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Enhancing the Culture of Safety in the U-M Research Community

1 message

President Mark S. Schlissel

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To: tja@umich.edu

The University of Michigan has a long history of conducting high quality research that helps educate our students and benefits the world. We are proud to continue U-M's strong commitment to those ideals and are equally committed to the health and welfare of our faculty, staff, students and community.

As one of the world's leading research institutions, we must do everything we can to address the risks that come with research activities. We must also hold the safety of our community to the highest standards and continually work to improve on our strong track record in research safety.

We are embarking on an ambitious plan to enhance the culture of safety in research at U-M. Several independent groups, including the American Chemical Society and most recently the National Research Council, have issued reports on the culture of safety in research institutions across the country. Here at U-M, we have reviewed laboratory safety practices in research units across our campus and identified a number of enhancements that can be made to ensure research safety.

Over the coming months, U-M's Department of Occupational Safety and Environmental Health (OSEH) and the U-M Office of Research, in coordination with the Office of the Provost, will launch an initiative to strengthen our current programs for research safety. Specific

measures will include establishment of a new oversight committee on research safety, a survey to assess awareness of safety procedures, clarification of roles and responsibilities for laboratory safety, and increased communication and information on safety issues and procedures. The ultimate goal, as always, is to enhance our ability to do quality research as safely as possible, and to remain a leader in safe research operations.

Safe research is the responsibility of everyone in the laboratory – how we think, how we act, and most of all understanding that making sure no one gets hurt in the process is paramount. When planning a project we must understand the hazards, protective measures, and controls.

U-M's Department of Occupational Safety and Environmental Health is ready to partner with our research community to identify risks and find ways to deal with them. For all of us, quality research is safe research. We very much appreciate your support of research safety efforts at U-M.

Sincerely,

Mark Schlissel, President

Martha Pollack, Provost

Kevin Hegarty, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Marschall Runge, Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs

S. Jack Hu, Interim Vice President for Research