hoisting activities or any job restrictions imposed by crane operations, and ensure job site coordination of cranes. Crane operators should be aware of these issues and, prior to starting crane activity, take time to observe the overall crane operations with respect to load capacity, site coordination, and any job site restrictions in effect.

Accidents can be avoided by careful job planning. The person in charge must have a clear understanding of the work to be performed and consider all potential dangers at the job site. A safety plan must be developed for the job and must be explained to all personnel involved in the lift.

9.8. **Fall Protection**

In the construction industry in the U.S., falls are the leading cause of worker fatalities. Each year, on average, between 150 and 200 workers are killed and more than 100,000 are injured as a result of falls at construction sites alone.

Standards for fall protection deal with both the human and equipment-related issues in protecting workers from fall hazards. Employers and employees are required to do the following:

- Where protection is required, select fall protection systems appropriate for given situations.
- Use proper construction and installation of safety systems.
- Supervise employees properly.
- Use safe work procedures.
- Train workers in the proper selection, use, and maintenance of fall protection systems.

This Program identifies areas or activities where fall protection is needed. These include, but are not limited to, ramps, runways, and other walkways, excavations, hoist areas, holes, formwork and reinforcing steel, leading edge work, unprotected side and edges, overhand bricklaying and related work, roofing work, precast concrete erection, wall openings, residential construction, and other walking/working surfaces. The rule sets a uniform threshold height of 6 feet, thereby providing consistent protection. This means that employers must protect employees from fall hazards and falling objects whenever an affected employee is 6 feet or more above a lower level. Protection also must be provided for workers who are exposed to the hazard of falling into dangerous equipment.

*Refer to the TAMUC Fall Protection Program for detailed explanation*

9.9. **Scaffolding**

When employees must conduct construction work above the ground and away from solid platforms, scaffolds may be appropriate. The following list provides guidelines for
using small scaffolds. Larger scaffolds must be designed and erected in accordance with applicable standards.

- Ensure that scaffold anchors are sound, rigid, and capable of supporting the maximum intended load without shifting.

**NOTE:** Scaffolds and their components should be capable of supporting at least four times their maximum load.

- For freestanding, mobile scaffolds, the height should not exceed four times the minimum base dimension. If workers are riding the scaffolding, however, the base dimension should be at least one half the height.
- Do not use unstable objects such as barrels, boxes, bricks, or blocks to support scaffolds or planks.
- Keep floors free of debris where mobile scaffolds are used.
- Lock scaffolds with wheels into position.
- Install guardrails, midrails, or toeboards on the open sides and ends of platforms that are more than 4 feet above the ground or floor level. Use lifelines for scaffolds that are more than 10 feet off the ground.
- Either overlap multiple planking and platforms by 12 inches or secure them to ensure stability.

**NOTE:** Planks must extend over end supports between 6 and 18 inches.

- Secure scaffolds to permanent structures with anchor bolts or other means.
- Do not load scaffolds in excess of their maximum load limits.
- Repair damaged scaffolds immediately.
- Do not work on scaffolds in high winds or during storms.
- Remove ice or snow from scaffolds and apply sand to the wood before conducting work in winter weather.
- Do not allow tools, equipment, or other debris to accumulate on scaffolds.
- Dismantle and remove scaffolds when they are no longer needed. Do not use temporary scaffolding as a permanent installation.

### 9.10. Trenching

29 CFR 1926.651 “Excavation Requirements”

- Controls the trenching and excavation requirements for construction (excluding tunnels)
- Provides requirements for employee entrance, working environment, and egress to/from open surface trenches and excavations
Pre-excavation requirements
- The estimated location of utility installations such as sewer, telephone, fuel, electric, water lines, or other underground installations that reasonably may be encountered during excavation work shall be determined prior to opening an excavation
- Utility companies or utility locator should be contacted to precisely locate such utilities
- Excavation may proceed with CAUTION if:
  - Utility Company/Locator cannot be located or contacted
  - Utility Company/Locator cannot locate utility

Excavation opening requirements
- When excavating operations approach the location of underground utilities, the exact location shall be determined by safe and acceptable means
- While excavation is open, underground installations shall be protected, supported, or removed as necessary to safeguard employees

Excavation access/egress
- Structural ramps/runways used for access/egress
- If constructed of two or more members, shall have members connected together if constructed of two or more members, shall have members of uniform thickness
- Cleats or other connections shall be attached to bottom of runways/ramps
- Runways/ramps shall be anchored to prevent movement or slipping
- Ladders:
  - Shall be of proper design
  - Shall be secured from movement or slippage
  - Shall extend 3’ above top of excavation

Employee protection
- Employees exposed to public vehicular traffic shall be provided with and wear vest or other suitable garments marked with high visibility materials
- No employee shall be permitted underneath loads handled by digging or lifting equipment
- When mobile equipment is operated near excavation; barricades, hand and mechanical signals, or stop logs shall be used to protect employees in excavations.

Hazardous atmospheres
- Excavations of greater than 4’ depth that are located in or near hazardous materials, liquids, or gases shall be tested for the presence of hazardous atmospheres prior to employee entry
- An atmosphere shall be considered hazardous if the level of atmospheric contaminants exceeds 20% of the PEL
- Excavation of greater 4’ depth shall be regularly tested for oxygen deficiency (less than 19.5% oxygen)
• Ventilation and respiratory protection shall be provided where hazardous atmospheres are encountered

**Emergency rescue equipment**
Where hazardous atmospheres exist or may be expected to occur, the following rescue equipment shall be readily available for use:
- Safety Harnesses and lines
- Basket stretcher
- Breathing apparatus equipment

Employees entering bell-bottomed holes shall wear harness and life line protection.

Employees shall not work in excavations where there is accumulated water unless adequate safety precautions (shoring, etc.) have been taken.

**Stability of adjacent structures**
- Excavations near structures or buildings shall be protected by shoring or other means to assure stability of the affected structure.
- Diversion ditches, dikes, or other suitable means shall be provided to prevent surface water intrusion where natural drainage has been interrupted.
- Excavations near foundation footings, sidewalks, pavement, or other appurtenant structures shall be protected by underpinning or other suitable means to maintain stability.

**Stability of excavated materials and excavation walls**
- Excavated materials shall be kept a minimum of 2’ from the edge of excavations or by the use of retaining devices.
- Excavated materials may require further clearance from excavations in accordance with soil types (see table).
Excavation wall slopes or other wall protection shall be used in accordance with soil type, moisture levels, and other criteria as specified in the soil tables.

10. **Fire and Life Safety**

Fire and life safety at Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMUC) is governed by federal, state and local, standards including System Regulations and University Rules and University Standard Administrative Procedures. Ultimate jurisdiction for fire safety lies with the Texas State Fire Marshal and with the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). However, each and every individual, whether faculty, staff, student, or visitor on our campus shares a role in fire safety.

TAMUC is committed to providing a safe environment for building occupants and emergency response personnel.

10.1. **Program Requirements**

The basis for the fire and life safety program at TAMUC is provided for by TAMU System regulation - 24.01.01 *Supplemental Risk Management Standards*


10.2. **Applicable Codes & Standards**

The Texas State Fire Marshal’s Office has adopted the National Fire Protection Association *Life Safety Code®* and all referenced codes and standards as the primary guide for fire and life safety. It is important to note that this code is not all inclusive, is not a building code, and that other codes and standards may also apply. Some of these include, but are not limited to:

- International Building Code
- International Fire Code
- International Mechanical Code
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Texas Accessibility Standards Act

10.3. **Fire and Life Safety**

The fire and life safety program at TAMUC involves numerous activities, programs, and procedures to help ensure that our campus is a safe place to work, live, and play. These program areas include fire prevention, fire suppression, emergency preparedness, preplanning, education, and response. The following information is provided as a general guideline for activities associated with fire and life safety. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

10.4. **Appliances**

An appliance can be defined as any instrument or piece of equipment or device designed for a particular use and powered by electricity. (i.e. computers, copy machines,
refrigerators, freezers, space heaters etc.) Use the following guidelines when using appliances on campus.

- Always use appliances that are UL or FM labeled.
- Adequate space should be given around appliances to allow for air circulation.
- Clothes dryers should have the lint removed after each load and excess build up of lint around the dryer should be cleaned regularly.
- Large appliances such as refrigerators and freezers should be plugged directly into wall outlets.
- Frequently inspect the electrical connection of appliances to ensure a good connection with the receptacle.
- Frequently inspect the condition of appliances. If appliances begin to spark or produce an electrical smell, turn power off immediately and discontinue using the appliance.

10.5. Arson

If arson is suspected, no matter how small the incident, contact the University Police Department and the Department of Risk Management and Safety. Do not alter the fire scene in any way, unless you are trying to extinguish a live fire. The UPD will investigate any possible arson.

10.6. Building Evacuation Plans/Drills

Every facility at TAMUC is required to have a written emergency evacuation plan. Each department or building should have a Building Emergency Manager (BEM) that is responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for emergency evacuations drills (assistance is available from the Department of Risk Management and Safety). The best way to develop this plan is to form an implementation committee with members from each building floor and each department.

To ensure that building occupants are prepared for an emergency evacuation, drills must be conducted on a regular basis. Evacuation drills may be used to vacate a building for several reasons such as fires, gas leaks, chemical spills, bomb threats or other similar emergencies and emphasis should be placed on orderly evacuation rather than on speed.

These drills should:

- Involve all occupants. Everyone should leave the building when the fire alarm sounds. A person may be exempt from an evacuation drill if it will cause undue hardship (e.g., interrupt an experiment or procedure that cannot be halted); however, exemptions are strongly discouraged without permission.
- Occupants should close (not lock) doors as they leave the work area, provided this does not violate security procedures. Items that require security may be placed in a locking file cabinet or desk drawer on the way out.
- Floor proctors should check all rooms and close doors on their way out.
• All building occupants should gather in the preplanned meeting place.
• Floor proctors should take a "head count" to determine if all occupants have left the building.

Upon completion of the drill, an evaluation of the drill shall be conducted and filed with the Department of Risk Management and Safety to identify any areas for improvement and to document the drill.

10.7. Candles & Incense
General guidelines include:
• Candles, incense burners, oil lamps or other personal items that have open flames or that smolder, are prohibited in work areas (individual or group), conference rooms, restrooms, etc. in all campus buildings. This restriction applies to such items regardless of whether the item has been lit.
• This use of candles does not apply to such devices used in the course and scope of University or Agency sponsored research or activities necessary to conduct business operations. If the burning of a candle(s) is permitted under the above mentioned exemption, the candle must be in a glass or similar container and kept away from combustible materials.
• Students living in residence halls and University-owned apartments are governed by similar but separate rules as set forth by the Residential Living and Learning.

10.8. Combustible Storage
One of the most common violations of general fire safety practices is that of improper or excessive storage of combustible material. By storing excess combustible materials improperly, employees not only increase the potential for having a fire, they increase the potential severity of a fire. To reduce the hazards associated with combustible storage, follow these guidelines:
• Eliminate excess combustible materials such as paper and cardboard.
• Never store combustible materials in hallways, stairwells, or mechanical rooms.
• When stacking combustible materials, leave at least 24" from the top of the storage to the ceiling.

10.9. Compressed Gas Cylinders
Compressed gas cylinders, in service or in storage, shall be adequately secured (chained) to prevent falling or being knocked over. Ropes, cords, rubber and other combustible material are not approved for this purpose. Compressed gas cylinders shall have their caps in place except when they are in use or are being serviced or filled.

10.10. Decorations
When decorating your area, there are several things that you must be aware of:
• Never hang anything from fire sprinkler piping or heads
Never obstruct fire alarm devices
Any combustible decorations such as curtains or drapes must be of a fire resistant material
Never obstruct an exit or the visibility thereof
Never staple or tack light strings
Decorations should not be placed in exit corridors or stairways

Holiday decorations are often fire hazards if not utilized properly. Follow these guidelines to improve fire safety during the holidays:
- Do not use live cut Christmas trees in University buildings. Use an artificial tree that is fire resistant.
- Do not place holiday decorations where they may block emergency egress (e.g., stairways, corridors, near doors, etc.)
- Only use decorations that are fire retardant.
- Practice good housekeeping by minimizing paper and other combustible decorations.
- Avoid using extension cords. If you must use an extension cord, use a heavy gauge cord and place it in plain view. Make sure the cord does not pose a tripping hazard.
- Use FM or UL labeled electrical decorations.
- Do not light candles or use other decorations with open flames
- Turn off lights when the room is unoccupied.

10.11. Electrical Safety
Extension Cord and Power-Strip Use
Many times it is necessary to use extension cords or power strips (surge protectors) to reach a work area or to provide additional outlets. It is important not to overload outlets, protect cords, and follow the manufacturer’s recommendation. Additionally, the following guidelines should be used while utilizing these items:
- Extension cords are for temporary use (defined as an 8-hour work day or less)
- Unplug and properly store cords when not in use
- Install permanent code compliant wiring for long term use
- Extension cords or power strips must be plugged directly into a wall receptacle – no daisy chaining is permitted
- Extension cords should be used for portable equipment
- Extension cords and power strips should be examined regularly for damage and removed from service if damage is found
- Extension cords and power strips should be UL listed
- Extension cords shall not be run above ceiling or under carpet or other similar materials

Electrical Panel Access
A working space of not less than 30” wide (or width of equipment), 36” deep and 78” high shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. No storage shall be permitted within this designated work space.

10.12. Emergency Access and Egress

Emergency access and egress are critical during an emergency situation such as a fire. During a fire, timing and quick response are essential to save lives and property. Effective emergency access ensures that fire trucks can reach a building in time to extinguish the fire. Unobstructed emergency egress ensures that building occupants can exit a building to safety.

Emergency access helps ensure that facilities and equipment remain available and unobstructed at all times to ensure effective fire detection, evacuation, suppression, and response. Emergency egress is defined as a continuous and unobstructed way to travel from any point in a public building to a public way. A means of egress may include horizontal and vertical travel routes, including intervening rooms, doors, hallways, corridors, passageways, balconies, ramps, stairs, enclosures, lobbies, courts, and yards.

Corridors, Stairways, and Exits
- An exit corridor and/or stairway is a pedestrian pathway that allows direct access to the outside of a building and/or allows access to a building entrance and subsequent pathways to the outside of a building (i.e., an exit corridor is the quickest, easiest, and most direct pathway for leaving a building). Because exit corridors or passageways are the primary means of egress during an emergency, employees must follow the safety guidelines outlined in this section.
- Follow these guidelines to promote safe evacuation in corridors, stairways, and exits:
  - Keep all means of egress clean, clutter-free, and unobstructed
  - Do not place hazardous materials or equipment in areas that are used for evacuation
  - Do not use corridors or stairways for storage or office/laboratory operations
  - Do not place locks, chains, or other devices that can defeat or obstruct an exit without prior written permission from the Department of Risk Management and Safety
  - Corridors may not be used as an extension of the office or laboratory

10.13. Flammable and Combustible Liquids

Definitions:
- Flash Point – The lowest temperature at which vapors above a volatile combustible substance will ignite in air when exposed to a spark or flame.
- Flammable Liquid - Any liquid that has a closed cup flash point below 100°F.
- Combustible Liquid – Any liquid that has a closed cup flash point at or above 100°F.
Flammable Liquids are further classified as Class I, Class IA, IB and IC liquids. Combustible liquids are further classified as Class II, Class III, Class IIIA and Class IIIB liquids. You can identify if you are working with flammable or combustible materials by referencing the flash point on the product label or MSDS sheet.

