



**NEES**

## NEES Network-Wide Safety Policy



*Version 1.0 – June 8, 2010*

### **Management Commitment to Safety**

NEEScomm is committed to achieving the highest possible levels of safety for all employees, users, and visitors of NEES facilities through the development of safety programs that encourage training and education, hazard prevention and control within the NEES network.

All members of the NEES community are expected to support this commitment.

### **Vision**

This guideline is intended to promote a culture of safety such that all research and daily activities may be completed without incident. This goal may be achieved through adherence to safety plans, policies and practices. NEEScomm's philosophy is for safety to go beyond a mere daily thought, and instead extend into every activity occurring across the NEES network.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide an overarching policy that addresses safety for the NEES network. This document outlines Responsibilities and Requirements for NEEScomm, Sites, and Users (Researchers, their staff, or their students); Dispute Resolution; Responding to Accidents and Incidents; and Web Accessible Safety Plans.

### **Implementing a Safety Culture**

Prevention of accidents requires thorough attention to organizational issues of structure, strategy and culture. An effective safety culture must instill a continuing commitment to safety as a value, permeating the entire organization. As such, NEEScomm's leadership role includes the following:

- Maintaining a blame-free environment, where individuals are able to report incidents and close calls without punishment and initiate corrective actions to improve safety performance,
- Acknowledgement of inherent risks, and vigilant watchfulness for unsafe practices in the organizations' activities,
- Maintaining organizational resources to directly address safety concerns, and
- Expectation of collaboration across ranks and grade levels to seek solutions to vulnerabilities and a ready willingness to do so with a positive attitude.

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## **1) Responsibilities and Requirements**

### a) NEEScomm responsibilities:

- i) NEEScomm will work with Sites to identify funding to mitigate identified risks.
- ii) Encourage Equipment Sites to allocate a portion of their annual budget for safety activities and safety improvement.
- iii) Provide Equipment Sites with safety supplements, when available, to improve site safety.
- iv) Collect and review Site Safety Plans as updates are made thereto. Review criteria will be maintained and be available as a resource for planning by equipment sites.
- v) Review updated regulations and best practices for implications to the NEES network, and communicate such findings.
- vi) Collect, review, and report statistical data on safety incidents. Assist Equipment Sites with accident analysis if needed.
- vii) Offer professional safety technical assistance to sites as needed. This may include purchased consulting services, or facilitation of safety training for site personnel.
- viii) Promote a Network-wide Safety Culture.
- ix) Provide notifications to NSF, as they occur, of any safety or health incidents.

### b) Equipment Site responsibilities:

- i) Each site will have a formal safety plan.
- ii) Each site will designate a safety officer, who will have overall responsibility for the safety of the Equipment Site. The safety officer will have the authority to immediately stop activities at the Equipment Site for safety reasons, at his or her sole discretion.
- iii) The Equipment Site will provide research participants with a copy of its safety plan and current contact information for its Safety Officer within 30 days of the execution of the Site User Agreement.
- iv) Equipment Sites are required to ensure all users of the equipment are trained in their safety procedures.
- v) The Equipment sites will work with their users to develop risk management plans in the early stages of the project. Furthermore, the Equipment Sites will require researchers to consider safety and possible property or equipment damage when designing an experiment.
- vi) Sites are responsible for complying with University Policies and Governmental Regulations.

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c) User responsibilities:

- i) Researchers will be required to review the safety plan.
- ii) Researchers will be required to comply with the safety plan and all safety policies at Equipment Site to the satisfaction of the Safety Officer.
- iii) Researchers will work with the site to develop a project-specific hazard mitigation plan.

**2) Dispute Resolution**

The Equipment Site has the right to "stop work" immediately and submit a petition for action to NEEScomm Director of Site Operations (DSO) for any Project activity that is deemed unsafe by its technical staff or management personnel. Project activities related to the nature of the petition shall be halted during this review period without penalty to Equipment Site if the petition is determined to be unsound.

The User may also submit a petition for action to the Equipment Site for any Project activity that is deemed unsafe. Project activities related to the nature of the petition shall be halted during this review, with no penalty to the User, if the petition is determined to be unsound.

**3) Responding to Accidents & Incidents**

Despite good planning and safety practices, accidents and other loss-producing incidents may sometimes occur. Incident analysis can be used to determine if changes in process or procedure are warranted. Responding effectively to accidents and incidents involves prompt response, prompt reporting, accident investigation, and adequate recording. All these elements should be adequately addressed in the Equipment Site Safety Plan and be strictly followed. Distribution of the results of incident analysis throughout the NEES Network may reduce the risk of similar hazards at other Equipment Sites. All accidents and incidents shall be reported to NEEScomm DSO in addition to any local reporting that is required by University or local regulations and guidelines.

Upon receiving a report of an accident, injury or environmental discharge from an equipment site, NEEScomm shall notify the designated personnel of the NSF of the accident. This notification should be made in writing and within 48 hours of the receipt of the report of the accident from the equipment site.

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Accidents involving NEEScomm personnel or property shall meet the same requirements for reporting, documenting, investigating, analyzing and notification to NSF as accidents occurring at the equipment sites.

#### **4) Web-Accessible Safety Plans**

For safety plans to be most effective, they must be accessible to a wide range of potential users, including such diverse groups as site employees, faculty, local and visiting researchers, contractors, students and the public. To facilitate easy access, the site safety plans shall be posted to a clearly marked safety tab accessible from the Equipment Site website homepage.

The following guidelines apply to web-posted Safety Plans:

- The site should review their safety plans annually and include a revision date on the plan.
- The safety plan documents, including all linked or referenced supporting documents and policies from the university EH&S Department, will be readily accessible to the public.
- If the plan refers to external documents, the reference should include a direct link to the material (from the electronic version) and the full written URL of the material.
- The safety plan should be available as a downloadable document in a standard format that maintains the capability of linking and searching.

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