SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 16, 2013

Present: Rick DuVall, Bumsoo Han, Bob Lucht, Peter Meckl, Marty Mlynarik, John Starkey, Mike Sherwood, Nathan Toner, Justin Weibel

Absent: Mike Logan, Becky Schumm, Justin Seipel, Thomas Siegmund

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. REM Recertification

   In a letter dated April 3, 2013, Carol Shelby notified us that ME had been approved for Integrated Safety Plan (ISP) recertification. To maintain certification, the following were specified:
   
   - regular meetings of the safety committee
   - ISP safety self-audits by each area
   - timely communication of safety issues throughout the department
   - REM annual audit

3. Grad Student Safety Orientation:

   In the past, REM has given a 1-hour safety overview as part of orientation for all incoming graduate students. This overview consisted of discussions of chemical hygiene and labeling, gas cylinder handling, machine shop safety, and PPE use.

   The School of Biomedical Engineering has a two-hour safety orientation for newly admitted graduate students, suggesting that ME may want to consider a longer safety orientation program.

   Nathan Toner, the graduate student representative on this committee, commented that most of the information given during the safety orientation is quickly forgotten, since at that time, it has no direct bearing on their work. He thought it would be better to do safety training covering specific topics of relevance to the students when needed. Access to helpful online information when needed would make this easier.

4. Safety Training (RTK, PPE):

   A variety of on-line training resources are available, but not always easy to find. Links to these will be assembled and collected in a safety website (see below) for easy access.

5. ME Safety Web Presence:

   Although ME does have a Building Safety link directly on the ME home page, it does not include a set of guidelines and links to training resources. A good model is the School of Engineering Education Safety website, which covers a host of safety suggestions and helpful links.

   More links, guidelines, and useful presentations will be added to the ME safety page soon. Rick DuVall commented in particular that we need more resources for faculty to fill out Hazard Assessments.

6. Safety Procedures for ME Labs:

   Several committee members commented on the importance of a safety culture. In the School of Materials Science and Engineering, all graduate students are required to take a 1-credit course in which they must evaluate each other’s laboratories and report any issues. The idea of students taking the initiative was appealing to the committee, and several suggested that it would be good to explore adding a similar course to the ME graduate curriculum. In addition, it was felt that proper training done when students are actually involved in their work would allow them to prepare ahead of any potential emergency and reduce the risk of any potential dangers.
Emergency plans were also discussed. Although a comprehensive plan for ME exists (and is easily accessed on the ME website), many committee members were unaware of it, or of its content. More must be done to disseminate this information. One suggestion was to reserve some time during the annual faculty retreat in August to go through some common emergency scenarios.

7. **Next Meeting:**

The committee agreed that it would be good to meet several times this summer to flesh out details for the graduate orientation, discuss a possible grad course, as well as develop enhanced online safety resources.