

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
&
SAFETY**

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

500 COLLEGE SAFETY STATEMENT

In 1994, the College adopted the following policy:

“The safety and health of all personnel at Bates College is of major importance. Therefore, the College accepts the primary responsibility of lessening accidents in order that each employee may work in a safe and healthful environment and return home each day without injury, illness, or financial loss.

Injuries are always disturbing, often calamitous and costly to the individual, his/her family and the College. Consequently, we have instituted a policy to promote safe practices that can help to prevent accidents and diminish unsafe conditions.

An organized college-wide safety committee has been established to enhance safety through awareness training, engineering and supervision.

Each employee plays an important part in this safety and health program, and is expected to join in making this a successful, accident free and healthy environment.”

In support of this policy, the College’s Safety Office, in collaboration with other Bates Departments, has developed policies and procedures for safe practices at the College. Information on safety policies are distributed to those who are directly affected by them, and they are available for review in the Human Resources Department. We expect that these guidelines will reinforce the College’s commitment to the safety of all members of our community.

501 SAFETY

To assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, students, and visitors, Bates College has established a workplace safety program. The Human Resources Department has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program. Its success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all.

Bates College provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as supervisor-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, or other written communications. A Safety Committee has been established to assist in these activities and to facilitate effective communication between employees and supervisors about workplace safety and health issues.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, where appropriate, to remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Refer to sections 112 and 231 for more information.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify the Human Resources Department or the appropriate supervisor as soon as possible, but not later than within 24 hours of the injury. For information on injury reporting, refer to section 509 Workers' Compensation and Incident Reporting.

Bates College is committed to providing a safe and healthful working environment. In this effort, Bates College makes every effort to comply with relevant federal and state occupational health and safety laws and to develop the best feasible operations, procedures, technologies, and programs conducive to such an environment.

Bates College’s policy is aimed at minimizing the exposure of our employees, students and visitors of our facilities to health or safety risks. To accomplish this objective, all Bates College employees are expected to work diligently to maintain safe and healthful working conditions and to adhere to proper operating practices and procedures designed to prevent injuries and illnesses.

The responsibilities of all employees of Bates College in this regard include:

1. Exercising maximum care and good judgment at all times to prevent accidents and injuries.
2. Reporting to supervisors and seeking first aid for all injuries, regardless of how minor.
3. Reporting unsafe conditions, equipment, or practices to supervisory personnel.
4. Using safety equipment provided by Bates College at all times.
5. Observing conscientiously all safety rules and regulations at all times; and
6. Notifying their supervisors, before the beginning of the workday, of any medication they are taking that may cause drowsiness or other side effects that could lead to injury to them and their coworkers.

502 RIGHT-TO-KNOW (HAZARD COMMUNICATION)

The Hazard Communication plan of Bates College ensures that all employees who handle or may come into contact with hazardous chemicals are informed of the hazards of these chemicals and of measures to protect themselves. This program includes the following: maintaining a Hazardous Chemical list; labeling containers of hazardous chemicals; providing access to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all employees regarding hazardous chemicals present in their work environment; semi-annual listing of all hazardous chemicals which are used on the campus; and training programs for employees who use or may come into contact with hazardous chemicals.

All employees are required to receive two types of training in the Right-To-Know Program. Basic training is received during orientation and includes: explanation of the Hazardous Chemical Protection and Right-To-Know Act; how to read and interpret an MSDS; how to read and interpret a chemical label; the College's Right-To-Know policy; and chemical hazard classification.

Employees working in areas that make it more likely that they may come in contact with different chemicals are required to have Chemical-Specific training. Department heads are responsible for ensuring that all new employees receive Chemical-specific training prior to being required to handle a hazardous chemical. Such training consists of, but is not be limited to, the following: methods and observations that are or may be used to detect the release of a hazardous chemical; the physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area; and the measures employees can take to protect themselves from these hazards.

503 MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

Material Safety Data Sheets contain vital information about chemicals that may be present in your work area. Employees should read and familiarize themselves with these documents to ensure that they are knowledgeable about potential dangers in the workplace. All departments will maintain a file/notebook containing MSDS's for all hazardous chemicals in their respective work areas. Departments shall advise employees as to the location and availability of the departmental file/notebook. The departments shall review all MSDS's in their area for completeness and accuracy. The departments shall notify any manufacturer who sends an inappropriate MSDS and request a revised and complete MSDS. A master list of MSDS's are located in the Environmental Health and Safety Office of the Human Resources Department.

