

# Environmental Health & Safety News

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## PORTABLE OXYGEN TANKS

### Oxygen Tank Holders -

#### Required to help keep patients safe for transport!

- ◆ Remind staff these are to remain on all Stryker beds at all times – They should not be removed.
- ◆ If a bed is missing one see if there is one hiding somewhere on your unit.
- ◆ If you find an extra one on your unit clean it and keep it on your unit.
- ◆ Unit leadership please add this to your unit based DAILY checklist to verify every bed on your unit has an oxygen tank holder attached. It will be up to the units to designate who's task this will be; leadership, charge nurse, unit clerk, LNA ....
- ◆ In cases of missing holders, the holders should be on the unit if the regular, daily checks are occurring as listed above; thus reducing the need to request any additional holders. Requesting additional holders can be completed via TeleTracking and Patient Support Services will deliver and track this process.
- ◆ This is a mandatory, CMS issue and must be adhered to in support of our patients and organization.



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Sharps safety devices can reduce injuries!

#### Types of sharps safety devices that can be used to protect workers:

- ◆ Needle-free IV systems
- ◆ Sheathed, blunting or retractable needles
- ◆ Blood transfer adapters
- ◆ Non-breakable plastic vacuum and capillary tubes
- ◆ Sharps disposal containers



Get involved in selecting and evaluating the device you use.

Employers are required to involve frontline workers in selecting devices with safety features

#### Choose devices that:

- ◆ Come attached with safety features that can not be removed
- ◆ Are easy to use with clear instructions
- ◆ Do no interfere with patient care
- ◆ Can be engaged wit hone hand
- ◆ Enable hands to remain behind the exposed sharp
- ◆ Are visibly different when activated



- Center for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information from the CDC please click on the link below.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/sharpsafety/pdf/brochure.pdf>

For more information on sharp injury prevention at the UVM Medical Center please click on the below link to be directed to the Employee Health Sharps Education website. [http://intranet.uvmhealth.org/Employee\\_Resources/Employee\\_Health/Pages/sharps\\_education.aspx](http://intranet.uvmhealth.org/Employee_Resources/Employee_Health/Pages/sharps_education.aspx)

**RADON IN YOUR HOME**

One in seven Vermont homes has elevated levels of radon. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that has no color, smell or taste. Radon is present in outdoor air, and radon levels can build up inside people's homes especially ones that do not have ventilation systems.

Many factors contribute to radon entering your home:

- ◆ Concentration of radon in the soil and permeability of the soil under the home
- ◆ Structure and construction of the home
- ◆ Type, operation and maintenance of the home's heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system

**Health risk factors -**

Breathing radon increases the risk of developing lung cancer over a lifetime. The risk depends on how long an individual is exposed to radon and whether or not they are a smoker. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 86% of radon-related lung cancer deaths occur among current or former smokers.

**Unless you test for it, there is no way of knowing if radon is present in your home.****Testing Your Indoor Air for Radon -** Request a Free Kit

The use of a long-term radon in air test kit is best because radon levels can change daily, weekly and seasonally. We recommend that you test your home for 3 to 12 months (ideally including a heating season). Longer test periods ensure the most accurate measure of actual exposure. Free long-term radon in air test kits are available to Vermont residents. You can request one from the Radon Program by:

- 1) Calling 1-800-439-8550 (toll-free in Vermont)
- 2) Emailing [radon@vermont.gov](mailto:radon@vermont.gov)

For more information: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/radon>

- Environmental Health Division, VT Department of Health

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM**

**116 years related to Healthcare;**

**160 years related to Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S)**

EH&S works with other departments within the organization to help maintain a safe and suitable environment for patients, visitors, and staff. The EH&S team works closely with our community partners and coalition members to promote environmental and occupational health and safety.

Our team is comprised of 6 members:

- ◆ Maria Marra, Safety Manager
- ◆ Greg Klimas, Safety Specialist
- ◆ John Berino, Occ. / Env. Health Program Coordinator
- ◆ Jon Wilkinson, Industrial Hygienist
- ◆ Judy Mirro, Environmental Health Specialist
- ◆ Leslie Allen, Office Coordinator

Each newsletter will feature one of the EH&S team members.

**Maria Marra, Safety Manager -**

Maria began her career at the UVM Medical Center in January of 2017, she has a long history in healthcare starting as a clinician in Critical Care, Emergency Department and Employee Health. Over time her interest turned to Healthcare Quality, Clinical Risk Management and Accreditation with a focus on Environmental Health & Safety.

What does she want you to know about UVM Medical Centers Environmental Health & Safety Department?

“My team is the most experienced team I have ever worked with. I am honored to lead them, and we are fortunate to have them! I would also request that if you have questions or ideas for articles for our newsletter please feel free to send them to Leslie Allen. Thank you to you all for your support of the EH&S Team as we work to support the Environment of Care at the UVM Medical Center.”

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