When working with these materials, precautions should be taken to prevent the ignition of flammable vapors by sources such as the following: open flames, hot surfaces, radiant heat, smoking, cutting and welding, sparks, static electricity. Make sure you are in a well ventilated and/or exhausted area to allow dangerous vapors to dissipate or escape the area. Only acceptable containers that meet the requirements set forth in the Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) should be used with flammable and combustible liquids. The allowable size of these containers is dependant upon the class of liquid and the container type and is specified in the Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code (NFPA 30). Flammable and combustible liquids should be stored inside a flammable liquids storage cabinet with an aggregate amount of liquid stored in an individual storage cabinet not to exceed 120 gallons.

Most occupied buildings on the TAMUC campus have automatic fire detection/notification systems installed in them. These systems are monitored at the the University Police Department. These systems utilize several different types of detection devices including heat, flame, and smoke detectors, relays from suppression/extinguishing systems, and manual pull stations to activate the notification portion of the system.

Detection Devices

Heat Detectors
- Heat detectors respond to the convected energy in hot smoke and fire gases (i.e., heat). Heat detectors are normally located in laboratories, mechanical rooms, storage areas, break rooms, and areas that could produce high levels of dust, steam, or other airborne particles.

Smoke Detectors
- Smoke detectors respond to the solid and liquid aerosols produced by a fire (i.e., smoke). Since smoke detectors cannot distinguish between smoke particles and other particles such as steam, building occupants must be aware of detector locations and be considerate when working around them. Smoke detectors are normally found in exit corridors, office areas, assembly areas, and sleeping areas.

Flame Detectors
- Flame detectors respond to the presence of a flame. Flame detectors may be found in specific areas where a fire will develop rapidly and the hazard is greater than what
is expected in normal locations within buildings such as chemical storage rooms. These devices are most commonly used in conjunction with a fire extinguishing system.

Manual Pull Stations

- Manual pull stations, when activated, will initiate the building's fire alarm notification system. Pull stations are generally located near exit stairways, near building exits, or in long corridors. Occupants should be familiar with the location of these devices should one need to initiate a building evacuation.

Building Notification

- The building notification system may consist of horns, bells, speakers, strobes, or a combination of these devices. It is important to maintain a clear line of sight to any of these devices to ensure they can be seen and/or heard.

10.15. Fire Door

Fire doors serve as a barrier to limit the spread of fire and restrict the movement of smoke. Unless these doors are held open and released by the building fire alarm system, fire doors should remain closed at all times. Do not tamper with fire doors or block them with equipment, potted plants, furniture, etc.

Fire doors are normally located in stairwells, corridors, and other areas required by Fire Code. The door, door frame, locking mechanism, and closure are rated between 20 minutes and three hours. A fire door rating indicates how long the door assembly can withstand heat and a water hose stream. All fire doors will have a label affixed to the door indicating the manufacturer, rating, serial # of the door and other information. It is important to not remove, paint, or in any way damage or destroy the label.

For your safety and to maintain the integrity of fire doors, there are several important items to remember:

- Know which doors are fire doors and keep them closed to protect building occupants and exit paths from fire and smoke.
- Never block a fire door with a non-approved closure device such as a door stop, blocks of wood, or potted plant.
- For fire doors with approved closure devices, make sure that nothing around the door can impede the closure.
- Never alter a fire door or assembly in any way. Simple alterations such as changing a lock or installing a window can lessen or completely void the fire rating of the door.
- Doors to offices, laboratories, and classrooms help act as smoke barriers regardless of their fire rating. Keep these doors closed whenever the room is unoccupied.
- A closed door is the best way to protect your path to safety from the spread of smoke and fire.
10.16. Fire Extinguishers

Fire Extinguishers, when used properly, play a vital role in containing and/or extinguishing small fires. Portable fire extinguishers are designed to be used on small, contained fires, by properly trained individuals. Lives could be saved, and property damage reduced, when fire extinguishers are used correctly.

Know the location of the closest extinguisher. A quick response is crucial to effectively put out a fire. You should not have to travel any farther than 75 feet to get to an extinguisher. This distance may be reduced in labs and other high hazard areas.

There are five classifications for fires. These are:

- **Class A**: Fires involving ordinary combustibles, such as paper, wood, plastic, cloth, and trash.
- **Class B**: Fires that involve flammable or combustible liquids, such as gasoline, solvents, oil, paint, and thinners.
- **Class C**: Fires that involve energized electrical equipment or appliances.
- **Class D**: Fires involving flammable metals, such as magnesium and sodium.
- **Class K**: Fires that involve cooking media, such as vegetable oils.

There are fire extinguishers designed for each type of fire. Some extinguishers can be used on more than one type of fire.

Class A extinguishers are to be used only on Class A fires. This extinguisher contains only water and compressed air and is not to be used on B, C, D, or K fires.

Carbon Dioxide extinguishers are recommended for Class B and C fires. Halon or other similar type fire extinguishers are also rated to be used on B and C fires.

Dry Chemical extinguishers come in two types. One type is rated for B-C fires, and the other is rated for A-B-C fires. The ABC or multipurpose extinguisher is the most common extinguisher found on the TAMUC Campus.

Class D extinguishers are specialized to be used only on flammable metals. Never attempt to extinguish a Class D fire with anything other than a CLASS D extinguisher.

Class K extinguishers are designed to be used on flammable cooking oils. They are to be used in conjunction with a commercial fire suppression system.

There is no extinguisher that is designed to be used on all types of fires. It is important to know your fire extinguisher and its limitations.

**Inspection and Maintenance**

- The Department of Risk Management and Safety conducts regular inspections of fire extinguishers. The department also services extinguishers that have been used, and
also performs the required maintenance and testing of extinguishers. Once used, fire extinguishers must be serviced or replaced. If an extinguisher has been used, is missing, needs to be relocated, or any other type of service, contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for assistance.

- Portable fire extinguishers are located throughout buildings across the campus. They are installed according to National Fire Protection Association codes and standards. Extinguishers are readily accessible in hallways, near exits, and in areas containing high fire hazards. Never block access to an extinguisher.

Using an extinguisher
To use a fire extinguisher you must remember the PASS-word.
- Pull the ring-pin (held in place by a plastic seal) to “un-lock” the operating lever.
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire
- Squeeze the lever completely
- Sweep the extinguishing agent from side to side until the fire is extinguished

The normal operating distance of different extinguishers will vary considerably. A dry chemical extinguisher will have a discharge range of 8-10 feet, while a Carbon Dioxide extinguisher may only reach 5-6 feet.

Remember:
- Only attempt to extinguish small, contained fires
- Make sure you are properly trained, and capable of fighting the fire
- Be certain that you have the correct extinguisher for the type of fire
- Always keep a clear, unobstructed exit
- Never turn your back on a fire
- Fires may re-ignite, so be prepared

Training
- Learn how to use a fire extinguisher before an emergency occurs. The Department of Risk Management and Safety can provide hands on training in the use of portable fire extinguishers. Participants will learn about the different types of extinguishers, how to use each type, and will have the opportunity to extinguish a real fire. Make sure you have the correct extinguisher for the type of fire to be extinguished. All extinguishers have a label that states what type of fire they can be used on and this will be explained to further assist occupants in selecting the proper type of extinguisher. For information or to request a class, contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety.
10.17. Fire Hydrants
Fire hydrants are located throughout the campus and play a vital role in fire suppression operations. It is important to maintain a clear path to all hydrants and allow clear distances around hydrants to allow uninhibited operation should an emergency occur. It is also important that vehicles are not parked within 15 feet of fire hydrants or other fire safety equipment.

10.18. Fire Lanes
A fire lane is an area designated for emergency personnel only. It allows them to gain access to building and/or fire protection systems. Parking in or blocking any fire lane is prohibited.

10.19. Fire and Life Safety Inspections
Fire and life safety inspections are conducted at least annually in TAMUC facilities. The goal of these inspections is to help identify potentially unsafe practices and conditions in TAMUC facilities.

Some of the items that our inspectors will be looking for include but are not limited to:
- Access to the facility for emergency responders
- Means of egress and verifying that egress components are unobstructed and in working condition
- Electrical safety (extension cords, power strips etc.)
- Storage of materials (24” from ceiling, 18” from sprinkler heads)
- General Housekeeping
- Presence of ignition sources

10.20. Fire Prevention
Fire Safety is everyone’s responsibility. In fact you are your office’s best fire inspector. The following section will provide ways you can help prevent fires.

Fire prevention starts with good house keeping. Loose papers, trash and other combustible items such as cardboard boxes are a fuel source for fire. If these combustible items are stored neatly and properly the risk of fire can be greatly reduced. Here are some things to be mindful of when it comes to combustible items:
- Never store combustible items within 24 inches of the ceiling.
- If you have sprinkler heads in your building keep ALL storage at least 18 inches below the sprinkler heads.
- Keep combustible items away from electrical sources that may produce heat and/or sparks. (Outlets, multiple adapters, etc.)
- Keep quantities of combustible items to a minimum.
- Never store combustible items in an exit corridor or stair enclosure.
- Combustible items should not be stored in mechanical equipment rooms or electrical rooms.
10.21. Fire Reporting
If you discover a fire in a facility on campus you should
- Locate and activate the nearest manual pull station (Pull stations should be located near building exits) to initiate a building evacuation
- Call 911 from any campus phone or 903-886-5111 if calling from a cell phone to report the fire and provide any information such as:
  - Building Name
  - Room Number
  - Type of Fire
  - Any injuries
  - Any other information requested by the emergency operator

If you are trained in the proper use of portable fire extinguishers and are not in immediate danger you may attempt to extinguish the fire (see Fire Extinguishers)

10.22. Fire Suppression
TAMUC uses various types of fire suppression equipment including portable fire extinguishers, water sprinklers, special gas extinguishing systems, cooking hood systems, and fire hose/standpipe systems. The following sections discuss each type of fire suppression equipment.

Sprinkler Systems
The purpose of a water sprinkler system is to contain and to minimize the spread of a fire, but is often successful in extinguishing fires. Sprinkler heads are normally activated by heat. Generally, if one is activated not all of the sprinklers in a building will discharge. Only in specialized sprinkler systems are they connected to smoke detectors or manual pull stations.

To ensure that sprinklers are effective in the event of a fire:
- Maintaining a minimum of 18 inches of clearance below the sprinkler head is required to any equipment or stored items.
- Do not hang drapes, curtains, tarps, etc that will interfere with the spray pattern of the sprinkler.
- Never attach or hang anything from sprinkler piping or sprinkler heads
- Do not paint or damage sprinkler heads in any manner.

Fire Extinguishing Systems
Special work areas such as computer server rooms or bulk chemical storage rooms may contain specialized gaseous fire extinguishing systems such as carbon dioxide (CO2), FE 13, FM 200, or Halon 1301 in lieu of water based fire suppression systems. These systems work by displacing the oxygen in the room to a level that will no longer support a fire. To ensure that the system operates as designed, the area or room(s) protected
must have its structural integrity preserved in order to maintain the required concentration level of the gas. There should be no penetrations through walls, ceilings, or floors and doors should be kept in the closed position.

Once a system is activated, the low level of oxygen is also dangerous to humans. Caution should be used when working in areas where these oxygen-depriving extinguishing agents are used. Manually operated systems, such as a pull-station or push button, should have signs posted indicating it will activate the agent. Do not enter a room that has discharged an oxygen-depriving agent until it has been ventilated and appropriate tests of the atmosphere have verified it is safe to enter.

Fire Hoses and Standpipe Systems
A standpipe system is an arrangement of piping, valves, hose connections and allied equipment installed in a building or structure for the purpose of manually extinguishing a fire. Fire hose cabinets are located in several buildings near or in the exit stairwells and in corridors. TAMU holds the stance that employees should only attempt to extinguish a fire with a portable fire extinguisher. Local fire department responders will use the standpipe system in the event of a fire in a building. Access to these systems should be maintained at all times and should not be blocked by any equipment, chairs, desks, etc.

10.23. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)
The Texas Railroad Commission regulates the sale and use of LPG, including butane and propane. In addition, the Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code (NFPA 58) provides regulations on the use of LPG as well. These regulations govern several types of LPG-powered equipment and procedures including the following:
- Forklifts
- Floor buffers
- Cooking and heating equipment
- Laboratory equipment

Exhaust fumes may contain carbon monoxide which can present a health hazard. Exhaust can also create smoke which may activate a smoke detector. Take special precautions to ensure adequate ventilation when using these machines indoors.

Because LPG is extremely flammable, it is a potential fire hazard. Do not store LPG near heat, flame, or other ignition sources. In addition, do not leave portable LPG containers larger than 16 oz. in a building overnight. Instead, place portable LPG containers and LPG equipment outside in a storage area that is at least 25 feet away from other buildings, combustible materials, roadways, railroads, pipelines, utility lines, and the property line. This storage area should prevent unauthorized entry and have a portable fire extinguisher within 25 feet.

When using portable LPG containers the requirements listed below shall be followed:
• Inspect containers for excessive denting, bulging, gouging, and corrosion and check hoses for cracks and deterioration; containers displaying any of these signs shall be removed from service
• Label all containers as Flammable and as LP-Gas, Propane, or Butane
• Cylinders shall be located to minimize exposure to excessive heat, and physical damage
• Cylinders shall be stored away from exits, stairways, or areas normally used or intended for the use of egress for occupants
• The maximum allowable quantity of LPG stored in a building shall not exceed 2 pounds
• Quantities in excess of this amount shall be stored outside in a lockable ventilated enclosure of metal exterior construction; protection against vehicle impact shall be provided

LPG powered Industrial Trucks
Use of LPG powered industrial trucks shall follow the guideline for containers in the previous section, in addition to the following:

• LPG cylinders shall be refueled outdoors
• The number of cylinders on an industrial truck shall not exceed 2
• The size of a cylinder on an individual truck shall not exceed 45 pounds
• Cylinder pressure relief valve discharge shall be directed upward within 45 degrees of vertical and shall not impinge on the cylinder, exhaust system, or any other part of the truck
• The discharge opening shall be provided with a protective cover
• Trucks shall not be parked or left unattended without the cylinder shutoff valve being closed
• Do not park truck near areas of excessive heat or near sources of ignition

10.24. Outdoor Burning
Refer to Agriculture Safety section 15.31 (Outdoor Burning)

10.25. Smoking
Smoking is prohibited in all university buildings and vehicles, and all indoor air space of University owned athletic facilities. Where smoking is allowed, it is important to fully extinguish any smoking material or dispose in an appropriate disposal container.