504 HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL LISTS

All department heads shall, on a semi-annual basis (June and December), supply the Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator with a list of all hazardous chemicals and/or products used by their specific department. This product list will contain the chemical name, its manufacturer, and the quantity of the chemical on hand. This list shall include all chemicals labeled as ignitable, corrosive, reactive, explosive, or toxic. The Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator serves as the point of contact for maintaining this list of chemicals.

505 HAZARDOUS WASTE

Hazardous wastes come in all shapes and forms. They may be liquids, solids, or sludges. They may be the end products of a science teaching lab, a research project, photographic development, an art class, Physical Plant operations or simply commercial by-products--such as household cleaning fluids or used batteries and fluorescent tubes--that have

been discarded. Whatever their form, proper management and disposal of hazardous wastes are essential to protect our environment and comply with existing State and Federal Laws. In order to regulate hazardous wastes, State and Federal Governments first had to determine which *specific* wastes are hazardous since there are tens of thousands of wastes that can be hazardous for many different reasons. Only wastes determined to be hazardous are subject to such regulations.

Environmental Protection Agency Regulations identify hazardous wastes based on their characteristics and also provide a list of specific hazardous wastes. The list is extensive. Determining which wastes are hazardous is a dynamic process, influenced by new concerns, research data, and test development. The list is constantly expanding. The EPA is now adding certain types and classes of wastes to its hazardous waste lists, and is deciding whether to identify additional hazardous characteristics. The best source of information about chemicals or products and any associated waste can be obtained from its Material Safety Data Sheet.

The Office of Environmental Health & Safety within the Human Resources department manages hazardous waste for the College. Hazardous Waste generated by the College is recycled or disposed of by a licensed (State and Federal) specialty contractor. Questions regarding chemicals or products and their waste must be addressed to the EH&S Coordinator at 786-6413 or 786-6140. Mismanagement of hazardous waste represents significant regulatory and financial liability for Bates as well as potential personnel injury, environmental harm, or property damage.

506 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN TRANSPORT

There are a number of restrictions in handling and transporting Hazardous Materials and Waste. The number of restrictions are too numerous to delineate in this handbook, however the Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator serves the campus point of contact for information related to this issue. Should you have the need to transport these materials call the Safety Office at 786-6413.

Many common items used everyday in the home or workplace may be seen as harmless, however, when transported by air, they can be very dangerous. In flight, variations in temperature and pressure can cause items to leak, generate toxic fumes or start a fire. The Federal Aviation Administration restricts the materials that can be transported by air or mailed (mail may be transported by air). Do not pack in luggage or carry on board: Fireworks (signal flares, sparklers or other explosives), Flammable Liquids or Solids (fuels, paints, lighter refills, matches), Household items (drain cleaners and solvents), Pressure containers (spray cans, butane fuel, scuba tanks, propane tanks, CO2 cartridges, self inflating rafts), Weapons (firearms, ammunition, gunpowder, mace, tear gas or pepper spray), Other Hazardous Materials (Dry Ice, gasoline-powered tools, wet-cell batteries, camping equipment with fuel, radioactive materials - except limited quantities), poisons, infectious substances. The above list is not inclusive and caution should be observed before attempting to transport or mail any substance.

Hazardous materials must be declared to airline, air package carrier or U.S. Postal Service. Violators of Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR 171-180) may be subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25,000 for each violation and, in appropriate cases, a criminal penalty of up to \$500,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 5 years. For questions, contact the College's Mail and Print Office or speak with a relevant airline representative.

507 BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS (BBP) AND INFECTION CONTROL

Blood borne pathogens pose a great risk to the health of employees if contact is made with another's blood/bodily fluids. In general, if contact with another person's blood or bodily fluids is possible, wear disposable gloves. Clean-up kits for dealing with blood/bodily fluid spills have been placed in several key locations on campus; each kit contains disposable protective gloves, a disinfectant/fungicide/virucide solution, a biohazard disposable bag, and a copy of the American Red Cross' [Preventing Disease Transmission Recommendations](#).

For more detailed and complete information in dealing with BBP, please consult the Bates College **Infection Control Plan**. Security, Athletics, and the Student Health Center maintain copies of the full College-wide plan, and maintain clean-up kits.

