

## Annual Report

2003-2004

### Campus Wide Safety Committee

The Safety Committee met monthly for 90 minutes throughout the academic year. The focus of our work again this year, was completing and documenting a comprehensive chemical inventory, hazardous waste policy and procedure development and associated training, EPA compliance activities and monitoring, identifying and implementing strategies to reduce workplace accidents, continued development of an emergency response plan in conjunction with the emergency response planning team, and motor vehicle safety activities that included policy revisions and specially designed safety programs to reduce the number of accidents.

Quarterly reports for the departments of Food Service, Facilities Services, and Campus Safety were also reviewed. Additionally, the Committee completed its annual review of the Chemical Hygiene Plan, and Radiation Safety Committee summary, and the Skidmore Security Advisory Committee recommendations.

In February 2004, The College received \$63,000 fine from the EPA for violations that were observed during their on-site audit, in March 2003. The violations primarily related to the poor condition of the Main Accumulation Area for Hazardous Waste, some waste labeling inconsistencies, some improper disposal of some waste (rags, darkroom materials,) Due to a number of proactive actions by the College, a subsequent visit with the EPA was successful in reducing the fine to \$50,000. More details can be found later in this report.

#### Policy/Procedure Development and Implementation

The committee continued to fine tune the Motor Vehicle policy, with particular emphasis on the investigation of motor vehicle accidents with campus and College rented vehicles.

We continue to have a trend related to accidents caused by improper "backing up".

As a result, the committee asked Larry Britt, Associate Director of Campus Safety to design and teach a program specifically geared to raise awareness in avoiding these types of accidents. We made this a mandatory session for all Skidmore approved departmental drivers.

Additionally, the Department of Campus Safety continues to run defensive driving courses for the campus. The committee also endorsed a recommendation that approved drivers involved in multiple on or off campus accidents be requested to take the defensive driving course. We are hopeful that these educational sessions will be successful in helping to reduce these problematic trends.

#### Regulatory Compliance Activities

As indicated earlier, after almost one full calendar year since the unannounced EPA visit, in February, 2004, the College received a list of citations and subsequent fines totaling \$63,000. The Committee had been expecting the citations following the exit interview during the survey, and had begun a corrective action plan at that point. Much of the Committee work this year was spent monitoring the completing of the corrective actions. As indicated earlier, much of the work centered on improving the condition of the main accumulation waste area. Additionally, a significant amount of work has been done to standardize the labeling of hazardous waste, and conduction educational sessions to ensure that hazardous materials are identified, used, labeled and disposed of properly by the users. This was an enormous undertaking, and will require vigilance to maintain ongoing compliance The College has been advised that we should expect a return visit at some point in the future by the EPA.

The College was also visited this year by OSHA in response to an employee generated complaint alleging that the College had violated OSHA policy with respect to Asbestos removal. OSHA conducted a review in July 2003, and both the College and Sodexo were cited but not fined. Both entities were cited for not fully informing employees, about possible hazards. The College is currently working on a comprehensive asbestos policy and associated communication plan. In the interim, the facilities services management team has

formalized communications to employees regarding asbestos work sites.

It should be noted that OSHA found no evidence of unsafe working conditions as was alleged, but an opportunity to improve communications.

#### Other Activities

The Committee continued to sponsor the Employee Safety incentive drawings for union staff on a monthly basis. The program was designed to help raise awareness and to promote a safe work environment and to reduce the number of work related accidents on campus. The popular program has helped reduce the number of accidents with lost work days by approximately 19% over the past 3 years. We anticipate making some changes to the program in the up coming year, and will continue to monitor its effectiveness.

Work continued towards completing the College's chemical inventory. The Committee's objective is to have a complete and accurate inventory that can be accessed by those on campus who utilize this information in their daily work, as well as all emergency response agencies in the area. Our goal is a comprehensive manual that is available on line and can be easily updated so as to remain current. The manual will also contain cad drawings detailing the floors and rooms of each building on campus where chemicals are located for quick emergency response should it be needed. This is a very complex project, but good progress continues.