

Meet EHS & RM



Mackenzie Mitchell

Mackenzie has been with the EHS & RM department since March 2015. Her duties include maintaining the University's Business Continuity Plan for emergency preparedness and for making sure all the safety equipment on campus meets the state and federal codes. Ms. Mackenzie is a Houston native and graduated from Stephen F. Austin.

Mercury Found Dumped down a Laboratory Sink

On August 18, 2015, a professor in the Chemistry department noticed puddles of mercury in a sink in his lab and immediately reported the issue to the EHSRM office. The EHSRM office responded by immediately notifying university police. The mercury was removed from the sink, and the lab was isolated. The following morning additional action was taken by facilities and EHSRM. The p-trap under the sink was identified and the plumbing department removed the p-trap to find additional mercury. The City of San Marcos was also notified and emergency sampling was conducted in the industrial wastewater port downstream and the water in the p-trap.

National Preparedness Month

Are you ready for a natural disaster? Well, September is National Preparedness Month and we want to make sure you are prepared. Ready.gov is a government site dedicated to making sure you are ready for any type of natural disaster. They want to help you put a plan into place to help your family along with making sure that you have the correct supplies at home. There is information on hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes, home fires, black outs and biological threats. The University has a Business Continuity plan that will take care of the university if there is a disaster but we want to make sure that all of our employees are prepared. Please look at our emergency preparedness information on our web-site <http://www.fss.txstate.edu/ehsrms/safetymanual/emergency.html>. So don't let a disaster get the best of you. Have a plan in place.

The laboratory reports showed the concentration of mercury in the p-trap was 200 times the permitted discharge limits. In addition it was detected at the down stream sampling point and was below the discharge limit. Texas State University falls under Industrial Wastewater permit requirements and hazardous waste management is under state and federal regulations. Discharges of hazardous waste or chemicals to the sink is a criminal offense under each of these program areas and punishable by fines and prison time. (See the case of Dr. Daniel Storm at the University of Washington in 2007). No responsible party has been identified.

The EHSRM office provides free pick up and disposal of all hazardous waste on campus including universal wastes such as batteries, fluorescent bulbs, mercury switches and devices, cell phones, and ink jet cartridges. Staff, faculty and contractors that find waste during the process of work at Texas State should contact our office for proper management at 512-245-3616

**When you gamble with safety,
you bet your life**

