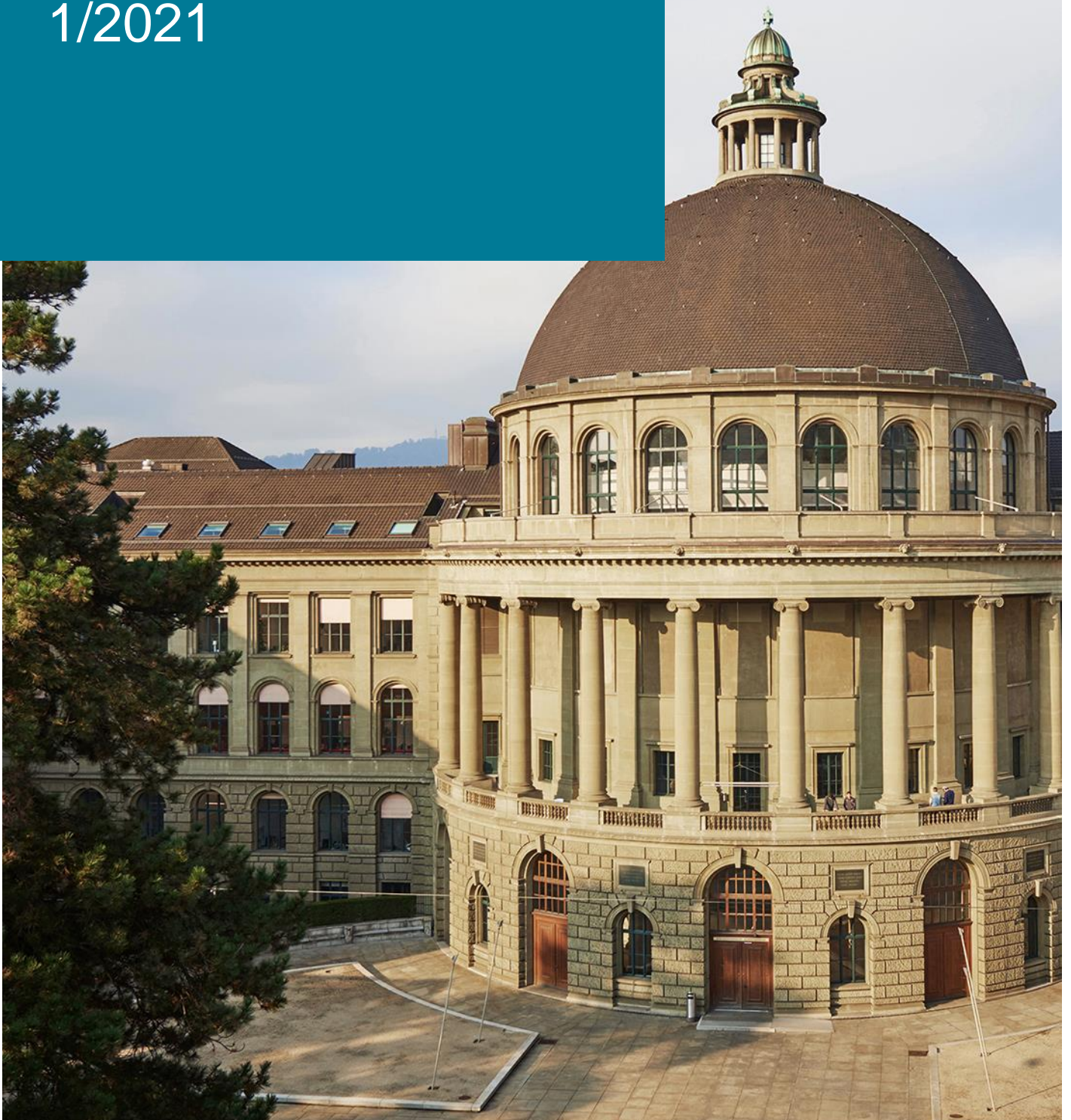


SSHE Newsletter  
1/2021



### **Resumption of the SSHE Newsletter**

After the SSHE Department refrained from publishing its newsletter in 2020, as it was feared that this content would be lost in the flood of pandemic-related information, it has been resumed in 2021. The purpose of the newsletter remains, as always, to provide members of ETH Zurich with the latest information that supports them in safely carrying out their work and studies. With this in mind, we wish you a good read.