508 VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS

When one speaks of VDT usage in the office environment they are most commonly referring to a micro-computer video screen or a computer remote terminal screen. The acronym "VDT" means Visual Display Terminal. The computer screen is also called a CRT or Cathode Ray Tube, hence many articles on this subject will talk about the CRT

user. Others may use the acronym "VDU" rather than VDT. The abbreviation of VDU stands for Visual Display Unit. These three acronyms (VDT, CRT, VDU) are interchangeable.

Both the Federal Government and the State of Maine have enacted laws requiring Safety Standards for Operators of Video Display Terminals. The law requires training of all VDT operators, defined as employees whose primary job, for at least half of their typical workday (four consecutive hours, exclusive of breaks), involves work at a video display terminal. All new operators must receive training within one month of their employment. Training is typically accomplished at New Employee Orientation or through written materials obtained from the Environmental Health and Safety Office.

The VDT user's comfort, performance, and productivity are directly related to the physical, psychological, and emotional well being of the VDT user. The VDT operation involves complex interactions between VDT User/VDT System/ Environment. A study of the key elements must include the ergonomics of the VDT user (Person), the characteristics and ergonomics of the CRT screen and the VDT furniture, and the physical aspects of the space (luminous, thermal, acoustical Environment).

Individual work site evaluations are conducted by the campus Ergonomics Committee, which may be contacted through the Human Resources Department.

509 WORKERS' COMPENSATION (WC) AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Workers' Compensation (WC) is a no-fault, state-mandated insurance program providing health coverage and wage replacement for employees sustaining injury or illness as a result of their employment. The principal purpose of Workers' Compensation Law in Maine is to provide specifically defined remedies for employment-related injury and illness.

In the event of an incident, accident, or injury, an employee must contact Human Resources, at 215 College Street, 786-6413, to report the incident to a Workers' Compensation representative. If no one is available, please leave a message with your extension number, so we may return your call. Include the following in your message: employee name, department, nature of incident, and if the employee needs an appointment to be seen. If immediate help is needed, call 786-6140.

This verbal report should be followed by an *Accident/Incident Report* within 24 hours of an incident. The Accident/Incident report must be completed by the employee and her/his supervisor and must be submitted whether or not medical attention is needed.

In the event of an emergency call x-6111, or pick up a security phone and Security and Campus Safety will respond along with other agencies as needed. Employees are urged to use their best judgment in determining what an emergency is. In all other cases requiring non-emergency medical attention, the Human Resources Department will call one of our medical providers and set up an appointment for the employee to be seen.

After the accident or incident has been reported, the Environmental Health and Safety Office will communicate with the College's Workers' Compensation insurer if necessary. The information communicated to the insurer is taken largely from the *Accident/Incident Report*, therefore an accurate and timely submission of this report is critical to establishing both employee and employer rights under Maine State Law and for establishing a date of injury necessary for initiating WC coverage.

Workers' Compensation provides for 80% income replacement after a 7-day or 56-hour elimination period for employees injured on the job. Employees receiving Workers' Compensation benefits will remain enrolled in the College's Health, Life, and Long Term Disability benefit programs if they are eligible and enrolled at the time of their injury. Employees receiving Workers' Compensation benefits will not accrue sick or vacation time or earn College-contributed pension benefits while in a non-working Workers' Compensation status.

510 MEDICAL PROVIDERS FOR WORK-RELATED INJURIES

Maine Workers' Compensation Law entitles employers to select health care providers to service injured/ill employees within the first ten days of treatment. Bates College has selected two local, hospital-affiliated providers for this purpose, *Occupational Health and Rehabilitation (OH&R)* at 59 East Avenue, Lewiston, or 777-8816; and *Work Med* at 77 Bates Street, Suite 10 Lewiston, or 753-3080. The College requires that all employees needing medical care for work-related injuries or illnesses to be evaluated by one of these providers.

Both organizations have expertise in the prevention, treatment, and management of work-related injuries and illnesses. Both are full service providers and are convenient to the College. Visits and appointments with these medical

care providers for work related injury/illness should be made during normal business hours. For emergencies, call the Security and Campus Safety office at x-6111 or pick up a security phone, Security will respond appropriately, to include dispatching ambulance services, if needed.

