Health and Safety Newsletter
Keene State College

Welcome to the eighth issue of the Keene State College Health and Safety Committee’s Newsletter. Many thanks to Elena Knorr and Evan Saravo for preparing this newsletter. If you have a safety related suggestion or concern that you would like to share please contact Sylvie Rice (srice2@keene.edu; ext. 82879) or any of our members.

Disposal of Unused Medicines

Why do we need to worry about the proper disposal of unwanted, unused or old medicine? Drug abuse isn’t the only risk associated with unused medications; elderly, children, and pets could ingest expired or strong medication by mistake, and it can be very harmful. Another good reason to dispose of medications properly is to help our environment. Never flush medications as they may get into our water supplies because the treatment plant can’t break them down.

The Keene Police Department has a FREE and ANONYMOUS medication disposal drop box for anyone who wants to dispose of unwanted drugs. It is located in the front lobby of the Police Department (400 Marlboro Street, Keene) and is available 24/7. The medicine you can dispose:

♦ Prescribed medications
♦ Over the counter medications
♦ Vitamins, syrups, ointments, creams and lotions.

For more information, please visit www.mondnockvoices.org/takeback.home.html

Winter Storm Tips

Ice and snow will be here before we know it! Be safe when you have to be out and about during bad weather.

Tips for Pedestrians

Dress properly for the weather, including a hat, scarf, coat, gloves, socks and water-resistant shoes or boots.

Walk slowly and carefully. If you have to walk in the street walk against traffic and as close to the curb as possible.

When walking at night, wear brightly colored clothing or reflective gear. Give yourself plenty of time to get where you are going.

Tips for Motorists

If you must drive, drive cautiously and maintain safe speeds and distances from other vehicles.

Be aware of hazardous road conditions, particularly black ice which can be deceptive in appearance and give the driver a false sense of security on the road.

Keep your gas tank at least half full. Clear all the snow and ice from your vehicle’s hood, roof, windows and lights before driving.

Have an emergency “go-kit” in your car. Visit http://www.ready.gov/car to learn how to make your go-kit.

Tips for Cyclists

Avoid cycling directly on snow or ice, especially if the temperature is below freezing. Wait for clearing and/or melting.

Watch for ‘black ice’- a thin, clear sheet of ice that looks like pavement.

After the storm, bike lanes may still be covered in snow, so share the travel lane with cars as necessary.

Check your gears and brakes for ice and dirt.

http://snow.dc.gov/page/snow-safety-tips

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Keene State College
The Health and Safety Committee is designed to promote health and safety in the workplace and to recommend initiatives which will enhance the health and safety of faculty, staff, students and the general public while at Keene State College. Please visit our website at: http://www.keene.edu/ehs/committee.cfm

Health and Safety Committee Members:
Doug Adler
Janet Albarado
Lynne Andrews
Cheryl Child
Jane Elsworth
Patricia Francis
Mike Fuller
John Glezen
Steven Goestch
Jeanne Heam
Karyn Kaminiski
Alison Marino
Cheryl Martin
David May
Frank Mazzola
Paul McMullan
Stuart Mitchell
Sue Nelson
Susan Piscopo
Sylvie Rice
Kelly Ricarte
Lynn Richardson
John Roberts
Rick Rumba
Evan Saravo
Ralph Stuart
Gail Zimmerman
Jane Warner
Brushfires

October is Fire Prevention Month! According to a report of the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Land, there have been 61 fires in 2014 (http://www.nhdfl.org/fire-control-and-law-enforcement/fire-statistics.aspx).

Brush and wild land fires can present a serious threat to lives and property. High winds and drought conditions make fire progressively worse. You can prevent brush fires by:

• Never use gasoline, kerosene or any other flammable liquid to start the fire.

• Have fire extinguishment materials on hand, including a water supply, shovels and rakes.

• Be prepared to extinguish your fire if the winds pick up.

• DO NOT delay a call for help — call the fire department immediately at the first sign of the fire getting out of control.

Homeowners often fail to extinguish a permitted brush pile and leave it smoldering. These fires can pick up the next day if it is dry and breezy, or they may burn in to the ground and smolder for weeks. As with a campfire, criminal charges may be brought forward against anyone who does not properly extinguish their fire. Contact your local fire department or fire warden for information on obtaining a written fire permit. http://www.nhdfl.org/permits-and-applications/burn-permits.aspx.

Handling Household Chemicals

Use of everyday household chemicals such as cleaners, insect repellants, and disinfectants may seem safe and easy to use, but without the proper handling can be very dangerous. Before using any of these chemicals, be sure to read the label to find how to correctly use the chemical and understand the hazards.

Keep all chemicals in their clearly marked original containers to prevent misidentification. Also never put chemicals in a food or beverage container, because someone may confuse the chemical with a beverage and accidently consume the hazardous chemical. This happens more often than you may think.

It is important that you never mix any incompatible household chemicals, especially bleach and ammonia, which can lead to toxic gases. Look at labels for guidance on this.

Wear protective equipment when using chemicals, such as gloves and shoes to reduce skin exposure. Lastly, you should always have a fan running and a window open for ventilation. Although most household chemicals may seem harmless and simple to use, they must be handled correctly and carefully (http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Poisoning/preventiontips.htm).


Smoking is prohibited within 25 feet of all buildings on campus.

Watch where you are walking. Always look up when crossing the street and make eye contact with drivers, especially when wearing headphones. You should also always stop when sending a text message.