

Environment, Health, and Safety

Policy Statement

The California Institute of Technology including its division the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), (“Caltech” or “the Institute”) is committed to conducting activities in a manner that promotes the safety and health of faculty, staff, students, and visitors and minimizes risk to Caltech property. Activities at Caltech are to be conducted in accordance with the following guiding principles:

- The responsibility for implementing and maintaining a safe environment rests on all staff, faculty, students, and visitors at Caltech.
- Supervisors and managers are responsible for establishing good environmental, health and safety practices in their laboratories, classrooms and workplaces and for providing safe equipment and facilities for faculty, staff, students, and visitors.
- All faculty, staff, students, postdoctoral scholars and visitors are expected to keep themselves informed of conditions affecting their health and safety, participate in safety training, follow proper environmental, health and safety procedures, and report accidents and potentially unsafe conditions or practices promptly to their supervisor or manager or another appropriate office.
- Institute activities must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental, health and safety laws and regulations.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Institute has the responsibility to establish environmental, health and safety policies and procedures, and provide resources to ensure compliance with environmental and safety laws. The Institute performs these functions through the following committees and administrative and management structure:

Institute Environment, Health and Safety Committee (IEHSC)

The Institute Environment, Health and Safety Committee is responsible for recommending campus-wide health and safety policies to the President.

The committee is responsible for making recommendations regarding the allocation of Institute resources so as to maintain environmental (air emissions, soil contamination, water discharges, hazardous waste management) and workplace health and safety compliance. In addition, the committee monitors developments through the campus Environment, Health, and Safety Office to ensure that Institute policies are observed, remain current, and are consistent with the anticipated changes in regulatory climate.

This committee also provides an annual report to the President, summarizing the status of environmental, health and safety programs and risks affecting the Institute.

Campus Environment, Health, and Safety Office

The Environment, Health, and Safety Office (EHS), which reports to the Associate Vice President for Facilities, is responsible for providing technical, regulatory, and related advisory services to the campus community. EHS works in partnership with the academic divisions and administrative departments to develop and implement safety programs that provide technical guidance and training support relevant to the operations of the laboratories and workplace, are practical to carry out, and comply with the law. This includes general orientation in prudent laboratory practices, emergency response procedures, occupational safety, and familiarity with Institute EHS policies and plans. EHS also initiates site reviews to assess potential hazards and determines effective controls, and coordinates hazardous waste training and hazardous waste disposal. EHS, working closely with the Office of General Counsel, reviews legislation, recommends policies, conducts accident investigations and investigates and reports environmental, health and safety incidents.

Division Chairs and Department Heads

The Caltech campus consists of divisions conducting research and educational activities and administrative departments supporting the operations of Caltech. It is the responsibility of each division chair and department head to ensure their units conduct operations in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and implement Caltech's environmental, health and safety policies and procedures. Division chairs and department heads maintain responsibility for day-to-day management and implementation of their environmental, health and safety programs.

Division chairs and department heads may designate an individual with the authority to implement, manage, and enforce environmental, health and safety compliance programs within the division or administrative office. With guidance and assistance from EHS, the responsible individual (i.e. the division chair, head department head, or their designee) shall manage the environmental, health and safety activities in the division or department.

JPL Office of Safety and Mission Success

The Office of Safety and Mission Success (JPL OSMS) at JPL establishes and leads the Environmental, Health and Safety and Mission Assurance Programs for projects, programs and major tasks that appropriately manage risks and enhance the probability of mission safety and success. In this capacity, JPL OSMS is an independent organization, reporting directly to the JPL Director, that continually assesses risk and provides infrastructure to ensure that JPL maintains compliance with the JPL Prime Contract and applicable federal,

state and local environmental, health and safety requirements. JPL OSMS applies knowledge, innovation and independence to achieve successful missions that inspire the world while safeguarding JPL's people, assets and reputation.

