

## Public Health Procedures

### Introduction

The goal of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) is to provide and ensure a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. We work with campus groups, laboratories, and many other members of the community to fulfill this mission. EH&S is also the primary contact for federal, state, and local regulatory agencies regarding matters of health, safety and the environment.

Florida Atlantic University takes a number of actions to reduce the likelihood of public health incidents on its campuses. These actions include but are not limited to the following:

- Buildings and grounds are maintained in states of cleanliness to reduce the harboring of bacteria, viruses, and vermin that contribute to disease transmission.
  - Established building cleaning schedules
  - Mowing and litter control operations.
- Food service facilities and swimming pools are maintained to proper public health standards.
  - Pools maintained by professional pool maintenance companies
  - Food service contracted to professional service provider
  - Procedures in place for temporary food service events.
- FAU conducts community education programs that inform the University Community about the nature of public health issues and preventative measures that can be taken.
  - Handwashing campaigns
  - Food safety training and illness prevention.
  - Pandemic Flu planning and presentations
  - Alerts issued when problems are suspected (i.e. mosquitos)
- FAU employs professional staff dedicated to the prevention, treatment and mitigation of public health incidents.
  - Environmental Health & Safety
  - Student Health Services
  - Athletic Sports Medicine

The procedures outlined below provide pertinent information to the Florida Atlantic University Community regarding the methods, responsibilities, and legal authority for evaluating and protecting the public health of the community. Further information can be found in the FAU EH&S Public Health Manual or on the EH&S website located at:

<http://www.fau.edu/facilities/ehs/safety/Public-Health-Program.php>

### Communicable Diseases

A communicable disease is a disease/illness that can be passed from one host to another (i.e. a host may be human or non-human). An infectious illness may be caused by different germs such as

bacteria, viruses and fungi. Communicable diseases are usually transmitted in one of five ways: airborne, vectors, contact, spread from feces to mouths, and contact with body secretions or blood. If a communicable disease situation occurs at FAU, EH&S will work with Student Health Services and the local hospitals and clinics to determine where on campus this may have occurred, so that education, screening and preventive measures can be established to stop the spread of infection.

### Staph Infection

Staph infection is caused by the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus*, and is commonly found on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. It is the most common cause of skin infections in the United States and is treatable with antibiotics. However, staph bacteria also can cause serious infections (such as surgical wound infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia) and some staph bacteria are resistant to antibiotics. Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA) is a type of staph that is resistant to antibiotics.

Student Health Services, Housing, or A.D. Henderson School will contact EH&S when someone has been diagnosed with a MRSA infection. An investigation will take place to find out if the person has been in close contact with other people during an event or classroom activity that may have spread the infection to others. Information is distributed to inform people about MRSA and outline preventative measures that can be done to stop the spread of infection. Areas or equipment that may have been contaminated will be thoroughly cleaned by Maintenance and hand washing areas will be checked for adequate supplies and hand sanitizer recommended for areas that do not have hand washing facilities

#### Contacts:

Student Health Service: 561 297-3512

Housing: 561 297-2880

AD Henderson: 561 297- 3970

Maintenance: 561 297-2240

### Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but can also attack any part of the body such as the kidneys, spine, and brain. If not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal and certain strains are resistant to antibiotics. TB disease is a reportable illness and health care facilities such as the local hospital or Student Health Services will notify the County Health Department (CHD) if a new case of TB has been diagnosed. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncphi/diss/nndss/phs/infdis.htm>

The CHD will work with EH&S to determine if the TB infection may have been spread to others on FAU campuses. Information will be given out about the disease as well as preventative measures individuals can take. The person infected will provide medical clearance to SHS or their supervisor/human resources when they are cleared of the infectious state of TB so they can resume classes or work.

#### Contacts:

Boca Raton Community Hospital: 561 955-4271

Student Health Service: 561 297-3512

County Health Department: 561-355-3070

Human Resources: 561 297-6055  
Maintenance: 561 297-2240

### Vector-borne Diseases

Vector-borne diseases are diseases in which the pathogenic microorganism is transmitted from an infected individual to another individual by an arthropod or other agent, sometimes with other animals serving as intermediary hosts. These diseases can pose significant problems to FAU, due to the high incidence of mosquitoes in and around our various campuses. The CHD and FAU will work together to curtail these potential problems.