Refer to Safety Section 4.26 and University Rule 34.05.99.R1 for further exlanation

10.26. Space Heaters
Some general guidelines to remember when using space heaters are:
• Always use appliances that are UL or FM labeled.
• Space heaters must never be left on unattended, even if you are just going to step out for a moment.
• Space heater must be equipped with an automatic shut off feature.
• Space heaters should be unplugged when not in use.
• A minimum of 36” should be maintained from any combustible materials
• Adequate space should be provided around space heaters to allow for air circulation.
• Space heater should be plugged directly into wall receptacles
• Frequent inspections of electrical cords for damage and to ensure a tight connection of the cord into the receptacle
• If heater begins to spark or produce an electrical smell, turn power off immediately and discontinue using the appliance.

11. Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) includes all clothing and work accessories designed to protect employees from workplace hazards. Protective equipment should not replace engineering, administrative, or procedural controls for safety — it should be used in conjunction with these controls. Employees must wear protective equipment as required and when instructed by a supervisor.

**IMPORTANT:** *Personal protective equipment that is used to prevent exposure or contamination should always be removed before coming in contact with other individuals or going in or near elevators, break rooms, classrooms, bathrooms, etc.* Do not launder personal protective equipment at home.

11.1. Arm and Hand Protection

Arms and hands are vulnerable to cuts, abrasions, temperature extremes, burns, bruises, electrical shock, chemical spills, and amputation. The following forms of hand protection are available for employees:

• Disposable exam gloves
• Rubber gloves
• Nitrile gloves
• Neoprene gloves
• Leather gloves
• Non-asbestos heat-resistant gloves
• Metal-mesh gloves for meat cutters
• Cotton gloves
• Kevlar or Dynema gloves for cut resistance

Always wear the appropriate hand and arm protection. For arm protection, wear a long-sleeved shirt, a laboratory coat, chemical-resistant sleeves, or gauntlet-length gloves.

Follow these guidelines to ensure arm and hand safety:
• Inspect and test new gloves for defects.
• Always wash your hands before and after using gloves. Wash chemical-protective gloves with soap and water before removing them.
• Do not wear loose fitting gloves near moving machinery; the gloves may become caught.
• Do not wear gloves with metal parts near electrical equipment.

**IMPORTANT:** Gloves are easily contaminated. Avoid touching surfaces such as telephones, door knobs, etc. when wearing gloves.

11.2. Body Protection
Hazards that threaten the torso tend to threaten the entire body. A variety of protective clothing, including laboratory coats, long pants, rubber aprons, coveralls, and disposable body suits are available for specific work conditions.

• Rubber, neoprene, and plastic clothing protect employees from most acids and chemical splashes.
• Laboratory coats and coveralls protect employees and everyday clothing from contamination.
• Welding aprons provide protection from sparks.

Do not launder contaminated chemically, biologically, or radiologically protective clothing at home or in any facilities outside of the university.

11.3. Ear and Hearing Protection
If you work in a high noise area, wear hearing protection. Most hearing protection devices have an assigned rating that indicates the amount of protection provided. Depending on your level of exposure, you may choose from the following devices:

• Disposable earplugs
• Reusable earplugs
• Headband plugs
• Sealed earmuffs

Earplugs may be better in hot, humid, or confined work areas. They may also be better for employees who wear other PPE, such as safety glasses or hats. Earmuffs, on the other hand, may be better for employees who move in and out of noisy areas, because the muffs are easier to remove. Before resorting to hearing protection, attempt to control noise levels through engineering or operational changes.

To avoid contamination, follow these guidelines when using earplugs:

• Wash your hands before inserting earplugs.
• Replace disposable earplugs after each use.
• Clean reusable earplugs after each use.
Refer to the Hearing Conservation Program in the General Safety chapter or contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for more information.

11.4. Eye and Face Protection
Employees must wear protection if hazards exist that could cause eye or face injury. Eye and face protection should be used in conjunction with equipment guards, engineering controls, and safe practices.

**NOTE:** Safety glasses are required in laboratories. Chemical goggles should be worn when handling chemical materials.

Always wear adequate eye and face protection when performing tasks such as grinding, buffing, welding, chipping, cutting, or pouring chemicals. Safety glasses with side shields provide protection against impact, but chemical safety goggles provide protection against impact, splashes, and hazardous atmospheres.

Follow the below information regarding eye protection:
- If you wear prescription glasses, wear goggles or other safety protection over the glasses.
- Safety glasses with side-shields provide primary protection to eyes and are four times as resistant as prescription glasses to impact injuries.
- Goggles protect against impacts, sparks, dust, and irritating mist. Wear chemical splash goggles, not just safety glasses, when working with chemicals.
- A welding helmet protects from flash burn due to welding, soldering, or brazing, but does not provide primary eye protection; safety glasses or goggles should be worn with the helmet.
- A face shield is designed to protect the face from some splashes or projectiles, but does not eliminate exposure to vapors. A face shield should be worn with goggles or safety glasses.
- To reduce eyestrain from glare and outdoor sun exposure use safety glasses with UV protection to minimize the ultraviolet light exposure.

11.5. Foot Protection
To protect feet and legs from falling objects, moving machinery, sharp objects, hot materials, chemicals, or slippery surfaces, employees should wear closed-toed shoes, boots, foot-guards, leggings, or safety shoes as appropriate. Safety shoes are designed to protect people from the most common causes of foot injuries — impact, compression, and puncture. Special foot protection is also available for protection against static electricity, sparks, live electricity, corrosive materials, and slipping.

**NOTE:** Foot protection is particularly important in laboratory, agricultural, construction and custodial work.
**IMPORTANT:** Do not wear sandals, crocs, or open-toed shoes in laboratories, shops, food prep, food serving, or other potentially hazardous areas.

### 11.6. Head Protection

Accidents that cause head injuries are difficult to anticipate or control. If hazards exist that could cause head injury, employees should try to eliminate the hazards, but they should also wear head protection.

Safety hats protect the head from impact, penetration, and electrical shock. Head protection is necessary if you work where there is a risk of injury from moving, falling, or flying objects or if you work near high-voltage equipment.

Hard hats should be water resistant, flame resistant, and adjustable. Wear one of the following hard hats as appropriate for your work situation:
- **Class G** - General service, limited voltage (2,200 Volts) protection
- **Class E** - Utility service, high-voltage (20,000 Volts) protection
- **Class C** - Special service, no voltage protection

Follow these guidelines for head safety:
- Check the shell and suspension of your headwear for damage before each use. Look for cracks, dents, gouges, chalky appearance, and torn or broken suspension threads. Discard damaged hats or replace broken parts with replacements from the original manufacturer.
- Discard any hat that has been struck or dropped from a great height, even if there is no apparent damage.
- Do not wear a hard hat backwards, unless this is necessary to accommodate other protective equipment (e.g., welders face shield).
- Do not paint the plastic shell of a hard hat or alter it in any way.

### 11.7. Respiratory Protection

TAMUC uses engineering, administrative, and procedural controls to protect people from dangerous atmospheres, including harmful mists, smoke, vapors, and oxygen-deficient atmospheres. When these controls cannot provide adequate protection against harmful atmospheres, respiratory protection is necessary.

The Department of Risk Management and Safety can provide training and fit testing for personnel who need respiratory protection.

**Usage Requirements**

People who use respiratory protection must be physically capable of using and wearing the equipment. In some cases, a physician must determine if an employee is healthy enough to use a respirator. In addition, all people required to wear respirators must be formally trained and instructed in proper equipment usage. This training should include instruction on common respiratory hazards and symptoms of exposure.
Before wearing a respirator employees must be fit tested by the Department of Risk Management and Safety to ensure their respirator protection equipment is the proper size and fits appropriately. Fit testing must be done annually or more frequently based on substantial weight gain/loss or facial surgery.

**NOTE:** Only use respirators that are approved by NIOSH

**Selecting a Respirator**
Risk Management and Safety will help departments to select the respirator. When selecting a respirator, consider the following factors:
- Type of hazards
- Identity and concentration of the contaminant
- Time constraints
- Activity of the person wearing the respirator
- Degree of protection provided by each type of respirator

**IMPORTANT:** Respirators are available in different sizes. Always fit test a respirator to select the correct size.

**Using Respirators Safely**
Your respirator is necessary to prevent the inhalation of particulates, gases, vapors, aerosols, or other contaminants. Be sure you have notified the Department of Risk Management and Safety of all hazardous chemicals or materials you will be working with to ensure you have been provided the best possible respiratory protection.

It is important to remember the following:
- Only use the respirator you were approved to wear and that has been properly fit tested.
- You must be familiar with the respirator, its use and limitations, and how to properly maintain and care for your respirator.
- You may not have facial hair that interferes with the seal of a tight fitting respirator. If you were fit tested without facial hair or with a minimal amount of facial hair, you must not wear your respirator with additional hair growth.
- You should contact EHS to be fit tested again if you have facial or dental surgery, significant weight gain or loss, facial scarring, or anything else that might affect the fit and seal of your respirator.
- You should be fit tested annually.

**Safety Tips**
- Inspect respirator before and after each use to ensure that all parts are present or attached and are functioning properly.
- Rubber and plastic parts should be checked for signs of wear and tear (cracking, stiffness, etc.). If you identify any worn or weak parts, do not use the respirator.
Perform a positive pressure and negative pressure seal check every time you put on the respirator:

NOTE: Positive pressure check: Cover the exhalation valve of the respirator with the palm of your hand. Exhale gently for about 10 seconds to build up a slight pressure. If air leaks out, the respirator is not sealing properly and should be repositioned before entering the hazardous area.

NOTE: Negative pressure check: Cover the filter or cartridge openings of the respirator with the palms of your hands. Inhale gently and hold your breath for about 10 seconds. You should notice a slight suction. If the face piece does not collapse inward or you feel an air leak, the respirator is not sealing properly and should be repositioned before entering the hazardous area.

Leave the respiratory protection area if any of the following occur:
- If your respirator is damaged.
- If your breathing becomes difficult.
- If you become dizzy.
- If you detect a respirator failure (smell something you did not notice before, eyes begin to water, etc.).
- If you feel your seal has been broken (air getting in or out around your face piece).

DO NOT REMOVE OR REPOSITION YOUR MASK UNTIL YOU HAVE LEFT THE AREA.

Storage, Cleaning, and Care:
- Store respirator in a clean, cool area (away from dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, moisture, and chemicals).
- Do not hang respirator by headband.
- The respirator should be cleaned regularly with respirator wipes or a detergent solution. All parts should air dry or be wiped dry with a lint free cloth.
- Clean and disinfect the respirator after each use if shared by more than one person (NOTE: respirators may be shared only by individuals who have been properly trained and fit tested for that respirator.

12. Biological Safety

Biological Safety is managed by the Texas A&M University Institutional Biosafety Committee. Guidance documents, requirements, and training sessions are offered and should be consulted when employees work with or have the potential to come in contact with biohazardous materials.

Biohazardous materials are potentially hazardous biological agents and include the following:
- Etiologic agents which may cause disease in humans, animals or plants (including bacterial, fungal, parasitic, rickettsial, viral, and prion disease agents)
- Human body fluids or tissues (e.g. bloodborne pathogens) including human cell culture (primary or continuous)
- Agents and molecules involved with recombinant DNA biotechnology and genetic manipulation (including recombinant / transgenic agents including plants, animals, as well as pathogenic and non-pathogenic microorganism (eukaryotic and prokaryotic)
- Animals infected with zoonoses
- Items contaminated with etiologic agents or human body fluids or tissues.

Possession and use of biohazardous materials for research requires prior approval by the Texas A&M University-Commerce Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC).

Refer to the Department of Risk Management and Safety for disposal requirements for biohazardous materials.

13. Agriculture Safety

13.1. Introduction to Agricultural Safety
The following information provides information on basic safety, tractor safety, pesticide and chemical safety, and fertilizer safety. For further safety information concerning Agriculture, please contact the Department of Agriculture Sciences.

Agriculture workers are exposed to many different work environments and potential hazards in agricultural activities such as operating agricultural equipment or heavy machinery, applying pesticides and other chemicals, and handling livestock. This manual will not only help in identifying hazards associated with agriculture work activities, but also help reduce exposure to those risks for a more safe and healthy agricultural work environment.

In work-related fatality rates among U.S. industries, agriculture ranks first. It is one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States. A majority of agricultural accidents involve some type of machinery or equipment. Accidents cost time, money, and involve intangible losses. Time will be lost while you are recovering, medical and rehabilitation bills will begin to add up, and, worst of all, you might not be able to function as you did before the accident. Safety is too expensive not to be taken seriously. Accident costs reduce the profit margin of your operation and, in the worst cases, accidents cost people their lives.

Safety is everyone’s responsibility. It is up to everyone associated with the agricultural industry to use safe working practices. All employees can contribute to each others’ safety.
Remember, operators of machinery aren't the only ones who get hurt in agricultural accidents.

13.2. General Tips for a Safe Working Environment:
- For an effective farm or ranch safety program, first perform a safety status assessment.
- Make safety everyone's concern including family, employees, visitors, and yourself.
- Be aware of what you are doing and your surroundings. The highest percentages of injuries happen during routine, 'every day' chores.
- Ask for help if a task might be more than you can handle alone.
- Take short rest breaks, so you don't overexert yourself.
- Eat a well balanced diet and get plenty of sleep.
- Stay away from equipment if you are angry. Wait a little while until you cool down.
- Train new equipment operators before letting them work on their own.
- Read the operator's manuals for all equipment.
- Wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for 'every day' chores and for specific jobs. Protective footwear, that also provides ankle support, and close fitting clothing are important for 'every day' work. (Specific job related PPE is discussed in the following modules).

Remember the Following Points
- Agriculture is the leading industry for work related accidents.
- Safety is everyone's responsibility.
- Safety is too expensive to learn by accident. Accidents have many related costs.
- Working environment safety can be improved by following a few simple safety measures.

13.3. General Farm Equipment Safety
Newer farm equipment incorporates specific design features to enhance safe handling and operation. Older farm equipment may lack these features, and additional caution is warranted when operating older equipment. Never disable safety devices or controls on farm equipment.

The following sections discuss general guidelines for farm equipment safety, including farmstead equipment, farm field equipment, guards, shields, and power take-off equipment (PTOs).
- Keeping equipment in good working condition is half the formula for being safe. The other half is the ability and awareness of the person operating the equipment.
- Safety = Good Working Equipment + Able and Aware Operator
- Equipment failure causes some farm accidents; however, most farm accidents are caused by tired, stressed, rushed, distracted, or incompetent operators.
In addition to the specific safe handling rules for each type of farm equipment, there are ten basic guidelines for equipment safety:

- Read and comply with the operator’s safety manual for each piece of farm equipment.
- Prepare for safety by wearing appropriate clothing, having enough rest, not drinking alcohol, and ensuring that all workers have been trained and are capable of safely using the farm equipment.
- Keep all guards, shields, and access doors in place when the equipment is in operation.
- Be aware of what you are doing and where you are going.
- Adjust equipment speed to fit operating conditions.
- Keep children and other people away from the working area.
- Take breaks from work, as necessary.
- Always stop the engine, disconnect the power source, and wait for all moving parts to stop, before servicing, adjusting, cleaning, or unclogging equipment.
- Display the slow moving vehicle emblem on equipment driven on public roadways.
- Allow the engine to cool before refueling.

13.4. Farmstead Equipment
Farmstead equipment is agricultural machinery that is normally stationary. This includes materials handling equipment and accessories for such equipment whether or not the equipment is an integral part of a building. Examples of farmstead equipment include cotton gins, grain augers, crushers, sorters, and miscellaneous belt-driven equipment.

