

THE COMMUNICATOR

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY'S EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

June 1997

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Pension fund loses on Bre-X, but overall performance still impressive

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Bre-X Minerals can claim another victim. The Memorial University Pension Fund lost \$800,000 on an investment in Bre-X. While any loss is difficult to take, plan members can take comfort in knowing that the gains the plan has made this year more than make up for the loss on Bre-X. In fact, the return on investment during the past year was 15.6 per cent. In comparison the Bre-X loss represents only two-tenths of one per cent of the \$400 million total value of the fund.

The university's pension fund is managed by three companies on a 50 per cent, 25 per cent, 25 per cent split, with each company making investment decisions independent of the others. TAL Investment Counsel (managing one of the 25 per cent blocks, or about \$100 million) bought the Bre-X stocks as a small part, in relative terms, of their diversified investment strategy.

Excellent returns

Despite the Bre-X set back, the MUN Pension Fund has performed quite well over the past number of years. In addition to last year's 15.6 per cent gain, the year before it returned 17 per cent, and the year before that 5.7 per cent. Over the 10-year period 1987-96, the performance averaged 10.25 per cent. So while there was a loss on Bre-X, it was more than made up for by gains in other holdings. "You don't achieve the kind of performance the university's fund has by putting all your money in a savings account," said Dr. George Hickman, director of Human Resources. "Certainly, the greater majority of the investments made with pension fund money are very secure, but there is still some small room for our fund managers to investigate more high-risk/high-return investments. And in diversifying the way they have, they've achieved great returns for the fund."

Dr. Hickman explained that the Performance Review Subcommittee of the MUN Pensions Committee, which includes members from the university's unions, Pensioner's Association and administration, has been kept abreast of the situation since the Bre-X story started to unfold. But even earlier than that a system of checks and balances was established to guide investment strategy for the pension fund.

Investment policy in place

Dr. Hickman explained that two years ago the Performance Review Sub-committee developed an investment policy in co-operation with the university's independent pension fund evaluation service

(SEI), the actuary, fund managers and other experts in the area. "The policy, which was later adopted by the university Pensions Committee, is very tight and imposes strict guidelines on the fund managers," he said. "While not interfering with the day-to-day investments of the fund managers, this control does hold them accountable. They are required to report to the university, through me, to ensure compliance with the policy on a regular basis. In addition, we hold regular meetings with the fund managers to discuss performance, and we are in constant contact with the custodian of the fund, Canada Trust, to ensure adherence and monitor day-to-day activity."

Doesn't impact pensions

Dr. Hickman added that investment performance has no impact on pensions. "The benefits to which individual employees are entitled under the university's pension plan are calculated according to a pre-determined formula and are not affected by the rate of return for any period," he said. "The objective of the university is to ensure that pension monies are invested in such a manner that sufficient funds are available to meet the liabilities of pension payments to employees/retirees."

Nominations sought for President's Award for Exemplary Service

(The Communicator, June 1997)

It's time again to consider recognizing those of our colleagues whose work at the university is exceptional. Nominations are being sought for the President's Award for Exemplary Service.

Presented each fall during the annual Employee Service Awards ceremony, these awards include a certificate, a permanent display of the achievement and a cash prize of \$1,000.

The awards acknowledge accomplishments, resourcefulness, initiative, creativity, leadership, responsiveness in delivering service, and/or dedication to high standards as a member of the Memorial University staff.

Qualified candidates include administrative and support staff of Memorial and its agencies who have worked at the university for at least one year prior to nomination. Nominations can come from alumni, faculty, staff, students and other members of the university community.

As many as five President's Awards for Exemplary Service will be presented.

Nomination forms will be available July 1 at academic and administrative department offices and through the Office of the Vice-President (Administration and Finance), Room AA-2024, Arts and Administration Building.

For further information about the awards, please call Marilyn Thompson, Human Resources, 737-4627, or e-mail marilynt@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.

Prepare to welcome Learned's delegates

(The Communicator, June 1997)

As we move into late spring and summer (hope springs eternal) we will also be moving into the major events associated with the Cabot 500 anniversary celebrations. Many of these have little to do with the Cabot anniversary itself, but the fact that the province is generally geared up for a series of special events makes it that much more interesting to visitors to be here in this particular year rather than some other year.