### West Nile Encephalitis

Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain and can be caused by viruses and bacteria, including viruses transmitted by mosquitoes. West Nile encephalitis is an infection of the brain caused by West Nile virus (WNV). WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. When there is an outbreak of illness in the community, EH&S will send out a campus wide notice to the FAU community about WNV and preventive measures to take on campus. The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites.

One measure is to schedule outdoor events during daylight hours, so EH&S will work with special event organizers to schedule an event during this time or have the Grounds Department spray mosquito insecticide the day before the event.

Dead birds may be a sign that West Nile virus is circulating between birds and the mosquitoes in an area. If there is a current outbreak of WNV in the campus vicinity, then EH&S and the Grounds Department will work together to pick up the dead birds found on campus and store in the hazardous waste facility until the CHD can pick up the bird. EH&S will do the on-line report located on the Fish Wildlife Commission web site at <http://myfwc.com/bird/> and contact CHD to let them know we have a bird for them to pick up.

### Contacts:

Environment Health and Safety: 561-297-0028  
Environmental Health: 561-355-3070  
Mike Bell at Grounds: 561 297-2293

### Foodborne Illness

The FAU Food Safety Program is designed to provide guidelines and rules to guard against food-borne illness, and to comply with applicable regulations. Detailed information can be found at <http://www.fau.edu/facilities/ehs/safety/Food-Safety-Program.php>.

All FAU events/services that involve food must comply with the [Florida Administrative Code \(FAC\) 64E-11](#) and all other applicable regulations. All campus food events that are serving to the public must contact Dining Services to use the campus food service provider, or obtain a waiver to use an outside vendor. If an outside vendor is used, the event must be approved by EH&S by completing a Temporary Food Service Event application and on-line training. <http://www.fau.edu/facilities/ehs/safety/Food-Safety-Program.php>

If a foodborne illness occurs at an event or in a food establishment area, EH&S will investigate the illness to determine where the source of contamination occurred and recommend prevention measures to stop the illness from spreading. If there is an outbreak of the illness, the University community will be informed by e-mail and EH&S will work the CHD to assist with the investigation and to collect and deliver specimens to the CHD laboratory.

Contacts:

Environment Health and Safety: 561-297-0028

CHD Environmental Health: 561-355-3070

### Research and Teaching Laboratories

Laboratories may use hazardous materials that need to be managed to ensure that personnel are safe and the materials do not get outside the environment to jeopardize the health and safety of the University Community. Mandated training is offered on a monthly basis to fulfill this requirement. Hazardous materials are treated and disposed in a manner that protects the public and the environment.

### Sanitation

Florida Atlantic University follows the rules and regulations outlined in Chapter 386 of the sanitary nuisance statute and takes pride in its beautiful and clean campuses. The Maintenance and Grounds Departments work hard to make sure this is accomplished on a daily basis. However, if pest/vermin, plumbing problems, or locker rooms become a sanitary nuisance that may jeopardize the health and safety of the University Community, Environmental Health and Safety will investigate the situation and outline recommendations to stop or prevent the problem from occurring on campus. EH&S and the CHD inspects all campuses on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to remain clean and safe for the public.

### Water Quality Complaints

Florida Atlantic University's water supplier, City of Boca Raton, provides an annual report on the local drinking water quality; therefore, we know the campus drinking water is safe to drink. However, water fountains on campus have been tested to ensure that the supply of water has not been contaminated in route.

When someone complains about the quality of the drinking water, EH&S will investigate and perform tests to ensure that the water is safe. Certain tests can be performed on-site such as the chlorine content test, but other analysis such as heavy metals are performed by a certified laboratory.

During emergency situations, the water may not be safe to drink and therefore a notice must be sent out to the community letting them know about the status of the drinking water. All buildings will have signs posted on the entrances, bathrooms and water fountains so people do not inadvertently drink the water. At public functions, bottled water may be offered depending on the activity and

resources. Once the emergency has been resolved, maintenance will purge the water system so the water is once again safe to drink.

Due to the high volume of construction occurring on various campuses, FAU must ensure the safety of drinking water on its campuses. Specifically, all new water mains shall be installed, cleaned, disinfected, and bacteriologically cleared for service in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency regulations. Contractors must comply with county/state guidelines when installing a new water system, complete the applicable forms, and adhere to appropriate procedures when there is a break in the system.

Contacts:

Environment Health and Safety: 561-297-0028

Environmental Health at 561-355-3070

Work Control: 561 297-2240