## 1 The Alarm Network at ETH Zurich

After a project spanning four years, ETH Zurich was able to put the alarm network into full operation this spring. Comprehensive coverage of the Zentrum, Höggerberg, Lindau, Dübendorf and Schwerzenbach locations enables alerting and communicating with the internal first response units of ETH Zurich (Uniformed Security Service, Fire Alarm Team, First Aid Team, Chemistry Intervention Team) across locations in the event of incidents. The new building in Basel and the Bedretto Lab in Tessin have also been integrated into the network. The system covers all requirements by authorities regarding alarms in the event of fire and is also available to the fire brigade as a replacement for Polycom (the emergency services' security radio network) if needed for deployment in the buildings.

The network was designed to allow other organisational units of ETH Zurich to work with it. Educational Development and Technology (LET), for example, uses radios for communication between network specialists to ensure that online examinations run smoothly. As part of events or other occasions, all parties involved have the option of communicating both within their own groups and across all groups. For example, the Services Department can use it to coordinate caterers or security personnel at events.

One safety aspect that was added during the course of the project was protection for employees working alone, for example those working alone at night or on dangerous tasks. The radios or pagers can detect a lack of movement or a fall and transmit this information, including the location, to the Emergency Desk, which can then initiate the appropriate immediate measures.

## 2 Revised Process for Dangerous Goods at ETH Zurich

Dangerous goods are substances that may pose a risk to people, animals or the environment during transport, for example due to their properties, and which are legally classified as dangerous goods. Examples of this are explosive, poisonous, radioactive or infectious substances. The process for dangerous goods comprises all activities from preparation to packaging, loading, transport, unloading and shipping.

In order to mitigate hazards in this process, it is legally required to appoint one or more Dangerous Goods Safety Advisors (DGSA). The size of ETH Zurich, with its decentralised campus structure, different Swiss locations and the associated complexity require that the process for dangerous goods be divided between several DGSAs. Whereas there was previously only a single DGSA for the entire ETH Zurich, now, a central DGSA and multiple local DGSAs share the responsibility. The central dangerous goods safety advisor of ETH Zurich is Dr Judith Rothardt. Local DGSAs are appointed if an organisational unit regularly arranges transport or shipment of dangerous goods (more than three tonnes a year) or if "special" dangerous goods such as radioactive or explosive substances are routinely transported. The local DGSAs take charge of the statutory tasks in their areas and report to the central DGSA. The services of the central DGSA for members of ETH Zurich will not change. You can find information and the new directive [here](#). If you have questions, please contact us via email: [sgu-gefahrgut@ethz.ch](mailto:sgu-gefahrgut@ethz.ch).

### **New Environmental Officer at ETH Zurich**

As of June 2021, Dr Silke Kiesewetter is taking over the role of Environmental Officer at ETH Zurich from Katherine Timmel, Head of SSHE, who previously performed this task on an interim basis. At SSHE, Silke Kiesewetter leads the Operational Environmental and Radiation Protection (BUSS) section, which also means that she is responsible for hazardous waste disposal at ETH Zurich.

### 3 Maintenance of Hoses and Sealing Rings in the Laboratory

Experiments and devices with hose connectors require particularly close attention. To ensure proper functioning and to avoid dangerous releases, it must be ensured that the hoses and connectors are in good condition. The prerequisite for this is that the recommended hoses and seals are correctly installed, used, maintained and replaced as recommended.