It is for that reason that about five years ago we issued an invitation to the Learned Societies. Over a period of about three weeks in early June thousands of individuals will be coming to our campus to attend the annual Congress of Learned Societies. Many of them will be first-time visitors to Newfoundland.

It is amazing how many people in this country can say that they have visited all of our provinces with the exception of this one. It is therefore of continuing importance that we provide the opportunity for people to do so, and to do our best to ensure that they have positive recollections of the experience so that they become our ambassadors in encouraging others to follow in their footsteps. Tourism has to be one of the major means of advancing our economy, particularly in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Meanwhile, it is of crucial importance to all of us employed at the university that we put our best foot forward when people visit here so that they carry away a positive impression. Ultimately this is part of our recruitment activity.

It is particularly important to ensure that our student numbers do not decline over the next few years as much as they have over the past few years.

Over the five-year period from September 1992 to September 1997 our student numbers will have dropped by at least 2,500. Since the numbers of faculty and staff at Memorial have a relationship to the overall size of the institution, none of us would have an interest in seeing these numbers drop by the same amount over the next five years.

Apart from our self interest as members of the university community, we have a broader reputation to maintain. As a province and as a people, we have a well-deserved reputation for treating visitors well. Let us show that our history of being friendly and hospitable to visitors from away is still very much alive. Please take the opportunity to welcome strangers to the campus, to assist them in finding their way about and to ensure that they remember positively their visit to Memorial, to St. John's, and to our province. They should want to come back and see more; they should take the opportunity to advise their

friends and acquaintances that a trip to Memorial and to this province is something that every Canadian should do.

This is a chance to do ourselves and our fellow citizens a favor. Let's make the most of it. Meanwhile, please accept my good wishes for a pleasant summer.

A. W. May, O.C.

PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

Work attendance at Memorial is improving

(The Communicator, June 1997)

By Barbara Sheaves, Human Resources

The cost to the Canadian economy of workers who are off sick is about \$15 billion annually. The average time lost is 9.3 days annually.

In 1994 Memorial University implemented a Leave Management Program with the goal to reduce costs and operating problems caused by absences, while at the same time ensuring that all legal and contractual obligations to staff are met.

An important aspect of the program is the identification of specific responsibilities for each of the key players - supervisors, employees, and Human Resources personnel. They are as follows:

Supervisor

- regularly review each employee's attendance
- educate staff on the importance of regular attendance
- maintain contact with absent employees
- adhere to policy for all staff
- take action when necessary

Employees

- maintain regular attendance
- use sick leave benefits responsibly
- adhere to reporting procedures outlined by the department
- provide medical certificates in accordance with collective agreements
- seek assistance when needed

Human Resources

- educate supervisors and staff on leave management issues
- monitor sick leave usage and ensure problems are addressed
- provide assistance and guidance to supervisors
- ensure legal obligations are met

In identifying an attendance problem there are a number of factors taken into consideration: these include the number of sick occurrences in the past 12 months, short intermittent absences versus long bouts, overall attendance history, patterns identifiable in time, and total time taken with or without a doctor's note.

There will be times when employees just can not come to work because they are ill or have a family crisis, but employees should be aware that their absence is felt on the job. They are part of a team and their skills are essential if the operations of the university run smoothly. Using sick days for "spur-of-the-moment" days off, especially if this become a habit, causes disruptions throughout the university. Employees might think that their absence will be less noticeable in a larger department than in a smaller one, but that is not true. Worker absences can cause delays, and create additional work for colleagues, as well as poor morale.

Employees who have good attendance can be counted on and trusted to be at work when they are needed, to follow through on their responsibilities, and to be there to support their co-workers.

In a future article in *The Communicator* we'll provide some statistics provided on Memorial's Leave Management Program, but if you have any questions or concerns about it, please contact Barbara Sheaves, 737-7408, or e-mail bsheaves@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.

Barbara Sheaves is the university's leave management officer. In addition to working with managers and staff on various leave management initiatives that are ongoing throughout the university, she will be involved in the implementation of the new performance management project and other training programs.

