Environmental, Health, and Safety (EH&S) Policy
October 2015

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution is committed to the safety and health of its staff, students, visitors, collaborators, community neighbors, and the environment. The Institution has an ethical obligation to ensure that all activities are conducted in a safe and healthful manner; a legal obligation to satisfy the ever increasing number of federal, state and local regulations relating to EH&S; and a fiscal obligation to eliminate accidents and incidents with their associated high costs. Meeting these obligations requires clear assignment of responsibility and accountability for EH&S - that is the purpose of this Institution policy.

Commitment to health and safety by individuals at all levels and functions must be an integral part of the Institution's activities. Principal Investigators, managers, and supervisors are accountable for the health and safety of persons who report to them; they shall ensure that persons directed by them understand and comply with prescribed safety regulations and safe work practices, and shall investigate all hazards of which they become aware and shall take appropriate corrective action.

All staff, students, collaborators, visitors and contractors have a duty to work in compliance with Institution EH&S requirements and established safe work practices and to report unsafe or unhealthy conditions to their supervisors. All Institution personnel are empowered to stop any work activity that is not safe and to report unsafe conditions to their supervisors and the EH&S office.

The elimination of accident-related illness, injury, property loss, and environmental damage is a cooperative effort and integral to our overall mission. We believe that accidents are preventable and look to all members of the Institution community to do their part in helping to meet our goal of zero workplace injuries and zero vehicle accidents.

The Institution’s commitment to health and safety can be successful only if individual members of the Institution community accept responsibility for their personal safety and the safety of those around them by following appropriate standards, codes, and guidelines. Institution EH&S plans, procedures, and guidelines shall be developed, documented, and implemented to meet prescribed environmental, health, and safety standards. The authority and responsibility for development, implementation, and oversight of EH&S programs are assigned to the Institution Safety Committee, Director of EH&S, and Vice President of Operations.

This Institution policy applies to all personnel at WHOI’s shore-side locations in Woods Hole, MA. This policy does not apply to WHOI’s marine operations and fieldwork locations that are covered by separate guidelines.

Mark R. Abbott
President and Director