Farmstead equipment should have an audible warning device to indicate that the machine is about to be started. Refer to Electrical Lockout/Tagout procedures to safely perform repairs or maintenance on electrical equipment. Farmstead equipment that is not properly guarded and shielded may pinch, crush, electrocute, or otherwise harm humans. Refer to the operator’s manual for specific safety instructions for each piece of equipment.

13.5. Farm Field Equipment
Farm field equipment is agricultural machinery that is normally mobile. Examples of farm field equipment include combines, tractors and their implements, including self-propelled implements. Because tractor accidents account for 500 to 600 fatalities each year, this section will focus primarily on tractor safety.

13.6. Grain Augers
A grain auger is a piece of farm equipment that helps transfer grain from one location to another. Tractor operators that move grain augers should take special precautions when working with this equipment.
**IMPORTANT:** Moving grain augers in their elevated position may result in electrocution if the equipment contacts overhead power lines.

Farm owners, managers, and operators should ensure that augers are in the lowered position before moving them. In addition, all augers should have warning signs that indicate the potential electrical hazards associated with moving the auger upright. Functional components of augers must be guarded to the fullest extent possible.

### 13.7. Hydraulic Equipment Safety

Farm equipment operators must be extremely careful when working around hydraulic equipment. Hydraulic pressure is often strong enough to knock a person out if a leak or explosion occurs.

Follow these guidelines when working with hydraulic equipment:

- Inspect hydraulic equipment regularly for leaks. Report and fix any leaks immediately.
- Ensure that all couplings are properly installed and in good working condition.
- Ensure that all lines and fittings are in good condition. Repair or replace any equipment that is not in good condition.
- Lock transport wheels and support jacks on implements in place before disconnecting hydraulic cylinders. This action will prevent sudden shocks to the machine or personal injury.
- Keep couplings and hoses in good repair so that the hydraulic system can safely sustain maximum pressure.

### 13.8. Guards, Shields, and PTOs

Guards and shields are extremely important because they keep operators from inadvertently contacting, or being caught, by moving machinery parts. Ensure that moving parts are guarded or shielded whenever possible. In addition, to prevent burns or fires, shield heat-producing components (e.g., exhaust pipes).

Since all moving parts cannot be guarded due to their function, stay clear of these machines when they are in operation. In addition, turn these machines off if they need service, maintenance, or repair.

**IMPORTANT:** If you take guards or shields off, put them back on the machine. Replace them if they are lost or damaged.

Guards and shields are absolutely essential for PTO farm equipment. Leave the master shield in place when the implement is unhitched. Replace missing or damaged shields immediately.
13.9. Fuel Storage
Fuel storage is an important safety concern in agriculture. The following sections discuss general safety guidelines for stationary fuel storage tanks, portable fuel tanks, and liquefied petroleum gas.

13.10. Stationary Fuel Storage Tanks
Petroleum products for agricultural use, including gasoline and diesel fuel, are stored in Aboveground Storage Tanks (AST) or Underground Storage Tanks (UST). The TNRCC regulates ASTs and USTs. Fuel tanks with volumes less than or equal to 1100 gallons are exempt from TNRCC requirements. Fuel tanks with volumes greater than 1100 gallons must meet these requirements:
- Notification
- Registration
- Annual fees
- Recordkeeping

13.11. Portable Fuel Tanks
Even small quantities of fuel, such as gasoline, kerosene, or diesel fuel must be properly labeled and stored. Always use DOT approved metal tanks or UL or FM labeled containers to store small amounts of fuel. Store small portable fuel tanks in well-ventilated areas, away from other flammable materials or ignition sources. Do not use containers such as empty plastic milk jugs to store fuels. Please refer to the Chemical Safety chapter for more information on flammable materials.

IMPORTANT: Clearly label fuel containers to indicate contents.

13.12. Liquefied Petroleum Gas
The Texas Railroad Commission regulates the sale and use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). There are several safety considerations associated with LPG. All LPG tanks must comply with Department of Transportation (DOT) standards for storage and use. Paint LPG tanks either white or aluminum. Locate LPG tanks away from flammable materials and possible ignition sources. In addition, ensure that ASTs have noncombustible structural supports and a firm masonry foundation so that the bottom of the tank does not touch the ground.

LPG tanks cannot be downhill from flammable liquid tanks such as gasoline or diesel. Stationary LPG tanks cannot be placed in any area beneath an electric transmission or distribution line.

LPG tanks must be equipped with hydrostatic relief valves, excess flow valves, etc, as required by the Texas Railroad Commission.
IMPORTANT: Portable LPG containers may be used within a building; however, they must be stored in a separate location outside of the building. Refer to the Fire/Life Safety chapter for more information.

The following table provides minimum safe distance requirements for the location of stationary LPG containers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ignition Source/Combustible Material</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
<td>25 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flammable Liquid Container</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
<td>25 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjoining Property line</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
<td>25 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway, Railway, Utility Line, or Pipe Line</td>
<td>10 feet</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
<td>25 feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.13. Grain Storage
Grain storage bins and hoppers pose severe hazards, including entrapment and suffocation. Each year, numerous people suffocate and die while working on or under the unstable materials contained in grain silos. Grain materials are unpredictable and they move quickly — entrapment, burial, and suffocation can occur within seconds.

In some cases, the surface material in a grain bin acts like quicksand. When a storage bin is emptied from the bottom, the grain material forms a funnel. The flow rate of this funnel can be strong enough to trap a worker and make rescue virtually impossible.

In other cases, a condition known as bridging can create serious hazards. A bridge occurs when grain or other loose material sticks to the side of a bin that is being emptied from below. The bridge is highly unstable and dangerous. If it collapses, it can trap any worker either on or below it.

Follow these guidelines to reduce the risks associated with grain storage:
- Assume that all stored materials are bridges and that the potential for entrapment and suffocation is constant.
- Do not enter a storage area from the bottom if material is adhering to the sides.
- If you must enter a storage area, use a safety belt or harness with a lifeline. Always stay above the highest level of material. Never stand on top of stored material.
- Lock out supply and discharge equipment whenever a worker enters the storage area.
- Post signs that indicate the hazards of working with stored materials.

Tractor accidents are the leading cause of fatalities and accidents on Texas farms and ranches. Approximately 42% of these accidents are the result of operators being run over by tractors, 36% are due to tractor roll-overs, and 5% involve riders who fall off the tractor and are then run over by the attached trailing equipment.

The following guidelines offer general safety tips for operating tractors:

- Know your tractor and how to use it safely. Regularly review the safety precautions in your operator's manual.
- Prepare for tractor work by inspecting the vehicle and wearing appropriate clothing.
- Ensure that new and inexperienced workers are properly trained in tractor operation.
- Never allow riders. A tractor should have only one person on board.
- Install an approved roll-over protective structure (ROPS) and seat belt on any tractor that is not equipped with these features. ROPS prevent tractor turnover injuries, but only if the seat belt is worn.
- Always wear a seat belt, when driving a tractor equipped with a ROPS.
- Disengage drives and turn the engine off before leaving the tractor unattended.
- Keep yourself and others away from moving parts.
- Hitch loads only to the drawbar. When using three-point rear hitches, add front end weights to maintain stability and control steering.
- Never bypass start the engine.

13.15. Tractor Driving Safety

Accidents usually occur because highway safety precautions are not followed. It is difficult to avoid highway travel when going between farm sites. Procedures should be discussed for traveling on highways with agricultural equipment. Common sense and good judgment should be emphasized.

Vehicles traveling on public roads at 25 mph or less are legally required to have a slow-moving vehicle sign attached. Equipment traveling faster than 25 mph is defined as a trailer and is not permitted to display the SMV emblem, but must be equipped with turn signals, brakes, and lights. Lighting regulations for slow-moving vehicles vary. Before installing any warning light system on a tractor, check the regulations. Generally the lighting and marking laws for tractors or self propelled machines are consistent with the recommendations by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) and the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). Only one vehicle classified as farm machinery may be towed by the licensed motor vehicle.

Lights and emblems must be clearly visible. If lights or emblems are blocked during towing, attach lights and emblems to the rear of the implements. Most tractors can be equipped with auxiliary connectors allowing implement electrical systems to be plugged into the circuit operating the tractor lights.
ASAE recommendations include:

- Two headlights
- At least one tail lamp, mounted on the left side facing the rear of the tractor
- At least two amber warning lights, visible from front and rear, mounted at the same level at least 42 inches above ground level.
- At least two red reflectors, visible from the rear and mounted on either side.

**Before traveling on public roads remember:**
- Lock brake pedals
- Adjust mirrors for good vision
- Make sure that all warning flashers, lights, and SMV emblems are in proper operating condition, clean, and easily visible
- Check tire inflation pressures. Inflate the tires to the maximum recommended pressure for long distance travel
- Check the wheels to see if the bolts are tight
- Make sure the tractor is balanced properly

**When pulling onto a public road, use a wide shoulder if available. If the shoulder is not wide enough, stay on the road. Allow extra time to reach full speed. Tractors do not accelerate rapidly, especially when towing equipment**

**When traveling on public roads:**
- Watch for pot holes or obstacles that could tip tractor
- Listen for cars. Often vehicles will rapidly approach from the rear at 3 to 4 times the speed of the tractor
- Stay alert at all times to avoid a serious accident
- Keep a constant lookout for pedestrians, animals, and road obstacles
- Slow down for sharp curves.
- Slow down when going down a hill

**Tractor operators can help prevent back roll-overs as follows:**
- Only hitch loads to the drawbar
- Limit the height of three-point hitches
- Use front-end weights to stabilize heavy hauling loads
- Start slowly
- Change gears carefully

**Tractor operators can help prevent side roll-overs as follows:**
- Increase tractor width, if possible
- Lock brakes together for road travel
- Operate tractors only as recommended
- Avoid steep slopes and ditches
- Be careful when pulling heavy loads or working with a front-end loader
- Turn corners slowly
Remember the Following Points
- Know the Law concerning highway travel for tractors
- Watch for highway traffic
- Use common sense and obey traffic patterns when traveling on the highway with a tractor

The following guidelines provide tips for driving tractors safely:
- Watch where you are going at all times. Be sure everyone is out of the way before moving.
- Watch for and avoid obstacles, ditches, embankments, and holes.
- Slow down when turning, crossing slopes, or driving on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.
- It is safer to back up an incline.
- Apply power slowly when pulling a heavy load.
- Lock the brake pedals together for single action braking.

Tractor operators can help prevent back roll-overs as follows:
- Only hitch loads to the drawbar.
- Limit the height of three-point hitches.
- Use front-end weights to stabilize heavy hauling loads.
- Start slowly.
- Change gears carefully.

Tractor operators can help prevent side roll-overs as follows:
- Increase tractor width, if possible.
- Lock brakes together for road travel.
- Operate tractors only as recommended.
- Avoid steep slopes and ditches.
- Be careful when pulling heavy loads or working with a front-end loader.
- Turn corners slowly.

13.16. Roll-over Protective Structures (ROPs)
Tractor rollovers account for 50% of tractor related fatalities in the United States. Distracted operators, speed, and rough or uneven ground are leading causes of tractor rollover. Rollover protective structures (ROPs) became available for tractors in the mid 1960’s and were not available for all new tractors until the mid-70’s. However, they were not standard equipment on new tractors until 1985. Many tractors built before that time are still in use and contribute to the tractor fatality rate because they are not ROPS and seat belt equipped. Use of ROPS and seatbelt are 99.9% effective in preventing deaths due to tractor overturns.
OSHA requires ROPS and seatbelts to be installed on all tractors operated by employees

There are two types of rollover protective structures:
- Rollover Protective Frame
- Rollover Protective Enclosure

Rollover Protective Frame
- These are either two or four post frames which are securely mounted to the main body of the tractor. Use the provided seat belt to keep the operator within the protected area

Rollover Protective Enclosure
- A rollover protective enclosure utilizes the protective frame, but totally encloses the frame with metal and glass. Seat belts are provided and must be used to contain the operator within the protected area. In addition, this cab enclosure gives protection from weather, dust, noise and vibration. Enclosures on older tractors were designed for operator comfort not for rollover protection and they are not considered ROPS. ROPS must meet regulations and standards that certify that they provide adequate protection in a tractor rollover. To find out if a frame or enclosure is certified, look for a certification label, contact the manufacturer, or check for the presence of a manufacturer installed seatbelt

Reducing the risk of a side rollover:
- Set wheels as far apart as possible
- Lock the brake pedals together before high speed road travel
- Match speed to operating conditions and loads. Do not let the front wheels bounce
- Slow down before turning.
- Use engine braking when going downhill
- Avoid crossing steep slopes. Watch for depressions on the downhill side and bumps on the uphill side. Turn downhill, not uphill, if stability becomes a problem.
- Stay at least as far from ditches and rivers as banks are deep
- Keep front-end loader buckets as low as possible when moving
- If right front tire goes off the road into the ditch--turn downward rather than attempting to turn back onto the roadway

Reducing the risk for rear overturn:
- Always hitch loads at the drawbar
- Use front weights to increase tractor stability
- Start forward motion slowly and change speed gradually
- If possible, avoid backing downhill
- Drive around ditches.
- Back out or be towed out of ditches or mud
Review The Following Points

- Install and use seat belts on tractors with ROPS
- ROPS do not prevent rollovers from occurring
- Most rollovers involve tractor speed, operator error, or unsafe driving conditions
- Follow safety steps to prevent rollovers

Always wear a seat belt, when driving a tractor equipped with a ROPS.

Tractors that do not require ROPS include the following:

- Low profile tractors used for work that would interfere with a ROPS (e.g., picking orchards, vineyards, hopyards, etc.).
- Tractors with mounted equipment that is incompatible with a ROPS (e.g., cornpickers, cotton strippers, fruit harvesters, etc.)

13.17. Bypass Starting

Bypass starting occurs when an operator "bypasses" normal safety procedures and the normal starting system. A typical bypass occurs when someone standing on the ground touches a screwdriver or other metal object to the starter contacts and activates the engine. This action avoids standard safety devices that keep the engine from starting without someone in the driver’s seat. Another method of bypass starting occurs when someone uses the starting button to start a tractor from the ground.

**IMPORTANT:** Any method of bypass starting is extremely dangerous. If the tractor is in gear when the bypass occurs, the machine will start and can injure or kill anyone in its path. This situation is even more serious if the tractor is equipped with a hydraulic clutch. If a tractor with a hydraulic clutch is bypass started, it will not move immediately, but it will lurch suddenly with the buildup of hydraulic pressure.

All tractor operators should follow these safe starting rules:

- Never start a tractor by shorting across the starter terminals.
- Keep tractors in good working order so they will start normally.
- If a tractor has a neutral start switch, but it starts in gear with the key or starter button, something is wrong. Fix the tractor immediately.
- Never wire around or defeat the neutral start switch.
- Always place a tractor in neutral or park before starting it.
- Never start a tractor from the ground.