WORKFLEX options available to staff

(The Communicator, June 1997)

With summer quickly approaching, staff employees may wish to take advantage of one of the WORKFLEX options that are available. WORKFLEX provides options that give employees an opportunity to modify current work arrangements including leave without pay, reduced hours of work, or short-term lateral position exchanges. To ensure cost savings for the university, there can be no replacement for employees accepting leave without pay or a reduced work week under the WORKFLEX Program.

Leave without pay

This option is subject to departmental operating requirements and can be granted for periods from one day up to six months. For example, employees may wish to take leave without pay in conjunction with annual vacation. While benefits and pension coverage can continue during the period of leave, such periods do not normally qualify for Employment Insurance benefits.

Reduced hours of work

Reduced hours can allow an employee to achieve a new balance between work and other personal interests. This can take one of three forms: reduced work week, job sharing, or part-time work.

A reduced work week can mean a shorter work day or a shorter work week where the minimum weekly total is 20 hours.

Job sharing involves sharing your position with another employee. The Department of Human Resources may be able to assist you in finding a job-sharing partner.

Part-time work involves working less than 20 hours per week and the worker is not included in the pension or benefit plans.

Short-term lateral position exchange

An employee may transfer to lateral positions with the consent of both employees and department heads. This arrangement is designed to provide variety to work experience.

If you decide that any of the above options, or some acceptable variation, would fit your personal

circumstances, forward a copy of your request to your department head, with a copy to the Director of Human Resources.

For more information about WORKFLEX options, contact Monty Green, 737-7405, or Barbara Sheaves, 737-7408, or e-mail bsheaves@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.

HST increases deductions

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Employees having payroll deductions for Faculty/Staff Club fees and Aquarena memberships will notice the deduction amount increased because of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) which took effect April 1. The new tax rate replaces the seven per cent GST.

Summer hours

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Effective Monday, June 2, and continuing until Friday, Aug. 29, summer hours for all administrative, technical and technical support personnel will be 32 and one-half hours per week. That's a half-hour a day less than working hours during the rest of the year.

CUPE results released

(The Communicator, June 1997)

by Mary Clarke, Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources released the results of Phase II of the Job Evaluation Project to CUPE employees in March 1997. Although the vast majority of the benchmark ratings were confirmed, there were a number of re-allocations to higher band levels. CUPE employees received individual letters indicating the band level assigned for each position and the fact that further developments were subject to CUPE negotiations.

Deans, directors and department heads have received band level information regarding CUPE positions. The Department of Human Resources plans individual meetings with deans and directors, similar to the procedures used in the case of non-bargaining unit employees.

The following is a list of the more common questions received to date regarding the release of band level information to CUPE employees. Please forward further questions in writing to the Department of Human Resources or e-mail Mary Clarke (mclarke@morgan.ucs.mun.ca) or Colleen Walsh (colleenw@morgan.ucs.mun.ca).

How can the Job Evaluation System allow for a class to be assigned to more than one band level?

The new system provides greater flexibility for movement to higher band levels in cases where a significant difference in the complexity of work, the initiative required, or other factors could result in the movement to a higher band level, even though the classification title is allocated to a lower band level. Again, the key point is the flexibility of the new system.

If I do not agree with the results of Phase II for my CUPE position, can I request a classification review?

All staff employees have the right to request a classification review of their position at any time. Requests to review for CUPE will be processed using the old classification system.

Why is it that Phase II confirmed my position as bench band level when I am performing work that is completely different from other positions assigned to the same classification?

Everybody has some understanding of the work performed by people in their work environment so it is understandable that employees draw comparisons between jobs. However, the rating of a position is based upon the information in the Job Fact Sheet which may be more complete than your general perception of the position. In addition, by comparing position with position, there is often a perception

that the position being compared is equal to the bench position for the class; this is not true in all cases.

As well, for those positions where a Job Fact Sheet was not received, the bench band level was assigned.

I feel my job is different from the bench band level and the rating committee did not understand my job.

It is possible that your job is different from the bench level classification and these differences would have been considered by the committee when rating each of the 10 factors. However, when the total points assigned to your position were calculated, your total fell within the minimum and maximum point totals of the band level. This results in the bench band level being confirmed as appropriate for your position.

