

Compliance Chats Podcast
Topic: Environmental Health and Safety

Podcast Title:	All in a Day's Work: The Division of Environmental Health & Safety	Podcast Date:	July 2017
Host:	Laurie Neal	Guest Speaker(s):	Terri Dominguez
Purpose	In this interview, listeners will learn about Environmental Health and Safety's (EHS) role at the University and about the various trainings and other resources they offer.		
About Guest Speaker	Terri Dominguez is the Director of the Division of Environmental Health and Safety and holds a B.S. degree in Human Ecology and a M.S. in Public Health. She is a Certified Safety Professional in Comprehensive Practice.		

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

QUICK INTRO:

LAURIE: Hello everyone and welcome to Compliance Chats- a new podcast series intended to keep Faculty and Staff up to date on various compliance issues. I am Laurie Neal and in today's episode I am sitting down with Terri Dominguez, Director of the Division of Environmental Health and Safety at UConn. Terri, thank you for taking the time to be here.

TERRI: Well I'm very happy to be here.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

LAURIE: You are in the business of protecting individuals from risk. But for someone who is new to the University or maybe doesn't have that much experience, could you maybe describe some of the roles and responsibilities of the Division of Environmental Health & Safety, otherwise know as EHS?

TERRI: Overall we are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of the University Community by providing the resources to the University to allow that to happen. So one of the things that we are charged with is to develop policies, programs, procedures to keep the University compliant and safe. In addition to that, we conduct inspections in laboratories and non lab settings such as our kitchens, art studios, facilities shops and other operations. We ensure people are trained appropriately. There are many trainings that are required that we administer. We also conduct consultative visits. A lot of folks call us with standard safety questions. They want some assistance and we are happy to provide that. So depending on where you are, what you do and who you are, we might service you in a different way.

LAURIE: There is the Health and Safety Policy. Maybe you could tell me a little bit about that and why it's important?

TERRI: The Health and Safety Policy is an overarching policy for all the health and safety programs and procedures that the University has that are all managed by our division. It really is a statement that says we are all responsible for safety, individually and collectively and the University is committed to ensuring the Health and Safety of its members and visitors.

LAURIE: You mentioned that your office does a lot of trainings. How would I know what trainings I am supposed to take?

TERRI: Well there's many ways you can do that, certainly you can go through our office. But we actually have some online tools that you can use. One particular tool is called the New Employee Orientation form and it assists employees and supervisors that identifies hazards in the workplace and the trainings that would be required, mandated by state/federal law, or mandated by University policy or recommended to protect against those hazards. We have checklists, we also have a new tool, a web based form to help people navigate that. That can be found on our website at ehs.uconn.edu/esta.

LAURIE: Definitely some resources to assist people in navigating what trainings they should take depending on their job function, or maybe they are a student doing some research. It's really helpful to know that EHS is there to guide individuals and help them get the proper training. I'm sure as tech evolves and things are consistently changing (best practices change), how do you keep up with those changes and how do you manage that?

TERRI: Of course beyond compliance we want our training to be informative, engaging, so with that in mind and recognizing that we need to provide different modalities depending on the particular learners or time constraints we have currently hired a new individual who is assigned the duties of helping us manage the training responsibilities. We have a training and outreach coordinator, Shauna Lessuer who joined us this year. She has a background in adult learning. She has been with the University for a number of years so has really hit the ground running and understanding what tools we have at the University already available to help us in that regard and of course help us identify other resources that will help us do the job better.

LAURIE: That's really proactive and shows the University continues to do more and more to make sure we are on top of things in all the training that has to go on. We talked about this a little bit earlier, if there's ever any kind of concern or you're in a situation that just doesn't sit quite right... Obviously if there's a direct emergency, you'll want to call 911.. But if there's something that just doesn't sit quite right, I'm sure you can call your office to voice that concern.

TERRI: Certainly they can always reach out to our office. They can bring it up to their supervisor- as I said everyone is responsible for safety. So it could be something that could be easily addressed by their immediate supervisors. We are always available to bounce questions off of and assess hazardous situations, people's concerns. Call our office, call our main number 3613. You can also look at our website and find the subject matter expert on the topic you have a question about. We have a number of individuals who are very well versed in a number of safety issues and can help you resolve your issue. You want to make sure not only your safety protected, but the health and safety of those around you.

LAURIE: Really at the end of the day, our health and safety comes first. I do want to ask you one more question: What do you like most about your job?

TERRI: What I like most about my job is that it's always different every day. It runs the gamut. On any given day I might be working with folks who have questions about ergonomics in an office setting, a question about research activities, a question about an electrical safety issue in the facilities department. It's a problem solving job. I think many of us in our profession are problem solvers. We also like to help people. It's really a job that helps you do both. What's more rewarding than that?

LAURIE: Well those are really great reasons and thank you so much for being here. Listeners you can find out more information about Environmental Health and Safety at [EHS.uconn.edu](https://ehs.uconn.edu) or call their phone number at 860-486-3613. Thanks for tuning in. Until next time.

RESOURCES MENTIONED BY TODAY'S SPEAKER:

<http://ehs.uconn.edu/>

<http://ehs.uconn.edu/esta>

MUSIC CREDITS:

On the Ground. Kevin MacLeod. Royalty Free 2014. Retrieved from: <http://incompetech.com/music/royalty-free/index.html?genre=Jazz>

Rollin at 5. Kevin MacLeod. Royalty Free 2014. Retrieved from: <http://incompetech.com/music/royalty-free/index.html?genre=Jazz>