13.18. Towing Safety

When towing a trailer or farm equipment, follow these guidelines to ensure driving safety:
- Ensure that the trailer and hitching attachments meet local and state requirements. The trailer must have a current tag and registration.
- Inspect the trailer and the towing vehicle’s wheels and lights to ensure they are in good working order.
- Ensure that the trailer hitch is sufficiently strong and properly mounted.
- Make sure that the towing ball is the correct size for the trailer hitch.
- Always secure a safety chain between the trailer and the towing vehicle.
- Inspect all indicator lights to ensure they are working.
- Adjust mirrors as necessary to view the roadway behind the trailer.
- Adjust your speed and apply brakes evenly to allow for increased stopping distances.
- When backing a trailer, it is helpful to have another person behind the trailer to guide you. Put your hand on the bottom section of the steering wheel and turn the wheel in the direction that you want the trailer to move.

13.19. Tractor Hauling Safety
When hauling a tractor for some distance, it is best to transport it on a truck or trailer.

Safe highway procedures for hauling include:
- Haul tractors and implements on a flatbed.
- Obey the laws for height, width and tie-down regulations.
- Remove, cover or turn SMV signs when tractors are transported on another vehicle.
- Use the correct flags, lights, and reflectors on the transport vehicle to warn other drivers.
- For shorter distances, tractor highway travel is appropriate. For the safety of everyone on the road, safety provisions should always be followed. Only operate machinery in good repair on the highway. Properly hitch implements with adequate safety chains before beginning the journey, and never use makeshift hitch pins.

13.20. Pesticide Chemical Safety
This section discusses agricultural chemical safety for pesticides, including rodenticides, insecticides, herbicides, etc. Pesticides are chemicals that protect crops and livestock from rodents, insects, disease, or weeds. They also control pests that endanger human health. Because pesticides are poisonous, they can be extremely dangerous to humans. Before applying commercial pesticides, always ensure your safety, the safety of others, and the safety of the environment.

There are four ways toxic materials can be taken into the body. They are: oral, dermal, inhalation, and ocular exposures, with dermal being the most common type of exposure. These types of exposures are explained in Table 13.1.
TABLE 13.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Exposure</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Cause of Exposure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Oral Exposure    | Swallow or ingest a | • Not washing hands before eating, drinking, smoking or chewing tobacco.  
• Mistaking a pesticide for food or drink.  
• Accidentally applying pesticides to food.  
• Splashing pesticide into the mouth through carelessness or accident. |
| Dermal Exposure  | Having pesticide on your skin | Not washing hands after handling pesticides or their containers.  
• Splashing or spraying pesticides on unprotected skin.  
• Applying pesticides in windy weather.  
• Wearing inadequate personal protective equipment while handling pesticides or their containers. |
| Inhalation Exposure | Breathing in a pesticide. | • Prolonged contact with pesticides in closed or poorly ventilated spaces.  
• Breathing vapors from fumigants and other pesticides.  
• Breathing vapors, dust, or mist while handling pesticides without appropriate protective equipment.  
• Inhaling vapors immediately after a pesticide is applied.  
• Using the wrong respirator, or an improperly fitted respirator, or using filters, cartridges, or canisters that are "full" of chemicals, dust, etc. |
| Ocular Exposure  | Pesticide gets in the eye. | • Splashing or spraying pesticides in eyes.  
• Applying pesticides in windy weather without eye protection.  
• Rubbing eyes with contaminated gloves or hands.  
• Pouring dust, granules or powder formulations without eye protection. |

Exposure is considered:

- **Acute:**  
  One-time case of pesticide exposure. For example: a spill on the body. Exposure is usually easy to determine

- **Chronic:**  
  Low-level exposure over a longer period of time. Exposure is usually difficult to determine

- A combination of the two exposures can be dangerous. For example, daily exposure to a pesticide through contaminated clothing combined with an acute exposure like spilling a pesticide on your skin poses the greatest risk because the body may not be able to deal with the acute exposure

**Avoiding Exposure**
In order to avoid exposure, it is important to avoid the causes of exposure. For example, by wearing the proper eye protection you can prevent a pesticide from getting in the eyes.

To avoid exposure:
- Wear proper personal protective equipment
- If you do start to breathe pesticide mist or dust, move away from that area as quickly as possible and get into fresh air
- Use a closed handling system
- Maintain and clean personal protective equipment
- Wash exposed body parts often to reduce dermal exposure
- Read pesticide labels thoroughly

Review the Following Points
- Dermal exposure to a pesticide means that it gets on the skin
- Ocular exposure to a pesticide means that it gets in the eye
- Oral exposure to a pesticide is swallowing or ingesting it
- Inhalation exposure is inhaling a pesticide
- Using improper personal protective equipment can lead to exposure to the pesticide

There are several government agencies that govern the use of commercial pesticides. For more information on pesticide usage, contact one or more of the following groups: Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Department of Health, Structural Pest Control Board, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

13.21. General Pesticide Safety
The following sections provide general or specific guidelines for handling pesticides. To help reduce the hazards associated with pesticides:
- Do not transport, mix, or use agricultural chemicals unless you can summon help, if needed.
- Keep an ample supply of water nearby to flush exposed areas, if a spill occurs.
- Check all pesticide equipment before you use it to ensure proper working condition.
- Read pesticide labels carefully. Follow the label directions when mixing, applying, storing, or disposing of pesticides.
- Wear personal protective equipment to prevent dermal, inhalation, and mucous membrane exposure.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke when handling pesticides.
- Launder clothing and bathe after working with pesticides to ensure that all chemicals are removed from clothing and skin.
- Do not use agricultural pesticides around the home or office.
- Observe assigned reentry intervals. Always wear the appropriate protective clothing when entering fields before the reentry date.
• Always handle pesticides downhill from wells, cisterns, sink holes, ditches, or standing water.
• Do not apply pesticides when rain is imminent or if wind could affect the spraying area.
• Triple-rinse spray equipment and empty containers. Apply the rinse water to the treated field.
• Properly dispose of empty containers.

13.22. Preparing to Apply Pesticides
Preparation is essential for chemical safety. Follow these steps to properly prepare for pesticide application:

• Plan Ahead.
  o Always read chemical labels before attempting to work with pesticides. Prepare for a possible emergency by maintaining a personal decontamination site, a chemical spill kit, and by knowing the proper first aid procedures associated with your pesticide.
• Move Pesticides Safely.
  o Careless chemical transportation can cause spills and contamination. Do not carry pesticides in an enclosed area, such as a car. Be sure to secure the pesticides to prevent shifting or bouncing. In addition, never leave your vehicle unattended when transporting chemicals.
• Select Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.
  o Regardless of the pesticide’s toxicity, always wear a long-sleeve shirt and pants when working with pesticides. Wear additional protective equipment, as necessary.
• Select Application Equipment.
  o Choose suitable equipment to properly apply pesticides. Before using the equipment, inspect it for good working order.
• Provide Prior Notification.
  o Before applying pesticides, inform all people in or around the application area. Notification allows people to protect themselves from harmful chemicals.

13.23. Mixing Pesticides
Always read and carefully follow label directions when mixing pesticides. Even if you are familiar with a particular chemical, reread the label to ensure that you have the latest safety information. In addition, follow these guidelines for mixing pesticides:
• Wear Personal Protective Equipment.
• Always wear protective gear when handling hazardous chemicals.

Work in a Safe Area.
The pesticide mixing and loading area should be well ventilated, well lighted, and downhill from any water sources. Concrete slabs are ideal for mixing chemicals since they allow for easy cleanup.

Measure Chemicals Correctly.
- Measure and mix pesticides carefully. Never mix different pesticides except as directed by the label or chemical manufacturer. Do not use more chemical than prescribed by the pesticide label. The overuse of pesticides is illegal, and may result in the following:
  - Higher pest control costs
  - Pesticide residue in food
  - Groundwater pollution
  - Pesticide resistance

Pour Pesticides Carefully.
- Always wear a face shield and take care not to splash chemicals when pouring pesticides. Never use your mouth to siphon pesticides.

When you apply pesticides, you are responsible for protecting yourself, other people, and the environment. Follow these guidelines when applying pesticides:
- Minimize Exposure.
  - Even mildly toxic chemicals can harm you if you use them daily. Take care to minimize your exposure to any chemical. Avoid working in pesticide spray, mist, or runoff. Always work with another person when working with hazardous chemicals.
- Avoid Applying Pesticides in Sensitive Areas.
  - Avoid spraying pesticides near beehives or areas that humans normally occupy (e.g., schools, playgrounds, hospitals, etc.). If you must apply pesticides in sensitive areas, do so when the weather is calm and when people are not around.
- Avoid Pesticide Drift, Runoff, and Spills.
  - Pesticides that fall outside the targeted application area can be very hazardous. Choose weather conditions, equipment, and chemicals that do not lend themselves to these hazards.
- Avoid Equipment Accidents.
  - Equipment accidents are often caused by poor maintenance and improper work habits. Avoid equipment accidents by following all operating instructions.

13.25. Pesticide Storage and Disposal
Always try to use all the pesticide in your application tank. If pesticides remain, use them on other target locations. After emptying the tank, clean and store the equipment.
The following summary of EPA storage criteria should be followed for pesticides labeled with the signal words DANGER, POISON, or WARNING, or the skull and crossbones symbol. These procedures and criteria are not necessary for the storage of pesticides classed as less toxic (CAUTION word on the label) or for those registered for use in the home or garden.

Site Storage
- Locate where flooding is unlikely.
- Locate where runoff will not contaminate any water system.

Storage Facility
- Dry, well ventilated, separate room, building, or covered area with fire protection (e.g., dry chemical fire extinguisher).
- Secured by fence and/or locked doors.
- Signs on rooms/buildings to provide hazard warning (e.g., DANGER, POISON, PESTICIDE STORAGE).
- Movable pesticide equipment is labeled as contaminated and not removed from the site until decontaminated.
- Provision is available for the decontamination of personnel and equipment; contaminated water disposed of as excess pesticide; contaminated runoff collected and treated as excess pesticide.

Operational Procedures
- Store pesticide containers in rows with the labels plainly visible.
- Place contents from damaged containers in sound containers.
- If relevant, segregate pesticides by formulation.
- Store rigid containers in an upright position, with tight lids/bungs, off the ground, in a manner to permit access and inspection.
- Maintain a complete inventory indicating the number and identity of containers.
- Check containers regularly for corrosion and leaks.
- Keep suitable absorbent (e.g., vermiculite) on hand in case of spills.

Safety Precautions
- Inspect pesticide containers for leaks before handling them.
- Do not allow unauthorized personnel in the storage area.
- Do not store pesticides next to items intended for consumption by animals or humans.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, or chew tobacco where pesticides are present.
- Do not store beverages, food, eating utensils, or smoking material in the storage or loading areas.
- Wear rubber gloves while handling containers of pesticides.
- Wash hands immediately after handling pesticides. Remove contaminated protective clothing immediately; extra sets of clean clothing should be nearby.
Fire Control
- Where large quantities are stored, inform the fire department.
- Furnish the fire chief with home telephone numbers of responsible persons.

Disposal
- Unused or outdated pesticides must be disposed as hazardous chemicals.
- See the Hazardous Waste Disposal chapter for more information.

*IMPORTANT: Never leave pesticide containers at a field site. Be sure to account for every container used, and safely dispose of empty containers.*

*NOTE: Store herbicides separately from other pesticides. Some herbicides may volatilize and contaminate the pesticides.*

13.26. Pesticide Cleanup
Always thoroughly clean all pesticide equipment as soon as you are through with it. Leaving pesticide residue in mixing, loading, or application equipment can result in accidental injury or death to livestock or people or unwanted contamination of plants or soil.

Clean the inside and outside of pesticide equipment, including nozzles. Dispose of contaminated rinse water as directed on the chemical label.

*IMPORTANT: Do not allow pesticide rinse water to contaminate water supplies.*

13.27. Antidotes
Time is of the essence when pesticide overexposure occurs. However, using an antidote kit may not be the best course of action. Unless a physician has stated that an antidote is needed, it should not be administered. Some antidotes such as atropine can be poisonous if misused. A prescription may even be necessary to acquire the antidote. You may be able to get a local physician to write the prescription, prepare a written protocol regarding the use of the antidote, and train pertinent employees about how and when to administer the antidote.

If medical assistance is available locally through a hospital, physician, or ambulance service, you should call 911 or take the individual directly to the nearest emergency treatment center instead of maintaining an antidote kit on site.

13.28. Fertilizer Chemical Safety
Ammonia fertilizers are widely used because of their effectiveness in getting large amounts of nitrogen into the soil. Anhydrous ammonia fertilizer is essentially dry ammonia gas compressed into liquid form. This material is very harmful if accidentally
spilled or sprayed onto body surfaces. It can cause blindness if it gets into the eyes. Also, high concentrations of ammonia gas in the air are very irritating to the lungs. Always use appropriate personal protective equipment and exercise rigorous care when handling, applying, and storing such toxic or irritating materials.

Safety Precautions

- Most ammonia fertilizer accidents occur when the material is being transferred from one tank to another. One of the major causes of accidents is hoses coming loose or bursting.
- Exercise care in the handling and use of ammonia fertilizer by doing the following:
  - Always wear chemical goggles and adequate skin cover.
  - Inspect equipment before each day's work and correct any abnormal conditions.
  - Water is the first aid treatment of choice when ammonia gets into the eyes or on the skin. In case of mishap, flush affected areas for 15 minutes and get medical help as soon as possible.
  - Make sure all valves, lines, and connections are secure in order to reduce the chance of either leaks or being doused during transfer.

- Observe these precautions when working with anhydrous ammonia:
  - Use good equipment specially designed for handling anhydrous ammonia.
  - Keep your equipment in good repair. Worn hoses, loose connections, and other defects can cause accidents.
  - Follow the prescribed sequence of operations for connecting to, filling, and disconnecting from the applicator tank.
  - Never leave the equipment during the transfer operation.
  - After filling the applicator tank, close all valves.

- **Storing Ammonium Nitrate**
The guidelines listed below must be followed when storing ammonium nitrate fertilizer:
  - Not more than 60 tons of ammonium nitrate shall be stored.
  - Storage buildings shall have adequate ventilation.
  - All flooring in storage and handling areas shall be of noncombustible material, without open drains or traps.
  - Buildings and structures shall be dry and free from water seepage through the roof, walls, and floors.
  - Bags of ammonium nitrate shall not be stored within 30 inches of the storage building walls and partitions.
  - The height of piles shall not exceed 20 feet. The width of piles shall not exceed 20 feet.
  - Aisles shall be provided to separate piles by a clear space of not less than 3 feet in width.
Ammonium nitrate shall be stored separately from flammable or combustible materials (e.g. paper, rags, hay, oils).

Broken bags, spilled material, and discarded containers shall be promptly gathered and disposed.

Prohibit smoking where ammonium nitrate is stored.

Fire control devices such as a water hose or portable fire extinguishers must be available in the storage area.

- Ensure that storage areas are equipped with mechanical devices so that workers are not required to enter the area.

13.29. Livestock Safety
Farm animals are responsible for many disabling injuries. Although animal-related injuries are generally less severe than injuries caused by farm machinery, such accidents cost time, money, and productivity.