I am a non-bargaining unit employee receiving pay equity. Will I receive a step adjustment on my anniversary date?

As per current step progression policy for non-bargaining staff, if your pay equity adjustment of April 6 is less than the step amount you normally received, the salary will be further adjusted on your anniversary date by the difference between the pay equity amount and the step adjustment. However, if your pay equity adjustment is more than your step adjustment amount, you will continue to receive pay equity, but there will be no step adjustment.

If Phase II results involve a reclassification upon implementation, will my step date change?

Step progression dates are revised to the effective date of the reclassification action.

If the job evaluation results determine the band level assigned to my position, what determines my step on the salary scale?

Current policy for non-bargaining employees involves the slotting of current salary, including pay equity (if applicable), to the closest step equal to, but not less than, your total current salary. All employees progress each year on their step-progression date until they reach the maximum band level salary assigned to their position.

How do non-bargaining employees progress on the salary scale?

On the step progression date, current policy allows for the employee's salary to be adjusted two steps on the band level allocated to the applicable classification, subject to the maximum of the salary scale.

What options are available when an employee reaches the maximum salary for his\her band level?

At any point on the salary scale, employees can be promoted to a higher band level through a recruitment action, or a position can be reclassified to a higher band level under the new system if the job content has changed significantly. Otherwise, once an employee reaches the top of the scale, salary increases will be through negotiated changes.

If I haven't completed a Job Fact Sheet can I still submit one?

Yes. However, please remember that the time it takes to rate you is dependent on available rating

personnel.

Does the amount of work a person performs have an impact on the band level assigned to his/her position?

No, the volume of work is not considered. Job evaluation considers the duties and responsibilities assigned to a position. You may feel you are busier than someone in the same classification, but job evaluation is not designed to address this issue.

CUPE negotiation process continues

(The Communicator, June 1997)

by Claude Horlick, Human Resources

The CUPE 1615/Memorial University Collective Agreement expired on March 31, 1997. There was a general consensus, I think, that the negotiation process did not serve either side well in the past, therefore, there seemed to be an opportunity to try a different approach in 1997. Also, there has been a trend in recent times to move away from the traditional power-based positional bargaining. Some members of the CUPE executive also talked about avoiding the adversarial process to some extent by presenting a short list of proposals and moving to final positions more quickly.

At the commencement of negotiations the parties invited a representative of the provincial Department of Environment and Labor to attend a joint meeting of the two bargaining teams and explain their process of interest-based bargaining. The representative explained that it would work only if both parties were willing to embrace this process of joint exploration of common interests. After a separate meeting with the CUPE side, the Department of Environment and Labor representative concluded that the process was not appropriate for the parties at this time. The reasoning seemed to be that CUPE suspected the university's motives and they were on a faster track than the interest-based process allowed.

Negotiations begin

The traditional negotiating process started in mid-March, prior to the expiry of the agreement. The two teams started with a budget presentation by Budgets and Audits followed by a CUPE presentation to the university's senior executive. Following this the parties exchanged contract proposals. The next day, the university responded to CUPE's original proposals. At that point the CUPE bargaining team chose to walk out of negotiations and advised that they would be applying for conciliation.

What is conciliation?

Conciliation is a process under the Labor Relations Act that is mandatory prior to a strike or lockout occurring. Either party may request a conciliation officer or a conciliation board and the Labor Act specifies time frames that must be met before the process is considered exhausted. Because many parties seek conciliation without having engaged in any negotiations, there is a process whereby the minister of

labor can delay making a decision in order to allow the parties time to negotiate with the help of a conciliation officer.

Requests for a conciliation board have rarely been granted in the past. The parties are in a strike/lockout position 15 days after the minister decides not to appoint a board. However, if a board is appointed and the parties cannot settle, then the board takes a position on each of the outstanding issues and writes a report of recommendation.

CUPE applied for a conciliation board and the minister deferred a decision on the appointment of a board, presumably because very little negotiations had occurred to that point. However, a conciliation officer was appointed.

Productive negotiations

Following some useful informal discussions, the university and CUPE met with the conciliation officer and engaged in several days of productive negotiations. As a result, the number of outstanding major issues has been reduced to three or four - but there is no guarantee that an agreement will be achieved at this stage.

