

SSHE Newsletter 3/2014

December 2014

1) How to Play it Safe at ETH Zurich

ETH Zurich is a safe university. In proportion to its size, there are only very few safety-related incidents: On average, three fire incidents and around 130 accidents involving people per year have occurred in the recent past. With over 25,000 members of ETH Zurich on the move in approximately 250 buildings, these figures are low.

Nonetheless, incidents and accidents cannot be eliminated altogether through comprehensive preventive measures. For this reason, the Safety, Security, Health and Environment Staff Unit (SSHE) has compiled a document that all members of ETH Zurich can consult when dealing with an emergency. [Sicher unterwegs an der ETH Zürich](#) → (English version in process) contains the most important procedures and practices for scenarios involving accidents, fires, explosions, harassment, threats, stalking and violence. It provides basic tips on managing emergencies and especially the correct way to raise the alarm. All in all, the contents offer minimal, general information that you require to deal with basic emergency scenarios.

SSHE will distribute hard copies to all members of ETH Zurich with a permanent position. For students, *Sicher unterwegs* is available for download online (cf. link above). We wish you a good read.

2) Surface disinfection: Wipe, don't spray!

In biosafety labs from Bio Safety Level (BSL) 2, the surfaces of lab benches and biological safety cabinets have to be decontaminated regularly. Often, spray flasks containing disinfectant are provided in the labs. At first glance, this kind of spray disinfection might seem straightforward and practical: spray on, leave for a moment to take effect and done. Unfortunately, however, this impression is deceptive: Aerosols are formed while spraying, and they settle on the surfaces shortly afterwards. In the time between spraying and the settling of the liquid, the fine droplets can be inhaled or accumulate on the skin, which, in the case of some disinfectants, can damage the user's health. Moreover, the sprayed surfaces are usually not fully wetted, which prevents a thorough disinfection from taking place. If you spray directly onto a liquid (e.g. a spilled sample), there is also a risk of aerosols of this liquid (and thus the organisms it contains) being distributed in the room.

Wiping with disinfectant is more suitable: In this case, the surface is rubbed with a cloth that has been soaked in the corresponding disinfectant solution beforehand. Ready-made disinfection cloths or towel dispensers for freely selectable disinfectants are commercially available. So wipe, don't spray – for your own safety.

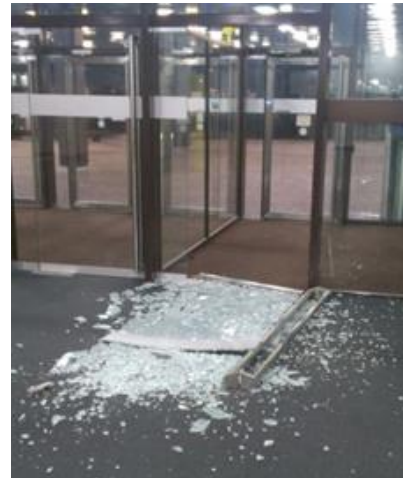
3) Safety restrictions for public events with drones

The Federal Office of Civil Aviation (BAZL) revised the Ordinance on Special Category Aircraft (VLK) on 1 August 2014. Drones are no longer permitted to fly over or within a radius of 100 metres of crowds of people. The BAZL only grants exemptions after a detailed safety inspection and a punctual application. Further information is available on the [BAZL website](#) → (in German only).

For smaller demonstrations involving drones, a safety plan is to be drawn up for the attention of SSHE (as before). An info sheet with a checklist is provided for you as a basis on the Office for Events and Location Development (VS) [website](#) → under "Kategorie 2: Einrichtungen/Aktionen" (in German only). Please contact [Reto Suter](#) → (SSHE) if you have any queries.

4) No artists at work

It is frequently found in corridors, on walls, on doors and on roads: graffiti or vandalism by strangers who leave their mark on ETH Zurich at night or at the weekend. This includes colourful legacies on freshly painted walls, the deliberate scattering of refuse or broken glass and deep scratches in the brickwork. What remain are not works of art but expensive clean-up costs and unnecessary work. Who bears the brunt if the perpetrators are not found? The state, the tax payer – all of us.



In order to be able to bring the culprits to account for the expense resulting from vandalism and clean-up work, we are asking you for help: Please, report any graffiti and vandalism immediately to the [Emergency Desk](#) → (telephone no. internal 888, external 044 342 11 88) and help keep ETH Zurich clean and cost-effective.

5) Flu jab campaign 2014

For years, SSHE has been organising flu vaccinations for ETH Zurich, which protect those who make use of it during most of the winter season against infection with the flu virus and hinder its transmission to people in the vicinity. This vaccination is voluntary and free for members of ETH Zurich. In the autumn of 2014, 1,000 members of ETH Zurich seized the opportunity to get vaccinated, which means around 25 per cent fewer people took advantage of the service than last year. One major reason for this is the more reticent reporting of flu infections in the media compared to 2013.

6) New business travel insurance policy for ETH staff

ETH Zurich has taken out a travel insurance policy with AXA Assistance. All members of staff are thus fully insured against the consequences of accidents and illness while exercising their professional duties abroad. The insurance cover is guaranteed independently of the booking type and payment method chosen and includes:

- The assumption of treatment costs
- Doctor's consultations around the clock
- Search and rescue
- Medical transport
- Access to the online platform with constantly updated information on the travel destination, recommendations for medical care and safety tips
- Cancellation insurance: journey cancellation before departure

In an emergency, AXA Assistance can be contacted around the clock, 365 days a year – either by [email](#) → or telephone (+41 22 819 44 66). For flight or hotel cancellations, ETH Zurich's Travel Service Department is at your disposal – by [email](#) → or telephone (+41 44 632 20 91 or +41 44 632 37 77). Further information is available on the Travel Service Department [website](#) → (in German only).

Ebola factsheet

Ebola has been very present in the media for months. This begs the question as to whether and, if so, how members of ETH Zurich might be affected. In order to answer this question, SSHE has compiled a brief factsheet providing key information on the virus and its spread. You can find the document, which, last but not least, also contains links to websites with more in-depth information, on the Travel Service Department [website](#) → (in German only).

7) Increasing the utilisation of waste heat in the RZ-building

Based on an analysis conducted on behalf of SSHE in 2010, a decision was made to replace the heat pump used in the computer centre (RZ) at the time with a view to profitability and increasing efficiency (CO₂ pollution). With the new pump, which boasts double the output (850kW), the waste heat accumulated from the cooling process can be used optimally for heating purposes instead of releasing it into the environment via recooling.

As all CO₂ pollution is generally ascribed to cooling production, the waste heat can be regarded as CO₂ free. Only the consumption of electrical energy thus flows into the heat pump's carbon footprint. Consequently, ETH Zurich uses an environmentally friendly heat source to heat buildings.



Heat pump for the use of waste heat

The project was concluded in the spring of 2013 under the management of the Building and Constructions Infrastructure Division with the support of the Facility Management Infrastructure Division, and the heat pump was commissioned at the beginning of 2014. The first months in operation revealed that it is running smoothly and making a sizeable contribution towards reducing CO₂ emissions.

Wolfgang Seifert moves to the Building and Constructions Infrastructure Division

With this newsletter, Wolfgang Seifert bids farewell to SSHE. He will be moving to the Building and Constructions Infrastructure Division as of 1 January 2015, where he will continue in his role as ETH Zurich's energy officer. SSHE wishes him every success in his new position and all the best for the future.

Editor

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