The following guidelines offer general safety instructions for working with any animals:

- Take good care of animals and treat them kindly.
- Use adequate restraining and handling facilities when working with animals.
- Always leave yourself an escape route when working with animals (i.e., do not work in small, confined areas or back yourself into a corner).
- Do not put your hands, legs, or feet in gate or chute closures where you may become pinned or crushed by a large animal.
- Reduce the chance for slips and falls by keeping handling areas free from debris. Attach ”no slip” safety strips to slick areas.
- Stay away from frightened, sick, or hurt animals whenever possible. Take care around animals with young offspring.
- Wear protective clothing around animals, as appropriate.
- Do not handle livestock when you are alone.
- Keep children away from unfamiliar or unfriendly animals.
- Treat manure pits as confined space. Exercise caution as appropriate. Refer to the Manure Pits section in this chapter for more information.

The following sections provide specific instructions for working with certain animals.

**BEEF CATTLE**

- Ordinary beef cattle generally have a calm disposition; however, they are easily spooked. Because cattle can see almost 360 degrees without moving their heads, a quick movement from behind can scare them just as easily as a sudden movement from the front. Loud, sudden noises tend to upset cattle.
- Although cattle are not likely to attack humans, their size and weight can make them dangerous. Always leave yourself an escape route when working with cattle. Keep small children and strangers away from cattle.
• Remember, cattle tend to kick forward and then backward with their back legs. If you working near the udder or flank area of a cow, consider pulling the back leg forward to prevent a kick.

**DAIRY CATTLE**

• Always announce your presence to a cow by speaking calmly or touching the animal gently. When moving cows into a constraining place, such as a milk parlor, always give them time to adjust before beginning work. If a dairy cow tends to kick, consider using a hobble.

**SWINE**

• Hogs can be dangerous because they can bite with enough force to cause serious injury. Likewise, a hog's size and weight can easily harm a person if the animal steps on, lies on, or charges a person. Guiding hogs for sorting or movement to a new pen requires lots of patience and adequate facilities. An easy way to guide a hog backwards is to place a box or basket over the hog's head. The hog will then back away to avoid the box. As with cattle, you should announce your presence to a hog by speaking calmly.

**HORSES**

• Take care not to spook horses with loud noise. If you intend to work with a horse, you should know how to ride properly, saddle, and handle a horse. Ride with extra care around trees, water, or rough terrain.

**SHEEP**

• Take care when working around sheep to avoid being butted by a ram. To safely immobilize a sheep for handling, place the animal on his rump and tilt him far enough back to keep the rear hooves off the ground.

**POULTRY**

• Chickens are fairly harmless, although geese, gobblers, and roosters can harm children and the elderly. Most hazards associated with poultry concern improper equipment usage, dust, and slippery surfaces within poultry facilities.

13.30. Manure Pits

Manure pit systems are often used to store large amounts of raw manure under animal confinement buildings. Manure pits make cleanup easier for farm employees; however, these pits may contain hazardous atmospheres. Due to the nature of these pits, workers should always treat manure pits as confined spaces.

Manure pits may contain one or more of the following gases in dangerous concentrations:

• Methane
• Hydrogen sulfide
• Carbon dioxide
• Ammonia

Within the confined space of a manure pit, these gases can create an oxygen deficient, toxic, and/or explosive atmosphere.

Treat manure pits like any other type of confined space. For example:
• Ensure that manure pits are properly ventilated.
• Test the pit atmosphere before entering the pit.
• Have a safety attendant ready to lift workers within the manure pit to safety, if necessary.
• Always wear a safety belt or harness with a lifeline when working within a manure pit.

13.31. Outdoor Burning
The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulates outdoor burning (30 TAC 111.201-221). All departments of Texas A&M University-Commerce will follow the Outdoor Burning Procedures administered by the Department of Risk Management and Safety. Authorized outdoor burning must comply with the TCEQ and Texas A&M University-Commerce requirements outlined in this procedure.

Authorized outdoor burning must comply with the following TCEQ, City of Commerce, and Texas A&M University-Commerce requirements:

• 72 hour advanced notice must be given to the Department of Risk Management and Safety.
• A fire break must be established and approved of ahead of time by the Department of Risk Management and Safety.
• Prior to ignition of material the day of scheduled burn, the Department Supervisor must contact the Safety Manager.
• The Department of Risk Management and Safety will make all the necessary notifications to university, local, and state agencies.
• Burning must be outside the corporate limits of Commerce, Texas.
• Burning cannot take place if there are any local burn bans in affect
• Ensure that wind direction will not allow smoke and other pollutants to cause adverse effects to any public road, landing strip, navigable water, residence, business, stable, greenhouse, etc.
• If at any time during the burning smoke blows onto or across a road or highway, it is the responsibility of the department initiating the burn to post flag persons on affected roads. Flags and safety vest must be on hand at time of scheduled outdoor burn.
• Burning must be conducted downwind of or at least 300 feet from any sensitive structure (e.g., residence, business, stable, greenhouse) unless prior written approval is obtained from the adjacent occupant with possessory control.
• Burning may be commenced no earlier than one hour after sunrise and must be completed on the same day no later than one hour before sunset.
• A responsible person must attend the burning at all times during the active burn phase.
• In cases where residual fires and/or smoldering objects continue to emit smoke after the active burn phase, such areas shall be extinguished if the smoke from these areas has the potential to create a nuisance or traffic hazard condition.
• No burning can be done if the wind speed is predicted to be less than six mph or greater than 23 mph.
• Burning shall not be conducted during periods of actual or predicted persistent low-level atmospheric temperature inversions. (Call the National Weather Service to get an advisory for your area.)
• Electrical insulation, treated lumber, plastics, non-wood construction/demolition material, heavy oil, asphalt materials, potentially explosive materials, chemical wastes, and items containing natural or synthetic rubber may not be burned.

Contact the Department of Risk management and Safety for detailed procedures relating to outdoor burning.

14. **Grounds Maintenance**

14.1. **General Lawn Safety**
TAMUC spends considerable time, effort, and money on grounds maintenance. From flower care, to lawn care, tree trimming, and leaf blowing, TAMUC employees are responsible for safely maintaining the grounds on campus. Gardening tools and mechanical lawn care devices, such as lawn mowers, power blowers, and chain saws, present special safety concerns for grounds maintenance personnel.

Common landscaping accidents include the following:
• Cuts, lacerations, or amputations from whirling mower blades.
• Bruises or broken bones from flying projectiles.
• Burns from hot equipment parts
• Electrical shock from faulty grounding or defective electrical cords
• Back strain from improper equipment usage
• Slips, trips, and falls

Regardless of the type of landscape equipment you use, follow these basic guidelines to ensure optimum safety:

• Read the equipment owner’s manual.
  o Use the right equipment for the job at hand.
  o Inspect the equipment before each use.
  o Know how to control and stop the equipment quickly.
• Wear personal protection equipment, as necessary:
  o Eye protection
  o Hearing protection
  o Long pants
  o Sturdy, close-toed shoes
  o Work gloves
  o High visibility safety apparel

• Apply sunscreen to exposed areas of skin.

• Be careful to avoid fatigue and heat stress (refer to the General Safety chapter in this manual for more information):
  o Drink plenty of water (5-7 oz. every 20 minutes)
  o Take breaks

• Do not operate powered equipment if you are tired, sick, or taking medication.
• Take special precautions when working with electrical equipment. If you are using an extension cord, take care not to accidentally cut it.
• Do not smoke around gas powered equipment. Allow hot equipment to cool before refueling.

Make sure that all guards are in place and in good condition.

*IMPORTANT: Keep pedestrians and bystanders at least 30 feet away when using powered equipment.*

Follow manufacturers instructions prior to conducting maintenance activities on any equipment.

14.2. Hand Tools

Although garden hand tools tend to be safer than powered equipment, common gardening tools, such as rakes, shovels, and hoes cause thousands of injuries each year. Follow these guidelines for using garden hand tools.

• Keep hand tools in good condition. Replace split or rotten handles. Keep blades sharp.
• Buy quality tools that fit your needs and your build. For example, if you are tall, choose tools with handles that are long enough to prevent you from stooping over your work.
• Never leave a rake, shovel, or hoe on the ground facing up. Foot injuries from exposed metal and head injuries from handles that pop up unexpectedly are the main hazards associated with these tools.
14.3. Mower Safety
Mowers are the most common type of lawn care equipment. To avoid injury with power mower equipment, you must pay close attention to your surroundings. Whether you use a riding mower or a walk-behind mower, follow these guidelines for lawn mower safety:

- Conduct a pre-mowing inspection of the lawn and remove any debris, rocks, limbs, or other items that could become a projectile. Look for concealed hazards such as holes.
- Keep hands and feet away from moving blades.
- Fill the tank with gas before beginning work. (By filling the tank initially, you can avoid having to fill the tank later when it is hot.)
- Replace loud or faulty mufflers.
- Shut off the engine before unclogging, servicing, or adjusting the mower and before removing the grass bag. For added protection, remove the ignition wire before working on the machine.
- Inspect mower to verify all guards and safety devices are in place and operating properly.

14.4. Riding Lawn Mowers
In addition to the general guidelines for mower safety, follow these guidelines for riding lawn mower safety:

- Before starting the engine, make sure the transmission is out of gear and the mower blade clutch is disengaged.
- Never allow extra riders on the lawn mower.
- Slow down when turning and when working on slopes. Mow up and down slopes rather than across them.
- Always look behind you before backing.
- If you hit a large rock or stump, stop the mower and inspect the blades and shaft. Replace damaged blades.
- Never leave a running lawn mower unattended. Before leaving the seat, park the mower on a flat area, disengage the mower blades, and remove the ignition key.

14.5. Walk-Behind Mowers
In addition to the general guidelines for mower safety, follow these guidelines for walk-behind mower safety:

- Wear sturdy shoes with good traction. Never wear open-toed shoes around walk-behind mowers.
- Do not bypass the safety device that stops the blade when the operator releases his/her grip on the handle.
- Mow across slopes rather than up and down slopes.
- Work slowly and patiently when mowing tall grass or tough weeds. Forcing the mower may cause repeated clogs and engine stalls.
Never leave a running mower unattended. If you stop momentarily, cut the throttle to idle and make sure the mower will not roll away.

14.6. Chain Saw Safety
Chain saws are ideal for trimming trees and cutting fallen limbs into smaller pieces. Unfortunately, chain saws are associated with many serious injuries each year. Common chain saw hazards include the following:

- Chain cuts
- Falling trees and limbs
- Strains and sprains
- Burns

To avoid injury, you must respect chain saw hazards and handle chain saws skillfully. In addition to general lawn safety guidelines, follow these instructions for safely using chain saws:

- Stay alert while sawing. Most injuries occur below the waist when the operator is not paying attention.
- Do not use a chain saw alone. Have someone else stand nearby in case of an emergency.
- Choose and inspect your chain saw carefully:
  - Use the correct size chain saw for the job at hand.
  - Ensure that the chain is sharp and the tension is taut.
  - Ensure that smaller chain saws have a safety tip to prevent kickbacks. (Kickbacks cause one third of all chain saw injuries.)

- Wear protective safety equipment as necessary:
  - Hard hat
  - Eye protection
  - Face shield
  - Hearing protection
  - Gloves
  - Chainsaw protective chaps

- Always operate a chain saw with two hands.
- Limbs that are at shoulder height or higher present a special safety problem. Use a ladder so that the saw is at a lower and safer position relative to your body.
- Never allow the tip of a running chain saw to touch the ground. This could cause a serious kickback injury.
- To avoid kickback injuries, stand to the side of a running chain saw. Do not stand directly behind it.
- Move brush and limbs as you work to maintain a clear operating area.
- Never force a chain saw through a limb.
- Never stand on a log or limb while cutting it.
14.7. Power Blowers
Because power leaf blowers can produce air gusts up to 200 mph, you must follow all manufacturers’ safety precautions. Always walk towards your work when using a power leaf blower. Do not back away from your work.

Always wear hearing and eye protection when operating a blower.

14.8. Trimming Equipment
Follow these safety guidelines for trimming equipment such as hedge trimmers, string trimmers, grass shears, and edgers:
- Avoid touching rocks, debris, and gravel with trimming equipment. These items could cause a serious injury if a kickback occurs.
- Make sure all screws and chains are tight. Vibrating equipment can cause screws to loosen.
- Walk towards your work. Do not back away from your work when using a trimmer.

14.9. Chemical Products
Information on the safe use of pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, etc.) and fertilizers is given in the section of Agriculture Safety, of this manual.

14.10. Outdoor Burning
Refer to Agriculture Safety section 15.31 (Outdoor Burning)

15. Glassware Disposal

15.1. General
Discarded glassware, both intact and broken, poses a genuine hazard and should be properly discarded to avoid injuries to lab occupants, office employees, students, and other university employees. This procedure introduces the minimal expectation for handling and disposing of glassware.

15.2. Glassware
Glassware is any item that could puncture regular trash bags and potentially cause injuries to someone handling the trash bag, including:
- Empty Glass Containers
- Unserviceable, Unwanted Glassware
- Broken Glassware
- Bottles, Flasks, Vials Apparatus, and Pipettes not used for bio-hazardous or infectious materials.
- Broken plasticware may also be included if it has potential to cause injury during handling.
Glassware does not include sharps, which are objects that can be reasonably anticipated to penetrate the skin or any other part of the body and to result in a bloodborne pathogen exposure incident, such as needle devices, scalpels, lancets, broken capillary tube, exposed ends of dental wire or dental knives, drills, or burs.

15.3. Approved Containers.
Any cardboard box, vendor purchased broken glassware box, or plastic buckets with lids, may be used as a laboratory glassware receptacle, provided:

- it is sturdy,
- has a sealable lid,
- is plastic-lined to prevent leakage
- is of a size that will not weigh more than 20 pounds when full.
- Never use a “red bag” (the universal symbol for infectious waste) to line the container.

15.4. Labeling.
- Clearly label the box “CAUTION: BROKEN GLASSWARE,” “BROKEN GLASS DISPOSAL” “GLASSWARE” or similar wording.
- Position the box so that the label remains readily visible.

15.5. Accepted glassware.
Any clean, empty and unlabeled glassware or plasticware, either intact or broken, may be placed in the container, except sharps.

Empty product containers, not containing hazardous chemical or infectious residue, must first have labels removed or defaced before being placed in a glass disposal container.

15.6. Prohibited materials.
- Contaminated laboratory glassware or plasticware
- Sharps
- Bio-hazardous or infectious materials
- Radioactive materials
- Liquid wastes

15.7. Disposal.
- Twist and tape closed the bag top.
- Close the container lid and tape it shut, ensuring that the label remains visible after the box/container has been sealed.
- Carry the sealed, labeled container directly to the dumpster outside of your building.
- The generator of the waste must take the broken glassware to the dumpster, not the custodial staff.
16. **Sharps**

16.1. **General**
Since the handling of sharps pose a significant safety and health risk, extreme caution must be exercised while handling sharps. Also, federal, state, and local regulations govern the safe handling and disposal of sharps. This introduces the minimal techniques and process to use while handling and disposing of sharps materials.

16.2. **Sharps**
A sharp is any device having corners, edges, or projections capable of cutting or piercing the skin, including
- Regulated sharps
- Unregulated biohazardous sharps
- Unregulated and uncontaminated sharps that pose a safety hazard to personnel.