511 RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM

It is the intent of Bates College to provide our employees who have sustained injury or illness, whether or not in the course of employment, with the best available recovery program that allows a return to work as quickly as possible.

Bates College will make an effort to create opportunity for all injured or ill employees to return to work to full or partial employment, within the limits of her/his medical condition, at the earliest point in time. This will be accomplished through assignment of modified work, referred to as light duty or restricted work, and the continuous monitoring of injured or ill employees.

The College will attempt to modify work for employees recovering from injury or illness, and to perform duties that medical providers have deemed safe during a recovery process. Alternative or modified job assignments will be structured to meet the physical capabilities and therapy needs of the employee. Modified work is defined as temporary assignments within an employee's physical abilities, knowledge, and skills. These activities will be monitored by the employee's supervisor and a human resources representative.

It may include responsibilities and tasks taken from the employee's regular job, when the employee cannot perform full duties or work a full day. Assignments may include other appropriate tasks within the employee's department or assignments within the College if suitable employment is not otherwise available in the employee's home department. In all cases, the assignment must be approved by the employee's supervisor and be consistent with the employee's medical restrictions. Work restrictions, as defined by the treating physician, will be strictly adhered to.

Employees who do not participate in the Return-To-Work Program are not eligible for the College's short-term disability coverage. For more information on STD, refer to section 317 of this handbook.

512 ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics is a branch of science which investigates human abilities and limitations in relation to work demands, and applies that knowledge to improve interactions with products, systems, and environments.

In the 50 years since the advent of ergonomics, it has gradually become clear that to be used safely and effectively, systems and products need to be designed with human limitations in mind. This discipline affects all aspects of our lives such as work, sports, and leisure. Design processes should take into account the variability of people's physical size, strength, vision, hearing, thermal comfort, motion, vibration, and workloads. If any of these variables are not accounted for in a particular environment, it may result in discomfort and/or injury.

Bates College has developed an ergonomics program to minimize Musculo-Skeletal Disorders (MSDs) in the workplace. The primary elements of the ergonomics program include: (1) worksite evaluations, (2) control of exposures that may have caused musculo-skeletal disorders, and (3) ergonomics training of employees. The ergonomics program also focuses on educating employees on their personal responsibility to ensure good work habits (such as posture and body mechanics) and adequate fitness for work.

Musculo-Skeletal injuries, identified and diagnosed by a licensed physician that can result from a job, process, operation, or poor work habits, where employees perform the same repetitive motion tasks. Examples of repetitive motion tasks include, but are not limited to, sustained computer keyboard and mouse usage; assembling materials and products; or lifting, carrying, and loading objects.

When a MSD has been reported at Bates College that results from a job, process, operation, or poor work habits, a worksite evaluation will be conducted. The evaluation identifies potential exposures that may have caused MSDs and determines the methods Bates College will use to control or minimize them. Affected employees will be informed of the potential exposures and trained in the control measures.

Every reasonable effort will be made to correct exposures in a timely manner that may have caused MSDs or, if the exposure is not capable of being corrected, to minimize it to the extent feasible. In determining how to correct or minimize exposures, Bates College will consider reasonable, cost-effective engineering or administrative controls. Employees are provided with training that includes an explanation of the ergonomics program, exposures that have been associated with MSDs, the symptoms and consequences of injuries caused by repetitive motion, the importance of reporting symptoms and injuries, and the methods used to minimize MSDs.

There are three primary risk factors that contribute to musculo-skeletal disorders, otherwise known as repetitive

motion injuries, or cumulative trauma disorders; **awkward posture, force, and repetition.** One or all combined is at the root of most workplace problems, whether health, productivity, or quality.

All of us can significantly reduce our risk of injury if we can adhere to the following ergonomic principles: 1) All work activity should permit the use of several different but equally safe postures to complete a task, 2) where muscular force must be exerted it should be done by the largest appropriate muscle groups available (legs versus back for lifting) and, 3) work activities should be performed with the joints at about mid-point of their range of movement, this applies particularly to the head, trunk, and upper limbs, 4) keep items close to your body and avoid reaching. These disorders may take a lifetime of activity to develop. It is, therefore, important to catch them at an early stage.

All employees are encouraged to immediately report to the Human Resources Department all suspected MSDs, MSD symptoms, or other ergonomic concerns. Employees must report all workplace MSDs as soon as possible after they have been identified and diagnosed by a licensed physician.