If the conciliation officer concludes that no further progress can be made, he will file a report with the minister. Upon receipt of the report, the minister must make the decision on appointing a conciliation board. If the decision is not to appoint a board, then the 15-day countdown to a strike or lockout commences. If the parties cannot reach an agreement during this period, only after the expiry of the 15 days is it legal to conduct a strike vote or for the parties to legally strike or lockout.

As of press time for *The Communicator*, the process of pre-conciliation was still ongoing. There are still some language items to be resolved, but obviously our ability to resolve the salary scale issue will determine whether or not an agreement is achieved.

The early application for conciliation has been positive in that it has forced the parties to quickly focus on the main issues. If we enter the countdown period to a legal work interruption, greater effort and focus to reach agreement will likely be made. We are still hopeful that a negotiated collective agreement, acceptable to the majority of CUPE Local 1615 members can be achieved without job action.

MUNFA

Grievances, arbitrations continue

(The Communicator, June 1997)

by Dr. Jack Strawbridge, Faculty Relations

The calendar year 1996 saw a record low number of grievances filed by MUNFA - a total of 30 (nine by the union, 21 by individuals). This compares to the previous low of 40 in 1992 and the record high of 61 in 1994. The 1994 number was artificially high because of two issues - salary appeals stemming from the 1992-95 agreement, and long-term disability (LTD) recipients affected by the bankruptcy of Confederation Life Insurance.

Strange but true

An unusual grievance was received concerning a faculty member whose department head promised to purchase a new computer for him. He was told he could purchase a computer of his choice, up to a certain value, from the Computer Purchasing Centre. The computer came equipped with 16 megabytes of memory. When the purchase order came to the department head, the list of items included the computer, some software, plus 16 megabytes of memory. The faculty member could not provide a reason as to why he needed the additional memory. The department head deleted the additional memory from the purchase order but allowed the software. MUNFA filed a grievance on his behalf, claiming that the memory was part of the computer.

Arbitrations continue

After two years of relatively low numbers of arbitrations (three in 1995, two in 1996), an increasing number of grievances either have been arbitrated or are scheduled for arbitration in 1997.

Justice via arbitration is often expensive but is not always swift. A case that was heard just over a year ago is still incomplete because we have yet to receive the arbitration board's decision. Similarly, a grievance filed in November 1996 is not scheduled to be heard until September 1998.

Career Scene

(The Communicator, June 1997)

The following career changes have received approval since the last issue of *The Communicator*. They are provided by Human Resources and are up to date at the time of publication.

ACADEMIC

Appointments

Dr. Glenn Rowe, Business Administration, assistant professor

John Grant McLoughlin, Education, assistant professor

Dr. Florence-Mary Williams, Engineering and Applied Science and Physics and Physical Oceanography, professor

Dr. Trevor Bell, Geography, assistant professor

Term appointments

Dr. Brendan Lewis, Medicine, clinical lecturer

Dr. Linda Moxley-Haegert, Medicine, clinical assistant professor

Dr. Vinod Patel, Medicine, clinical associate professor

Cross-appointments

Dr. Parvez Kumar, C-CORE to Engineering and Applied Science

Dr. Bill Bavington, Community Medicine to Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine

Dr. Y. Chen, Marine Institute to Mathematics and Statistics

Dr. Veeresh Gadag, Medicine to Mathematics and Statistics

Dr. Bruce Virgo, Pharmacy to Medicine

Promotions

Dr. Stuart Brown, Anthropology, professor

Dr. Ratnajothi Hoover, Biochemistry, professor

Dr. John Gow, Biology, professor

Dr. Faye Murrin, Biology, associate professor

Dr. John Bridson, Chemistry, professor

Dr. Paris Georghiou, Chemistry, professor

Dr. Raymond Poirier, Chemistry, professor

Dr. George Miminis, Computer Science, professor

Dr. T. A. Abrajano, Earth Sciences, professor

Dr. Greg Dunning, Earth Sciences, professor

Dr. George Jenner, Earth Sciences, professor

Dr. Pierre Morin, Engineering and Applied Science, professor

Dr. Barrie Barrell, Education, associate professor

Richard Buehler, English Language and Literature, professor

Dr. Graham Shorrocks, English Language and Literature, professor

Dr. Diane Tye, Folklore, associate professor

Dr. Larry Felt, Sociology, professor

Dr. Thomas Daniels, Psychology, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College (SWG), professor