Important: Hoses are only suitable for those cooling media or gases for which they have been recommended by the manufacturer. A gas hose cannot replace a water hose and vice versa. Information on correct use is available from the manufacturer (website, information leaflets).






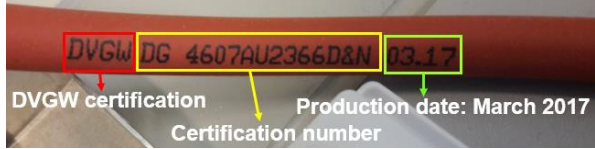

Cooling Water Supply			
PVC hoses	PVC hoses with textile components	Polyurethane hoses	Silicone hoses
			
These hoses should be avoided due to their fragility			
Gas/Vacuum Supply			
Vacuum hoses made of natural rubber	Natural gas hose according to the DWGE ( <i>Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches</i> , German association for gas and water)	Liquefied petroleum gas hose pursuant to EN 1762	
			

Image: Thomas Mäder, CHAB-Safety

When setting up an experiment using hoses, proceed as follows:

- 1) Select and use suitable hoses.
- 2) Check the quality of hoses and sealing rings. If cracks or brittle patches are visible or the date of expiry has passed, new material must be used.
- 3) Connect the hoses to the machine using hose clips.
- 4) To prevent leaks, media should be able to flow through the system without overpressure. Overnight experiments must be connected to magnetic valves / water monitor.

**Tip:** In order to detect if an experiment that will last several hours is running smoothly at an early stage, you should start it at least one hour before leaving the laboratory.

### 4 Polyterrasse: New Code of Conduct

Since November of 2020, external security personnel has been patrolling the Polyterrasse at night every Friday to Sunday. In addition to this, hopefully only temporary, measure, SSHE Management decided to introduce a new code of conduct for use of the Polyterrasse and all its access paths. The new

prohibition signs are intended to combat the increase in property damage, vandalism and nighttime disturbances that started about two years ago. The alcohol ban imposed from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. serves the same purpose. Exceptions for serving and consuming alcohol will only be made for authorised events.

These measures have so far contributed a great deal to defusing the situation on the Polyterrasse, as well as easing the burden on the cleaning staff and the employees of the Building Area HG. The objective is to be able to use the Polyterrasse again as a place to stroll, linger and enjoy the beautiful view. However, this is only possible if the visitors comply with the new rules.



Image: SSHE

## 5 What to Do if there is Smoke in the Stairwell

In October 2020, a fire broke out at a construction site in the CLA building caused by insulation material igniting during the construction work. An access door left open in the hustle and bustle led to smoke entering the main stairwell and various other areas from there, including the glass hall between the LEE and CLA buildings. The first responders arrived on the scene quickly and were able to bring the situation rapidly under control; no one was harmed. However, the fact that the building was not evacuated led to justified questions from the building users afterwards.

The facts are as follows: In the event of an evacuation, the responsible head of operations must be sure that escape and rescue routes are clear and safely accessible for all those affected. However, this was not the case here due to the smoke in the main stairwell. In the event of an evacuation, this could have put people in danger. This is because just three breaths of smoke can lead to unconsciousness and, in the worst case – if no help is on site – to death. We would like to remind you again of the rules of conduct, especially if your escape route is filled with smoke:

- Contact the Emergency Desk (internal phone no.: 888, external phone no.: 044 342 11 88)
- Alert people in the immediate area – save yourself and others
- Close the doors and windows

Never leave the building via smoke-filled escape routes!

- In these cases, stay in a safe, smoke-free place

- Close the doors
- Draw attention to yourself by calling the Emergency Desk or shouting from the window
- Stay there until the fire brigade arrives and follow their instructions
- You can prepare in advance for such an emergency by ensuring that escape and rescue routes are free of obstacles at all times and by familiarising yourself with the conditions on site

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the staff of the [Fire and Explosion Protection section](#).

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