

SAFE SCHOOLS: a Health and Safety Check

**A Manual of Checklists Covering Environmental, Health and
Safety Regulations for Secondary Occupational and Career
Orientation Programs in New Jersey Public Schools**

Updated Through June 2007 - Update #27

Prepared by

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School of Public Health

In cooperation with

The New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs
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Safe Schools Project Description

Safe Schools is a project supported by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs, to assist schools in meeting environmental and occupational safety & health regulations and protecting students and staff from occupational injuries and illnesses. The project is administered by the Center for School and Community Health Education of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – School of Public Health (UMDNJ-SPH) and the Public Education and Risk Communication Division of the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI). UMDNJ-SPH is sponsored by UMDNJ in cooperation with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and New Jersey Institute of Technology and in collaboration with the Public Health Research Institute. EOHSI is jointly sponsored by UMDNJ - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Safe Schools involves a number of outreach components designed to support Safety and Health Designees and those involved in School-to-Careers. Safety and Health Designees are school board appointed school personnel who are charged with the responsibility of implementing a safety and health program for vocational programs in their school district. The following is a list of the current Safe Schools outreach components:

- Safe Schools: a health and safety check. This is a manual of checklists covering environmental and occupational safety & health regulations for secondary occupational and career orientation programs in New Jersey public schools. The manual is updated twice per year;
- Free training to teachers throughout the year;
- Biannual newsletter;
- Analysis of injury/illness records;
- Training needs assessments;
- Project evaluation;
- Assistance with safety and health issues associated with School-to-Careers; and
- Special task forces and projects.

Additional information regarding the Safe Schools Project can be found at www.njsafeschools.org.

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DISCLAIMER

The Safe Schools manual was developed cooperatively with the aid and support of the individuals, organizations, and agencies listed in the Acknowledgments. **However it does not necessarily represent official interpretations of regulations or the official policy of any participating organization or agency.** In addition, reference to company names or products does not constitute endorsement by any participating individual, organization, or agency.

The information contained in this manual is believed to be accurate as of the date it was prepared. The manual is not intended as legal advice and should not be relied upon as such for any purposes, without consulting one's own legal counsel. The manual is a technical assistance resource and is only intended to provide guidance in meeting Federal and State environmental, safety and health regulations that are **applicable to New Jersey public secondary vocational education programs and courses on school grounds.** Since regulations are subject to change and interpretation, it cannot be assumed that the use of this manual will guarantee regulatory compliance. Nor can it be assumed that the use of this manual will guarantee that all environmental, safety and health hazards are addressed. It remains the school's responsibility to ensure a safe and healthful classroom and to comply with relevant Federal, State, and local regulations.

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To ensure that the Safe Schools manual addressed the needs of New Jersey educators and administrators, over two hundred individuals participated in all phases of its original development.

- **A task force**, with representatives from New Jersey public secondary school vocational programs, regulating agencies, unions, health and safety organizations and businesses, was formed to provide ongoing guidance.

- **Two focus group meetings** with vocational educators and NJ Department of Education staff gave valuable feedback on drafts of the manual.

- **A written needs assessment survey** was completed by over 100 teachers.

- **The checklists were pre-tested** at several schools with teachers and administrators accompanying project staff after school hours on walkthrough inspections of their classrooms.

- **A planning group** comprised of school administrators and teachers was convened to provide guidance in the pilot-test and training procedures.

- **A pilot-test of the manual** was done in 12 schools selected for their broad range of ethnic, geographical and socio-economic backgrounds.

We are indebted to these individuals for their valuable contributions.

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