The following items are considered sharps and should be placed in a sharps container, whether or not they are contaminated with medical, chemical, or bio-hazardous waste:
- Needles
- Needles with syringes
- Needles from vacutainers
- Needles with attached tubing
- Blades (razors, scalpels, X-acto, etc.)

The following items contaminated with medical, chemical, or biohazardous waste must be placed in a sharps container:
- Broken glassware
- Glassware with sharp edges or points
- Pasteur pipettes
- Glass slides

The following items may be placed in a rigid container and properly marked and placed in the sanitary trash only if they are not contaminated with medical or hazardous waste.
- Broken glassware
- Glassware with sharp edges or points
- Glass slides

16.3. **Sharps Containers**
Sharps containers should be red and must be puncture-resistant and labeled as sharps waste, or with a biohazard symbol and the word biohazard, or as unregulated sharps.

Sharps containers must be placed in the area of sharps waste generation. Do not overfill sharps containers.
16.4. Sharps Waste Disposal for Contaminated Materials
Contact the Safety Office for pickup and disposal of your sharps container.

Sharps are also generated with unregulated or non-hazardous materials.

These sharps, even though not contaminated with medical, chemical, or hazardous waste, must also be disposed of properly.

The following items are considered sharps and should be placed rigid, puncture proof container
- Needles
- Needles with syringes
- Needles from vacutainers
- Needles with attached tubing
- Blades (razors, scalpels, X-acto, etc.)

Label the container Unregulated Sharps. These sharps must be free from medical, chemical, and/or radioactive contamination.

Contact the Safety Office for proper disposal procedures of your sharps container.

17. Hazardous Chemical Management

17.1. General
Hazardous chemicals must be handled, transported, stored, and disposed of properly. Federal, state, local, and university rules stipulate the procedures related to the safe handling, transportation, storage, and disposal of hazardous chemicals. The following guidelines establish the minimal requirements all university employees and contractors must follow.

17.2. Product Ordering and Shipping
- Before ordering, consider safer alternatives, and check for chemical stocks already on hand.
- Order no more than you need, do not order in bulk.
- Hazardous materials must be unloaded by the carrier and signed for before you may move them.

17.3. Receiving and Storage
- Store chemicals segregated by hazard class and compatibility and in proper storage cabinets.
- Do not keep expired chemicals.
Use caution when using and storing highly reactive chemicals such as certain peroxides, picric acid, & ethers/peroxide-forming compounds.

17.4. Use and Management
- Keep original labels.
- Label all secondary containers.
- Do not dispose of waste chemicals via evaporation or sewer discharge.
- Handle chemicals per university and department procedures for the intended purpose.

17.5. Transportation and Shipment of Hazardous Materials
- Do not ship by commercial carrier or transport over public roads or via air carrier in any form or quantity unless properly trained and approved.
- Authorization must be given by the Department Head and Safety Manager for transportation and shipping of hazardous materials.
- Unauthorized shipments will be refused by commercial carriers.
- If you need something shipped, contact the Safety Office or your certified departmental HazMat shipping officer.
- Only a certified hazardous materials shipping agent may offer hazardous materials for shipment.
- You must correctly identify the materials for any shipping or transportation.
- Personal vehicles are not authorized for transporting or shipping hazardous material.

17.6. Treatment and Recycling
- Minimize wastes:
  - Recovering
  - Reusing
- Elementary treatment such as:
  - solvent distillation
  - acid/base neutralization.
- Check with the safety office for regulatory restrictions.

17.7. Satellite Waste Accumulation
- Accumulate hazardous waste only in designated Satellite Accumulation Areas (SAAs).

17.8. Pick-up and Disposal
- Have the Safety Office pick up full waste containers for central accumulation, consolidation, shipping and treatment or disposal.
18. **MSDS Management**

18.1. **General**
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) provide important information to the user and surrounding individuals of the chemical hazards associated with every chemical. Federal, state, and local regulations require the employer to make available certain right to know information. This procedure establishes the minimal procedures Texas A&M University-Commerce will follow to meet such regulations.

18.2. **Chemicals**
Every chemical used on campus must have a MSDS provided by the manufacture. If no MSDS is available, then the product is not allowed to remain on campus. Contact the Safety Manager for proper removal and disposal of the product.

18.3. **MSDS Condition**
MSDS’s must be in English and in a condition that allows easy reading.
- No stains
- In good condition
- No secondary writing such as notes, scribbling, or pictures

18.4. **MSDS Accessibility**
MSDS’s must be easily accessed by any individual on the campus of Texas A&M University-Commerce.

MSDS’s must be made available to emergency response groups, including
- Commerce Fire Department
- Commerce Emergency Management
- Hunt County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- Emergency Medical Providers

18.5. **MSDS Management**
Each department of Texas A&M University-Commerce that uses chemicals must maintain MSDS’s for their chemicals. The Dean, Director, or Manager must identify the individual responsible for maintaining their departments MSDS inventory. Notify the Safety Manager of the responsible person

- MSDS’s must be updated yearly.
- MSDS’s must be updated if the chemical ingredients of the product change.
- MSDS’s must be located in a common, accessible area.
- All departmental employees must be trained on the use of MSDS’s and be told of the location of MSDS’s.
- MSDS’s must be kept for a minimum of 20 years after the chemical is not used.
19. **Hazardous Materials Transportation**

19.1. **General**
The US Department of Transportation (DOT) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have detailed regulations for shipping hazardous materials or dangerous goods. When shipping within the United States or Internationally, it is critical to comply with all shipping regulations to protect the shipper, the carrier, and the environment to prevent stiff penalties from being imposed.

All ‘hazmat employees’ require some level of training specific to the transportation-related function they perform (i.e. classification, packaging, marking, labeling, paperwork, etc). It is crucial that Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMUC) personnel responsible for shipping are properly trained to package and ship their materials.

19.2. **The Regulations**
The Hazardous Materials Regulation (HMR) Parts, 171 – 180 of Title 49 CFR contain all the regulations pertaining to the transport of hazardous materials. The purpose of the HMR is to provide the shipper with instruction on how to properly package, mark, label and document a hazardous material to be placed in commerce (i.e. ground, air, water and rail).

The International Air Transport Association’s Dangerous Goods Regulation is the guide that is recognized by all airlines that carry dangerous goods in all countries. This regulation provides procedures for the shipper and the operator by which Dangerous Goods can be safely transported by air on all commercial air transport.

Both regulations serve the same purpose, to provide safety to the shipper and carrier and to minimize the risk of contamination to the environment.

19.3. **Who Needs Training?**
A “hazmat employee” is a person who is employed by a hazmat employer (TAMUC) and who directly affects hazmat transportation safety. At TAMUC this is a person who:

- Loads, unloads, or handles hazardous materials;
- Classifies hazardous materials, prepares hazmat packages and/or shipping papers for transport by carriers; and/or
- Is responsible for safely transporting hazardous materials in university vehicles.

19.4. **What Training is Offered?**
Only trained persons may ship or receive shipments of hazardous materials / dangerous goods. The following trainings are available through Environmental Health and Safety:

- General Awareness – This training enables the employee to recognize and identify hazardous material shipments. The training is consistent with the hazard communication program required by 49 CFR.
• Dry Ice Shipping – This training is specific to shipments of Dry Ice. Dry Ice is a regulated hazardous material / dangerous good when shipped by air and therefore requires special packaging, marking and labeling.

• Limited Quantities – Limited quantities are shipments that must meet specific requirements (e.g. a specific amount) in order to be classified as a limited quantity shipment. This training will assist in classification, packaging, marking, labeling and documentation of a limited quantity shipment.

• Excepted Quantities – These shipments are materials that are less than 30 milliliters or 30 grams of a hazardous material. This training will assist in classification, packaging, marking, labeling and documentation of a limited quantity shipment.

• Function Specific Training – Function specific training is for individuals shipping specific hazardous materials repetitively and focuses on the needs of the shipper. This training is available as requested and developed for the specific needs of the shipper.

• Annual Contracted Training – A 40 hour Hazardous Material Transportation course is offered at the beginning of each year. Each department that ships hazardous materials is encouraged to have at least one person attend the 40 hour course. The training consists of 24 hours of 49 CFR, eight hours of the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulation, eight hours of Infectious Substance Training or Radioactive Material Training.

• Refresher Training – DOT requires refresher training every three years. IATA requires refresher training every two years. To ensure Texas A&M University-Commerce meets the refresher training requirements as required by both regulations, anyone shipping hazardous materials to be retrained every two years.

19.5. Hazardous Materials Defined
Hazardous materials mean a substance or material that the Secretary of Transportation has determined is capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, and property when transported in commerce, and has been designated as hazardous under Section 5103 of the Federal Hazardous Materials Transportation Law (49 U.S.C. 5103).

Hazardous materials, for the purpose of transportation, are those in one or more one of the following groups:
• Explosive materials
• Gases
• Flammable liquids
• Combustible liquids
• Flammable or water-reactive solids
• Oxidizers
• Poisonous materials
• Infectious materials
• Radioactive materials
• Corrosive materials
• Miscellaneous hazardous materials

19.6. DOT Requirements Simplified
The DOT regulations stipulate
• How a hazardous material is packaged (e.g., cardboard box, metal drum);
• How the package is marked—what words are written on the side?
• How the package is labeled—what colored diamond-shaped label is applied?
• How the material is described on shipping papers, which are required for shipment.
  o This information is summarized in the Hazardous Material Table in section 172.101 of the DOT regulations
  o It is important to note that just because the material you are shipping is not listed in the hazardous materials table does not imply that the material you are shipping is not regulated.
  o If you are unsure of the classification of your material, always contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

19.7. Hazardous Materials Shipping Questions
For assistance in resolving questions about the proper shipment of hazardous materials contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety

20. Confined Space
20.1. Policy
It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMUC) that any individual entering into a confined space on TAMUC property will do so in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Confined Space Program and 29 CFR 1910.146.

The purpose of this program is to identify, document, evaluate, and properly label all confined spaces on the TAMUC campus, and to allow only trained and authorized personnel to enter such spaces.

This program also provides guidelines for all entries into confined spaces on TAMUC grounds and facilities, so that they can be accomplished in a safe and healthful manner.

20.2. Reason
Confined spaces can present unique and very dangerous safety situations to those that must enter.

By their definition, confined spaces can typically be difficult to enter and exit.
Confined spaces can also contain atmospheric gases and other hazards that make them particularly hazardous for personnel entry.

The Confined Space Program involves training, signage and safety equipment, as appropriate; to be sure that employees are vigilant in their work in and around confined spaces and do not inadvertently or innocently enter into a confined space. The potential for serious injury is high, thus it is important that TAMUC employees who may enter any confined space, work with their department and the Department of Risk Management and Safety to ensure that all necessary safety precautions are considered and taken.

### 20.3. Definition and Locations

A confined space is defined as:

A space with the existence of all of the following conditions:

- Large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work. Has limited or restricted means for entry or exit.
- Is not designed for continuous employee occupancy.

#### Locations

- TAMUC has undertaken the effort to identify and maintain a detailed listing that permanently identifies locations meeting the criteria for a confined space.
- In addition, TAMUC will identify and label Permit Required Confined Spaces (PRCS). Only appropriately trained individuals may enter PRCS.

### 20.4. Examples of a Confined Space

Some examples of confined spaces at TAMUC include manholes, boilers, tanks, vats, and sewer pipelines.

### 20.5. Training

All employees that participate or have duties in the Confined Space Program will receive training to ensure that each individual has the understanding, knowledge and skills necessary to safely perform activities in the confined space.

The level of training will be in accordance with the Confined Space Program.

### 20.6. Working in a Confined Space

All work in a confined space must be performed in accordance with the Confined Space Program. (Review the [Confined Space Program](#).)

If you are unsure about whether you will be entering a confined space, you must **STOP** and contact your supervisor or the Department of Risk Management and Safety, before entering the area.
21. **Laboratory Safety**

21.1. **General Safety Guidelines**

Laboratory Safety incorporates safety principles from a variety of areas, including fire and life safety, chemical safety, biological safety and radiation safety. The hazards encountered in a laboratory touch every field in safety and may be similar, although potentially greater in quantity or severity, to hazards encountered in the average home or work place.

Laboratory Safety is overseen by the Department of Risk Management and Safety. This group works with other groups within the University to ensure that safe practices are utilized and that state, national, and international safety standards or requirements are followed. This is accomplished through conducting laboratory inspections, testing of chemical fume hoods and other safety equipment, and providing general laboratory safety training.

Specific information on safe lab practices can be found in the TAMUC Laboratory Safety Manual. This document contains information on the different hazards that may be found in laboratories - including chemical hazards, physical hazards, biological hazards and radiological hazards - and how to minimize the risks associated with those hazards. The TAMUC Laboratory Safety Manual also provides information on training requirements for laboratory personnel, how to protect oneself when working in a laboratory, and how to plan for an emergency situation in the laboratory.

For specific questions relating to Laboratory or Chemical Safety, contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety or review the TAMUC Laboratory Safety Manual.

22. **Utility Vehicle and Personal Transportation**

TAMUC has developed vehicle safety guidelines that provide guidelines for the use of Utility Vehicles and/or similar slow moving vehicles (SMV) and other forms of personal transportation on the campus of Texas A&M University-Commerce. The intent is to enable operators to avoid situations that may compromise their safety and avoid damaging the vehicle or other property, as well as to promote a safer environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Utility Vehicles Include:
- Golf Carts
- Club Cars
- Gators
- Tractors
- Mowers
- Four Wheel ATVs (Three Wheel ATVs not included)
Personal Transportation Includes:
- Skateboards
- Bicycles
- Skates
- Rollerblades
- Foot Scooters
- Electric Personal Mobility Devices
- Motorized Skateboards
- And Other Similar Devices

All members of the University community are covered by these procedures (students, staff, faculty, visitors, and contractors/vendors). All operators of Utility Vehicles must meet the following criteria before operating a Utility Vehicle on property under the jurisdiction of Texas A&M University-Commerce:
- Possess a valid Texas driver’s license.
- Know and adhere to the State of Texas motor vehicle laws.
- Annually review the Utility Vehicle Operating Procedures Program provided by the Department of Risk Management and Safety.

22.1. Utility Vehicle Safety
All original equipment safety features must be kept in good working order. The following outlines procedures for the safe operation of Utility Vehicles:

- Supervisors must monitor and document that all persons operating Utility Vehicles have been instructed in the safe operation of Utility Vehicles and have read the Utility Vehicles Operating Procedures Program.
- Utility Vehicles are not to be overloaded, i.e. carrying more passengers than seating provided or overloading the Utility Vehicles recommended carrying or load capacity (Seat belts must be used when provided).
- No one is permitted to ride on the running boards, fenders, or any part of the Utility Vehicle except the seats.
- All body parts – feet, legs, and arms shall be kept inside the Utility Vehicle while it is in motion, unless the operator is signaling for a turn.
- The MAXIMUM speed limit for Utility Vehicles off standard roadways is 10 mph (5 mph when pedestrians are present).
- Utility Vehicles may operate on University roadways, but must adhere to posted speed limits. Utility Vehicles must operate only on University campus/property. All Utility Vehicles should travel in the right hand lane, unless turning left.
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way on campus. Utility Vehicles must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks. SPEED IS TO BE REDUCED TO A MINIMUM (5 mph max.) WHEN DRIVING ALONG OR CROSSING SIDEWALKS SO AS TO AVOID ACCIDENTS WITH PEDESTRIANS.
• Utility Vehicle operators are to be diligent and pay particular attention to the needs of disabled persons, as limitations in vision, hearing or mobility may impair their ability to see, hear, or move out of the way of Utility Vehicles.

