



Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

MSC 3445
New Mexico State University
P.O. Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001
575-646-2127, fax: 575-646-6334
provost@nmsu.edu

January 25, 2017

To the NMSU Research Community:

Occasionally, another university does something so well that it is worth simply adopting their words and approach rather than attempting to craft a new message or create a new process. This is the case with a message sent out by the University of Maryland to its research community, which has resonated with Katrina Doolittle, Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety, and Glen Haubold, Associate Vice President for Facilities. We copy the text of the letter below. Our signatures are affixed simply to affirm our strong agreement with the message.

As a researcher, you know that research excellence and safety are inextricably intertwined. Safety is a core value of our institution and an integral part of the responsible conduct of research. You play a critical role in ensuring safety in your research every day.

The University expects all members of our research community to integrate safety into their research activities, to strive for excellence, and to go beyond minimum compliance. It is our expectation that every researcher will:

1. **Demonstrate a Commitment to Safety** – Lead by example, adhere to the rules, and be willing to speak up if you see unsafe practices. Faculty and other supervisors are expected to put safety on the agenda and build it into the way their group works and thinks.
2. **Assess and Plan for Hazards and Risks** – Take the time to systematically assess risks and plan for the hazards identified. Incorporate safety into laboratory, shop and field standard operating procedures.
3. **Implement Controls** – Take action to control your risks. Make sure you have the right protective equipment and that engineering controls are working correctly. Principal investigators must enforce the established rules in their lab, shops and field.
4. **Complete Safety Training** – Ensure that new researchers have the knowledge and skill to safely perform their research activities. It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that researchers receive *research specific* safety training.
5. **Strive for Continuous Improvement** – Research is not a static endeavor. Managing safety requires ongoing reassessment, feedback, and reinforcement. Encourage reporting and resolve safety concerns. Involve all members when identifying and reviewing lessons learned after incidents and near-misses.

Environmental Health and Safety has a variety of services, tools, and guidance to assist with meeting these expectations (safety.nmsu.edu). We encourage you to take advantage of their assistance and to not hesitate to contact them (ehs@nmsu.edu or 646-3327) if you have any related concerns.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Howard
Executive Vice President and Provost

Luis Vazquez
Interim Vice President for Research

Angela Throneberry
Senior Vice President, Administration and Finance