Dr. Sandra Tomsons, Philosophy, SWGC, associate professor

Appointments - other

Rex Clark, Anthropology, head

Dr. Linda Phillips, Education, associate dean (graduate programs, research and development)

Dr. Roy Hostetter, Fine Arts, SWGC, head

Dr. Diane Goldstein, Folklore, head

Margaret Hackett, Nursing, associate director (undergraduate programs)

Dr. John Evans, Psychology, head

ADMINISTRATIVE

Appointments

Gary Peddigrew, Medicine, manager (finance and administration)

Retirement

William Stapleton, Medicine, chief executive officer

From the Garden

(The Communicator, June 1997)

by Carl P. White, Botanical Garden

Rock Garden explodes with color early in the season

At the Memorial University Botanical Garden we have 11 different display plantings, each depicting a different plant habitat or theme. The largest and first to provide widespread color in the new season is the Rock Garden.

Our Rock Garden can be divided into two sections, the old and the new. The old part, which extends from the Alpine House along the drive to the gate, was constructed in 1972 and is in the traditional style, with a sloped bank located in full sun built up with a series of rocks and little terraces placed to represent a mountainside. The rocks are fairly small and were placed by hand. The area was filled with a well-drained soil mix of screened topsoil, leafmold, and coarse sand (1:1:1) and then the whole area was mulched with crushed rock, about two-inches thick. The south end was made into a scree garden and is a reconstruction of a talus slope where pieces of rock have broken off and rolled together. There is little real soil in a scree and the plants growing there are usually rooted quite deeply.

The new section has three distinct features: a limestone garden, a mountain gully with a stream, and the Alpine House. The limestone garden was built in 1989 and further developed over the subsequent years. It is constructed with limestone rock from a quarry in Corner Brook, donated by Lundrigans. In this bed we grow lime-loving alpiners that need the "sweet" soil found here. Many native plants (mostly from the west coast) are grown, such as yellow lady's-slipper, pussytoes and several species of dwarf willows. The main difference between the mountain gully, opened in 1993, and our other rock gardens is the size of the rocks and the immaturity of the plantings. The rocks are quite large, some the size of small cars, and were placed using heavy equipment and lots of "elbow grease." more than 200 tons of rock and 80 tons of mixed soil were used to create the mountain gully. Most of the plant material is still "filling in" and the many shrubs are settled and growing quite well. A small pool, stream, and series of waterfalls were added in 1995 and they have already become a favorite with visitors. There is something about the sounds of water trickling among rocks that is relaxing, and it also helps mask some of the traffic noise from Mount Scio Road. The handcrafted, "eyebrow" bridge built by the Friends of the Garden volunteer group spans the stream and is a popular stop for visitors who wish to have their pictures taken; it also provides a great "viewing stand" from which to observe the garden.

Most of the plants in these gardens are true alpiners, well suited to the harsh windswept life above the treeline. With their low-tufted habits and tough foliage they survive where most plants would not. Alpiners generally bloom in spring or early summer (you have to be quick off the mark in the mountains if your seeds are going to mature before winter) but we have complemented these with many later-flowering plants, such as geraniums or cranesbills, potentilla and spiraea, to prolong color during the growing season.

A great place to view and photograph alpine plants is the Botanical Garden's Alpine House. Built in 1991 with funds raised by the Friends of the Garden, this structure has two viewing benches along the sides and a small rockery built at the south end opposite the entrance doors. The plants are displayed in clay pots sunk into sand which helps keep roots cool and allows for some moisture absorption from the damp sand. The beauty of this design is that plants can be easily removed when they have finished flowering and replaced with others just coming into bloom. The roof shelters the plants from heavy rains that can easily ruin delicate alpine flowers, and the slight shading provided allows the flowers to last longer.

An interesting and relaxing garden to visit throughout our open season (May to November) the Rock Garden is at its peak from the middle of May to the end of June.

