



# SAFETY INSIGHTS

News and Awareness Information from Environmental Health & Safety

## A Walk in the Woods - Beware the hazards...

Autumn is a great time of the year to get outside for fall harvests, pumpkin picking, or just a hike in the woods. Students, faculty and staff often venture out into the woods, salt marshes or other natural areas for educational activities, to conduct research, or to just reconnect with nature. They need to be aware of potential hazards, including ticks, mosquitoes, stinging insects, poisonous plants, and wild animals, both on and off campus.

### Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) found in our area

The Suffolk County health recently reported additional mosquito samples that tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus. To date this season, the County has reported 74 mosquito samples that have tested positive for West Nile virus and seven that have tested positive for EEE. While there has not been any reported cases of EEE on Long Island, two people in Connecticut have died so far this year from EEE virus.



More >> [Mosquito-borne Diseases](#)

### Ticks remain active well into the fall



A recent study, with corresponding author Jorge Benach, Distinguished Professor at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the Renaissance School of Medicine, found that nearly one-quarter of the deer ticks ticks are infected with more than one agent, resulting in the possibility of simultaneous transmission from a single tick bite. (see [Multiple Agents of Tick-Borne Diseases Found on Long Island](#)). So, while we often hear and think about Lyme Disease, we must be concerned about the potential for other infectious diseases such as Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, to name a few.

More >> [Prevent Tickborne Diseases](#)

### Poisonous plants abound

Poison ivy is a native North America plant and present statewide in New York. All parts of the plant contain a resinous oil called urushiol (you-ROO-she-all), which is a potent allergen that can cause an intensely itchy rash, severe blistering and other serious allergic reactions.



More >> [Poison Ivy \(DEC Website\)](#)

## Get out, and stay out...



In a fire, seconds count. Knowing what to do in advance of a fire alarm signal can save your life, and the life of others. Every building on campus has a fire alarm system that includes a signaling device to alert occupants of the need to evacuate for a fire or other emergencies. Fire drills are conducted each semester to familiarize building occupants with the signals in their building. Everyone should take every fire alarm seriously, know at least two ways out of the building and evacuate immediately upon hearing a fire alarm. More >> [Fire Alarms](#)

## A pain in the... back!

Anyone who has experienced a back injury, or has chronic back pain, knows how debilitating it can be. Preventing back injuries is a major workplace safety challenge. In 2016, musculoskeletal disorders involving the back accounted for 38.5 percent of all work-related musculoskeletal disorders (349,050) nation wide. While no single approach has been found to totally eliminate back injuries caused by lifting, a substantial portion can be prevented by using proper lifting techniques.



More >> [Proper Lifting Safety Guide](#)

## Fire & Safety Expo 2019



We had a great turn-out for the Annual Fire & Safety Expo, which took place on the SAC Plaza on Wednesday, October 20, 2019. Throughout the month of September and October, EH&S Fire Marshals have been conducting fire safety training and demonstrations in Campus Residence quads to raise awareness about fire safety on campus. Fire Safety is a year-round effort. Click on the link below to learn more about what you can practice fire safety.

More >> [EH&S Fire Prevention Website](#)

## Safety Spotlight



Ralph Tortora, Assistant Director of Utilities is recognized for instilling a culture of safety within the Campus Operations & Maintenance organization. Ralph is responsible for all of the electrical systems on campus as well as the campus-owned natural gas distribution system, and safety is his number one priority. To ensure the integrity of the gas systems, Ralph developed an annual gas leak testing procedure and secured the specialty contracting services required for this type of testing. Ralph implemented a program to test all battery operated emergency lights throughout the campus, and works closely with building managers to schedule electrical shutdowns that are necessary to perform the inspections. Ralph's top priority is the safety of electrical workers. He established a strong Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program and ensures that workers are trained in accordance with NFPA 70E, Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace. Ralph's care for people goes "Far Beyond" the campus boundaries. He is a volunteer firefighter in the Blue Point Fire Department and is currently an ex-chief with 32 years of service to his community.

Congratulations Ralph, and THANK YOU!!