• Operators must park Utility Vehicles away from heavily traveled pedestrian areas.

• Operators are not to block the path, limit pedestrian access on walkways, nor park at entrances to buildings.

• Utility Vehicle operators are responsible for ignition keys for the period of time in which they are using the vehicle. Keys shall not be left in Utility Vehicles.

• Exiting the utility vehicle
  o Turn the key to “off” position.
  o Engage brake.
  o Remove the key

• University owned Utility Vehicles are to be used for University business only.

• No Utility Vehicle shall be operated between dusk and dawn without properly working headlights and taillights.

• The operator must report any accidents to the University Police Department and to the operator’s supervisor.

All Utility Vehicles and trailers (pulled by Utility Vehicles) must have clearly displayed on the exterior of that Vehicle and any trailer towed the slow moving vehicle reflective triangle.

University owned Utility Vehicles are to be maintained in accordance with manufacturer’s specifications.

• Departments are responsible for keeping all original equipment and safety features in good working order.

• Modification or tampering with a Utility Vehicle governor is prohibited and is a violation of Federal Law.

Personally owned Utility Vehicles are prohibited from operating on University property.

The safe operation of Utility Vehicles is paramount. Failure to follow this procedure, render common practices or courtesies, or follow rules of the road for the State of Texas, could result in citation, appropriate disciplinary action, and/or suspension of operator’s Utility Vehicles driving privileges.

22.2. General Vehicle Safety

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death and crippling injury in the United States. Traffic safety laws are important components of vehicle safety, but the most important aspect of vehicle safety is the driver.

*IMPORTANT:* All TAMU employees who operate a motor vehicle for company business (whether a company vehicle, rental vehicle, or personal vehicle) must possess a valid state driver’s license for their vehicle’s class.
The University Police Department is responsible for regulating moving vehicles and bicycles on university property. To ensure driving safety, follow these driving practices:

- Never drink and drive. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited.
- Obey all traffic laws, signs, and signals.
- Respond to dangerous driving conditions as appropriate.
- Maintain a safe distance between your car and any car in front of you. Allow at least one car length for each 10 MPH (e.g., three car lengths if you are driving 30 MPH).
- Keep your eyes moving to avoid fatigue, especially if you plan on driving for a long period.
- Always use your turn signal to indicate your intended action.
- Leave yourself an "out" by either driving in the lane with a shoulder, driving in the middle lane of a multi-lane road, or following other vehicles at a safe distance.
- Safety belts must always be worn when available in the vehicle.

22.3. Personal Transportation Safety

The University recognizes the use of these or similar devices as sustainable, alternative forms of transportation. They are easily portable, require little if any storage space, and provide the user relatively fast, energy-efficient transportation and equitable access to and/or around campus.

Users of personal transportation devices must use caution when riding on campus. Especially in high traffic pedestrian areas, riders must keep in mind that they must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and that the safety of TAMUC pedestrians is vital.

Respect and consideration for others on campus is a critical requirement for having different modes of transportation mix within a campus. The safety of pedestrians, cyclists, boarders and those using other devices depends on every person being careful and aware of their surroundings. Every person is strongly urged to watch out for the safety of others, especially those persons using modes that are more vulnerable to get to and around campus.

22.4. General Guidelines for the use of Personal Transportation include:

- Use of personal transportation is for campus transportation only
- Users must comply with University designated speed limits
- Personal transportation users must yield to pedestrians.
- Use personal transportation on designated sidewalks and crosswalks on campus.
- Use is only permitted at reasonable, safe and prudent speeds based upon conditions, including the terrain.
- Maintain control at all times
- Use them within the limits of your abilities, within the guidelines of this policy and within the purpose and design of the transportation.
• Use of personal transportation is not permitted on stairs, tables, ledges, railings, ramps or other structures.
• Do not use personal transportation in any University building or elsewhere on University property where signs prohibiting such activities are posted.
• Do not use personal transportation in a manner which presents an unreasonable risk of harm to the user or others.
• Do not use personal transportation in a manner which presents a risk of damage to University property.
• Do not use them within 10 feet of all building entrances, windows, or exits

Refer to the TAMUC Vehicle Safety Guidelines for further information

23. Powered Industrial Trucks

23.1. General

Powered Industrial Truck (PIT) is a significant safety concern. During the movement of products, employees, and materials, there are numerous opportunities for personal injury and property damage if proper procedures and caution are not used. The following applies to all powered industrial trucks, including forklifts, tractors, platform lift trucks, motorized hand trucks, and other specialized industrial trucks powered by electric motors or internal combustion engines.

23.2. Responsibilities

The Department of Risk Management and Safety is responsible for developing, implementing, and administering the powered industrial truck safety program. The Safety Manager will review the powered industrial truck safety program annually and make revisions if necessary.

• Each university supervisor or director that will have employees who operate PITs must ensure that all employees who operate or work near forklifts are properly trained.
• Supervisors must ensure that their employees follow safe operating procedures when using PITs.
• Employees who operate PITs must follow the safe operating procedures specified below.

23.3. Safe Operating Procedures

• Only authorized and trained personnel will operate PITs.
• All PITs will be equipped with a headache rack, fire extinguisher, proper lighting, back-up alarm, and seat belts.
• The operator will wear seatbelts at all times.
• The operator will perform daily pre-inspections.
• Any safety defects (such as hydraulic fluid leaks; defective brakes, steering, lights, or horn; and/or missing fire extinguisher, lights, seat belt, or back-up alarm) will be reported for immediate repair or the PIT will be taken out of service.
• Operators will follow the proper recharging or refueling safety procedures.
• Loads will be tilted back and carried no more than six inches from the ground.
• Loads that restrict the operator’s vision will be transported backwards.
• PIT operators will obey plant speed limits and slow down on wet floors and going around turns.
• PIT operators in high lift areas will wear hard hats.
• Operator will sound the horn and use extreme caution when meeting pedestrians, making turns, and cornering.
• Passengers may not ride on any portion of a PIT. Only the operator will ride PITs.
• If PITs are used as a man lift, an appropriate man lift platform (cage with standard rails and toe-boards) must be used.
• **PALLETs ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF LIFTING PLATFORMS – NO EXCEPTIONS!**
• The TAMUC Fall Protection Program must be understood and read prior to using lift platforms!
• Aisles will be maintained free from obstructions, marked, and wide enough (six-foot minimum) for vehicle operation.
• Lift capacity will be marked on all PITs. Operators will assure the load does not exceed rated weight limits.
• When unattended, PITs will be turned off, forks lowered to the ground, and the parking brake applied.
• PITs will not be used in inclement weather (rain, snow, high winds, etc.)
• All PITs (with the exception of pallet jacks) will be equipped with a multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher.
• Operators must report all accidents, regardless of fault and severity, to the Supervisor.
• When loading rail cars and trailers, dock plates will be used. Operators will assure dock plates are in good condition and will store them on edge when not in use.
• Rail cars and trailers will be parked squarely to the loading area and have wheels chocked in place. Operators will follow established docking/undocking procedures.

24. **Contractor Safety**

24.1. **Safe Work Practices**
Texas A&M University-Commerce requires all Contractors to follow Safe Work Practices at all times. It is understood that some work is inherently hazardous and dangerous, it is expected that Contractors will follow all local, state, and federal guidelines to reduce such hazards and dangerous environments. Safe Work Practices will assist to minimize the risk of injury, illness and property damage. Safe Work Practices are general in nature and are dependent of the type of work being performed. Safe Work Practices include:
- Proper use of PPE
- Elimination of hazards
- Maintaining proper housekeeping and area cleanliness
- Avoiding unsafe conditions
- Avoiding horseplay, harassment, and fighting at all times
- Posting the proper signage
- Properly illuminating work sites
- Ensuring, to the extent possible, a healthy environment is maintained

Along with Safe Work Practices, TAMUC requires all Contractors to follow local, state, and federal regulations. TAMUC reserves the right to enforce such practices to the extent allowed by law.

24.2. Department Responsibility
Each department that coordinates or uses the services of a Contractor or Subcontractor to perform maintenance, repair, installation, renovation or construction-related operations is expected to designate one or more persons to coordinate this program within his or her department. These coordinators are expected to assure that the Contractor is:

- Informed of the presence of hazards in or near the work area.
- Informed about TAMUC’s requirements related to the TAMUC Contractor Safety program
- Aware of the university’s expectations regarding safety compliance and the control of worksite hazards.

25. Hot Work Safety

25.1. Purpose
Hot Work Safety is used to prevent the outbreak of fire, fire alarm activations, smoke and flames or which produces heat and / or sparks. This includes, but is not limited to: brazing, grinding, cutting, torch soldering, thawing pipes, torch applied roofing and welding.

25.2. Application
This applies to work performed by any Texas A&M University-Commerce employee, student and contractor performing work in existing buildings, new construction in existing buildings or new construction attached to existing buildings. When hot work is performed outdoors, necessary precautions should be taken to ensure combustible materials have been cleared and the risk of fire has been eliminated. This does not apply to new construction where there is no attachment to existing buildings or to areas that are specifically designed and equipped for such operations, i.e. maintenance shop areas and designed welding areas.
25.3. Procedures

- Hot work should not be performed if the work can be avoided or performed in a safer manner. When practical, objects to be welded, cut or heated should be moved to a designated safe location, i.e. maintenance shops.
- If hot work must be performed, a Hot Work Permit must be completed.
- All precautions on the Hot Work Permit must be met prior to any work commencing. The supervisor or the employee performing the hot work will complete the permit.
- The Hot Work Permit is only good for the date specified on the permit.
- A Hot Work Permit must be displayed at the work site during all hot work.
- All building occupants must be suitably protected against hazards generated by the work. i.e. heat, sparks, fumes, welding rays, etc.
- Before hot work begins:
  - An appropriate fire extinguisher must be available and operable.
  - Flammable and igniteable materials and debris must be moved at least 35 feet from the hot work area or covered and protected from the hot work by fire resistant material.
  - Explosives, oxygen acetylene tanks, flammable liquids, compress gas cylinders or stored fuel must be moved at least 50 feet from the hot work area or covered and protected from the hot work by fire resistant material.
  - Smoke and fire detectors in the immediate area of the hot work must be temporarily disabled until the hot work is completed. This can only be accomplished by contacting the Safety Coordinator at (468-3129).
  - Adequate ventilation is being used (especially when cutting or welding material with painted or metal coated surfaces). For questions or assistance, on ventilation issues, contact the Physical Plant at (886-5761).
  - Building occupants have been protected or isolated from the hot work area. If work impacts building occupants, the work must be coordinated with the building proctor.
  - Cracks or holes in floors, walls, and ceiling (including ductwork) are properly covered or plugged.
  - Hot work equipment is operable and in good repair.
  - Drums, barrels and tanks have been cleaned and purged of flammables and toxics, all tank feeds are closed and the tank vented.
  - A fire watch is implemented if conditions warrant. If no fire hazards or combustible exposures are present a fire watch is not required.
  - Workers and Fire Watch personnel are trained in the use of fire extinguishing equipment and how to activate the fire alarm system.
- When hot work is complete:
  - The work area and any potentially affected surrounding areas are inspected for fire, fire damage or the potential for fire for a minimum of 30 minutes following completion of the hotwork.
  - Smoke / fire alarms that were disabled because of hot work are reactivated by contacting the Safety Coordinator.
  - Hot work permit is closed out.
Completed permit is returned to workers supervisor who then submits the completed permit to be placed in hot work permit file at each location.

26. Trenching and Shoring

26.1. Introduction
The following will apply to all Texas A&M University-Commerce employees and contractors. A trench excavation is a narrow excavation made below the surface of the ground where the depth is greater than the width, but the width of a trench (measured at the bottom) is less than 15 feet.

The following is established to assist A&M Commerce staff to recognize the hazards involved in trenching in order to prevent injury. Hazards associated with excavation include:
- cave-ins
- striking of underground utilities
- falling tools, materials, and equipment
- hazardous air contaminants or oxygen-deficient environments

26.2. Requirements
- All A&M Commerce employees and contractors are to comply fully with the following requirements:
  - A competent person shall be placed in charge of all excavations.
  - All materials in proximity to the excavation site must be stored, arranged, or secured in such a manner as to prevent the material from accidentally falling into the trench.
  - The Department or Contractor Supervisor is responsible to ensure underground utilities are located prior to excavation work.
  - While the excavation is open, the underground utilities must be protected, supported, or removed as necessary.
  - Employees are not are allowed in the excavation while heavy equipment is digging.
  - Adequate means of egress will be maintained at all times.
  - Excavations located near public traffic shall be barricaded and employees shall be provided with and wear warning vests.
  - In excavations greater than four (4) feet in depth, or where oxygen deficiency or other hazardous atmospheres could reasonably be expected to exist, testing must be performed prior to the entry of employees.
  - If a hazardous atmosphere is verified at a trenching site, emergency rescue equipment must be available and attended (SCBA, Lifelines, etc.) as required by the TAMUC Confined Space Program.
  - Inspection of trenching operations for hazardous conditions must be performed daily or when changing conditions warrant (rain, different soil type, etc.). Upon detection of a hazardous condition employees must be removed from excavation at once.
  - Both visual and manual soil testing will be performed by a “competent person” to determine soil type before employees are allowed to enter a trench.
• Protective systems for excavations deeper than 20 ft. shall be designed by a registered engineer.
• Excavation beneath the level of adjacent foundations, retaining walls, or other structures must be avoided unless specific regulatory requirements for that type of activity have been met.

26.3. Excavations
All excavations or trenches of 4' or greater in depth shall be appropriately benched, shored, or sloped according to the procedures and requirements set forth in OSHA's Excavation standard, 29 CFR 1926.650, .651, and .652.

Excavations or trenches 20 feet deep or greater must have a protective system designed by a registered professional engineer.

27. Safety Training
TAMUC offers a variety of safety training materials. The Department of Risk Management, along with the Department of Training and Development, encourages all departments to take advantage of material available for training purposes. Although there are several mandatory training materials, the Department of Risk Management and Safety can provide a number of voluntary training programs. Such topics include:

- Asbestos
- Confined Space
- Ergonomics
- Back Safety
- Crosswalk
- Electrical
- Fire and Life Safety
- Fall Protection
- Flammables and Combustibles
- Forklift
- Heat Stress
- Hot Work
- Federal Regulations
- Lab Safety
- Lock Out and Tag Out
- Office
- PPE
- Scaffolding
- Stairs and Ladders
- Trenching
- Walking Surfaces
- First Aid

Along with the above materials, the Department of Risk Management and Safety can develop specific training materials based on the departments' needs and conditions. Contact the Department of Risk Management and Safety for further information.