Safety Notes

Safety Notes is compiled by the Office of Safety and Environmental Services, Department of Facilities Management, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Nfld., Canada, A1C 5S7. It is distributed in the university's employee newsletter, The Communicator, and to external safety organizations. For further information contact Wally Drover, manager of safety and environmental services, 709-737-4393.

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Safety Notes

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Report a hazard

Potential hazards on campus can be reported to the Office of Safety and Environmental Services. The following problems and solutions have been identified by members of the campus community:

Pedestrian traffic on campus

The university's corridors, tunnels and stairways can become quite congested between classes, at lunch time and at other times during the day. Pedestrian traffic flows much smoother and presents less hazard if everyone would follow this simple rule: **KEEP TO THE RIGHT**.

Backpacks in elevators

People who wear backpacks in elevators are usually unaware of the hazard they may present to others. Moving around in a crowded elevator while wearing a backpack can result in injury to other passengers. Prior to entering an elevator, remove your backpack and carry it or place it on the floor.

Report

Please report any safety hazards you may observe to the Facilities Management Control Centre, 737-7600, or the Office of Safety and Environmental Services, 737-4393. Together we can find solutions.

Safety Notes

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Surplus chemicals available

Over the past year, the Office of Safety and Environmental Services has been saving unused chemicals which were marked for disposal. These are chemicals for which the researcher had no further use but which are still in usable condition, still in the original container, and in some instances not even opened. Most chemical surpluses happen when a researcher retires or transfers to another institution. We felt it would be more environmentally and economically sound to find new uses for these chemicals.

There are currently over 400 items in our surplus inventory that are available for free for potential use by members of the university community. For a copy of the inventory list, or for more information, call the Office of Safety and Environmental Services, 737-4320, or e-mail gkennedy@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.

Safety Notes

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Week (June 2-8)

This year for the first time ever, Canada, the United States and Mexico will unite to participate in North American Occupational Health and Safety Week. The three countries have joined efforts in promoting the importance of preventing injury and illness in the workplace. Canada will celebrate this event as Canadian Occupational Health and Safety (COHS) Week with the theme *Managing Safety: An Element of Productivity*.

Safety is a shared responsibility and participation is the key. The Office of Safety and Environmental Services plans a number of promotional activities, displays and education forums around campus during the week. University safety committees are encouraged to plan their own in-house activities to focus on health and safety issues. For more information or assistance in planning activities call the Office of Safety and Environmental Services, 737-4393.

Safety Notes

(The Communicator, June 1997)

A clean sweep for safety

Spring is traditionally a time to clean and get rid of accumulated items which take up precious space. Our traditional spring clean-up of grounds and facilities is well under way on campus. Now is the time to look at our individual work areas. Chances are we will find that cleaning and re-organization is in order.

Good housekeeping should be part of the daily routine. You can't put a place in order, forget about it and expect the order to be maintained. Here are some good housekeeping tips that will help keep your work area hazard free and orderly:

- Walking and working surfaces should be kept clean, uncluttered and unobstructed. Dispose of scrap, debris and trash promptly.
- Materials and supplies should be stored so as not to obstruct travel ways or work areas. Utilize storage shelves, racks and stock rooms when available.
- Keep only enough stock in the work area for immediate use. Do not allow unusable items to accumulate underneath workbenches, in corners or other areas.
- Flammable liquids must be kept in approved safety containers. Do not keep excessive quantities of such liquids in the work area.
- Trash containers should be of fire- retardant material, emptied regularly and not allowed to overflow.
- Clean up liquid spills immediately. Oily rags should be disposed of in the proper covered containers.
- Ensure adequate lighting for good visibility.

An orderly work area will add to safety, efficiency and work quality. Keep it clean.

Safety Notes

(The Communicator, June 1997)

Hazardous waste disposal guidelines

In an effort to create a more effective, cost efficient and environmentally friendly waste management system, the Office of Safety and Environmental Services has developed guidelines for the disposal of hazardous (chemical) waste. The guidelines outline the appropriate procedures to follow to arrange for disposal of chemical waste and the reasons for these procedures. For more information regarding chemical waste disposal, or for a copy of the guidelines, please call 737-4320 or 737-8250.
