I. PURPOSE

This is a statement of official University policy to establish the process for maintaining occupational exposures to laser light within acceptable industry standards, as recommended by the American National Standard for Safe Use of Lasers (ANSI) Z-136, as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Guidelines for Laser Safety and Hazard Assessment.

II. POLICY

The University is dedicated to providing safe and healthy laboratory facilities for students and employees. Laboratory administrators, managers, faculty, staff and students share responsibility for minimizing exposure to hazardous laser light, which for the purpose of this policy includes all laser light between 0.180 and 10.6 microns, inclusive.

The Laser Safety Plan (LSP) shall be implemented for all facilities at the University of Maryland at College Park (UMCP) where the referenced lasers are utilized for research, education and training, manufacturing, and other processes.

The LSP shall be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Department of Environmental Safety (DES) shall:
   a. Provide a Laser Safety Officer (LSO) to develop and coordinate administration of the UMCP Laser Safety Plan (LSP);
   b. Prepare the LSP with annual review and revision;
   c. Distribute the LSP to each Laboratory Supervisor or Principal Investigator (LS/PI);
   d. Provide consultation, worksite monitoring, hazard analysis, and advisory assistance and information concerning the use of hazardous laser light;
   e. Investigate, document, and report any significant exposure to laser light to the Director of Environmental Safety, and Chair of the department in which the incident occurred;
f. Direct periodic laboratory safety audits and recommend action to correct conditions generating the release of hazardous laser light;

g. Provide initial training to all users of lasers based on the class of lasers in use. Refresher training shall be provided each year based on Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) recommendations; shall be commensurate with the operation and class of lasers in use; and as a minimum provide:

1. Provisions of the LSP;
2. Physical and health hazards of lasers in the area;
3. Measures to protect employees;
4. Signs associated with laser exposure;
5. References on hazards and safety features regarding laser light;
6. OSHA recommendations and the ANSI standard;

h. Establish a system of notification for purchases involving lasers or systems containing lasers.

2. Laboratory Supervisors/Principal Investigators (LS/PI) shall:
   a. Implement all provisions of the LSP for laboratory facilities under their control;
   b. Prepare an inventory of lasers in laboratories under their control;
   c. Prepare laboratory specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which includes information provided in Appendix III;
   d. Train laboratory workers regarding the specific practices and provisions in the SOP; and
   e. Comply with necessary documentation requirements;
   f. Determine and implement medical surveillance requirements.

3. University Health Center shall:
   a. Maintain medical records relating to consultations and examinations as required by law.

4. Individual Researchers and Laboratory Users shall:
   a. Adhere to the requirements of the LSP and SOPs;
   b. Complete all safety training requirements and comply with documentation procedures; and
c. Report all workplace injuries, exposures, or unsafe conditions to the LS/PI as soon as possible.

IV. INFORMATION

Assistance will be provided by the Department of Environmental Safety to any department requesting guidance or training to satisfy implementation of this policy. A complete copy of the Laser Safety Plan is available in the Department of Environmental Safety.