Post-offer medical examinations may be required for positions in which there is a bona fide job-related physical requirement. They are given to all persons entering those positions only after conditional job offers to help ensure they are able to perform their duties safely, refer to section 216 of this handbook. All medical records are confidential and will be kept separate from personnel files.

Appointments for ergonomic evaluation can be made in the Human Resources Department. Interested employees who would like to serve on the campus wide Ergonomics Committee, please call the Safety Office within Human Resources at 786-6140.

513 PREPLACEMENT, RETURN TO WORK AND FIT FOR DUTY MEDICAL EVALUATIONS

Bates College reserves the right to require health evaluations of employees as necessary to the safe performance of work. Pre-placement (post-offer) evaluations are valid, job-specific evaluations of the abilities of the conditionally hired employee to perform the essential functions of the job safely and efficiently, and are compliant with ADA guidelines. A standardized evaluation protocol is used based on job descriptions provided by the employer. This service can help reduce injuries by determining if an employee is capable of performing the job he/she was hired for in a safe and efficient manner over a period of time. The screening can also help determine whether or not any type of accommodation may be needed to reduce risk of future injury. See section, 216 Post-Offer Physicals for more information.

A return-to-work evaluation involves a comprehensive examination of the musculoskeletal system, which includes a basic neurological assessment, directed toward determining the worker's ability to return to his/her job. Specific functional capabilities, e.g., lifting and other material handling techniques are tested based on job-specific needs. The results of this examination determine the employee's ability to return to work safely with or without accommodations. This evaluation will normally be utilized for return to work after absence from work for any injury/illness reason (workers' compensation, short or long term disability) or other leave or period of absence.

Fit for duty evaluations of incumbent employees may be conducted in order to determine physical or mental/psychological ability to perform ongoing job tasks and a motivating stimulus for employees to take responsibility for their own health. It identifies health changes that place the worker at increased risk for injury or illness. Employees may be tested for cardiovascular status, body fat/lean mass ratio, flexibility, strength, and coordination, or other physiological or psychological tests. A copy of the examination results will be provided to the employee and the College by the physician performing the evaluation.

514 WELLNESS

Wellness is the promotion of a healthy lifestyle in the areas of environmental, physical, social, mental, and occupational wellbeing. The environmental piece is not constrained to the physical environment, but also includes the inner life or emotional terrain each of us exists in daily. A safe, healthy workplace is a requirement, as are the tools to cope with the ever-increasing pressures of life. By ensuring an environment safe from both physical and mental dangers, the College protects itself, the students and employees.

Wellness is a continual process of acknowledging and acting on choices that leads to a more fulfilled, healthy, and successful existence. The success is determined by each individual based on their own accomplishments, aspirations, and belief system. It is a process because we can never reach a point at which there can be no improvement. A process that seeks to continually expand our knowledge and thereby the variety of options from which we can select to achieve our goals. Wellness is multidimensional, personal, and ever changing.

Employees may receive assistance in meeting their wellness needs and goals from the College's Human Resources department, from the College's healthcare provider (the Working Wonders program), and assistance for mental health issues through the Employee Assistance Program, refer to section 332 for more information on EAP. Additionally, the College will often provide wellness activities and programs that support the wellness of the College community.

515 INTEGRATED CONTINGENCY PLAN

An Integrated Contingency Plan has been designed to minimize hazards to human health and the environment potentially caused by fires, explosions, natural disasters, bomb threats, and any unplanned release of hazardous material to air, soil, surface water, or groundwater at or from the facility. The provisions of this plan will be carried out whenever there is a fire, explosion, or release of hazardous material at or from the facility that could threaten human health or the environment.

This plan serves as a reference document which employees, administrators, environmental managers, emergency responders, and environmental regulators are encouraged to use to learn Bates' emergency action and response, hazard communication, and oil spill prevention and response policies, procedures, and programs. This plan also provides guidance on the ways in which Bates' employees are trained on these policies and procedures. The procedures specified in this document should be implemented whenever an emergency occurs.

This plan is intended to be an evolving document. As campus operations and personnel change the document will be revised accordingly. Bates College Administration fully supports the implementation of this plan, and will make available the necessary resources to carry out the provisions of this plan. Copies of the Plan are maintained at the offices of Environmental Health & Safety, Security, and Physical Plant.

516 ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

To be added at a later date.