JPL Environmental, Health and Safety Program Management

The JPL Occupational Safety Program Office, the JPL Systems Safety Program Office and the JPL Environmental Affairs Program Safety Office are chartered with establishing and leading programs related to Occupational Safety, Systems Safety and Environmental Compliance, respectively, and are tasked with appropriately managing risks and enhancing the probability of mission safety and success. Working closely with the Office of General Counsel, these offices review legislation, recommend policies, conduct accident investigations and investigate and report environmental, health and safety incidents. Each of environmental, health and safety program management offices has office-specific policies that are detailed in JPL Rules!

Manager and Supervisor Responsibilities

All managers and supervisors, both academic and administrative, at campus and JPL are responsible for conducting operations in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and Institute policies, practices and programs.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that areas under their management have adequate resources for environmental, health and safety programs, practices and equipment; and that those areas under their management are in compliance with Institute environmental, health and safety policies, practices and programs.

Supervisors, including Principal Investigators (PIs), with guidance and assistance from the environmental, health and safety offices listed above, are responsible for implementing Caltech environmental, health and safety policies, practices and programs, ensuring that workplaces, including laboratories and equipment are safe and well-maintained, training and informing employees, students, and visitors about workplace-specific hazards and safety procedures; providing personal protective equipment; correcting violations; investigating incidents and complaints; overseeing proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials; enforcing policies (including appropriately disciplining employees and students who violate environmental and safety requirements); and appropriately documenting activities and processes.

Faculty bear full responsibility for the safety of work undertaken in their laboratories but can designate an individual to implement and manage the day-to-day activities related to environmental and safety practices within their research group.

All faculty, staff and students

All faculty, staff and students are responsible for:

- Keeping themselves informed of conditions affecting their health and safety;
- Participating in safety training programs as required by Caltech policy and their supervisors;
- Performing work in a safe and prudent manner;
- Adhering to health and safety practices in their workplaces, classrooms, and laboratories
- Advising of or reporting potentially unsafe practices or serious hazards in the workplace, classroom or laboratory, and cooperatively participating in the investigation and/or remediation of any incidents.

The success of the Institute's environmental, health and safety management activities requires the active involvement of individuals through participation in training; compliance with established environmental, health and safety procedures; and reporting hazards and potential violations.

It is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars and students at Caltech to disclose fully any activity that may result in a violation of environmental, health or safety laws or regulations, and to cooperatively participate in the investigation and remediation of any incidents.

Contractors

Those who do business with Caltech, such as contractors, consultants and vendors, are responsible for performing their work in a manner that protects the Institute from environmental, health and safety risks, and complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations and all applicable Caltech environmental, health and safety policies, practices and programs.

Reporting

In matters of actual or potential regulatory enforcement action, investigations, or employee complaints, the appropriate environmental, health and safety office will work closely with the Office of General Counsel to coordinate the Institute's response to external regulatory agencies concerned with workplace health, safety, and environmental compliance.

Any questions or concerns regarding compliance should be brought to the attention of the relevant manager or supervisor or to the relevant environmental, health and safety office. Alternatively, concerns can be raised with the appropriate division chair or vice president at campus, or the OSMS Director at JPL. In addition, concerns can be raised anonymously for campus through the anonymous hotline (626) 395-8787 or (888) 395-8787 or online at

[Caltech Hotline](#) or, for JPL, through the [anonymous hotline](#), or the [NASA Safety Reporting System](#).

Sanctions

The Institute expects all faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars and students to be vigilant in complying with all environmental, health and safety requirements to properly conduct their activities at the Institute.

Local, state and federal laws and regulations establish civil and criminal penalties for violations of environmental, health and safety laws and regulations, including substantial fines and possible imprisonment.

Caltech views compliance with all laws, regulations, and Institute guidelines as conditions of employment, and violation of such requirements shall be considered grounds for disciplinary action. Penalties can include employment termination and student suspension or permanent separation from Caltech.



Thomas F. Rosenbaum
President