

# EHS & Facilities Services News



photo by Lauren LeBarre

## Field Research and Summer Travel

Summer is a busy time for research at Reed, with students and faculty taking advantage of the break in academic courses to focus on projects. Researchers planning on working off campus may be exposed to unique hazards and should take extra care to be prepared.



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Faculty advisors or other research supervisors bear the responsibility for ensuring the proper safety procedures are in place before

heading into the field. This includes having a communication plan and identifying potential hazards. Environmental Health & Safety has created a [Field Research Safety Guide](#) to help trip leaders prepare for their outing. A template is provided in the document.

Now is a good time to begin planning your transportation needs for the summer as well. [Van reservations](#) should be submitted to Facilities Services no later than 10-days before your trip, though earlier requests are easier to accommodate. A certified van driver is required for trips using Reed owned vehicles.

Rental cars may be booked by faculty and staff for a discounted price through our preferred provider program at Enterprise and National Car Rental. Details on the process can be found on the [Risk Management Travel Webpage](#).

## What is Recyclable?

Not everything with a recycling triangle can be recycled in the commingled bins (the main collection receptacles on campus). Plastic cups, square plastic containers, paper coffee cup and lids, and certain coated paper products are not recyclable in the standard bin. Learn more specifics on the [City of Portland website](#).

Placing non-recyclable materials in the bin, while good intentioned, can cause the entire load to be rejected. This means that all items in the bin will be taken to the landfill due to the "contamination" of a few unacceptable items. Reed needs the help of everyone in the community to achieve our recycling goals.

Have items that aren't acceptable in the commingled bins? Fear not! Specialty recyclables can be taken to the Reed Recycling Center at the west end of basement of GCC. Sustainability interns work with local organizations to find recycling outlets for these harder-to-dispose-of items.

## Let There Be Light!

Starting earlier this calendar year, Reed began transitioning from fluorescent light bulbs to LEDs. The state of Oregon recently banned the sale of linear fluorescent bulbs, taking effect on January 1 of this year, spurring our shift to LED lamps.

Making the swap from fluorescents to LEDs involves more than simply changing out the bulbs, however. Both systems rely on electric components that regulate and transform the electricity that flows to the light fixture, known either as a ballast or a driver. Unfortunately, ballasts and drivers function very differently, so the old fluorescent lamp ballasts need to be replaced with new LED drivers.

Replacing fluorescent ballasts with LED drivers for the whole campus is a large project and will take months to complete. A contracted service provider has been working steadily, with an anticipated completion date of mid-summer.

LED bulbs have many benefits when compared to older fluorescent lamps. They are far more efficient, using up to 75% less energy. This will help Reed continue to decrease our energy usage as we move towards creating a

more sustainable campus.

The lifespan of LED bulbs is far greater than fluorescents as well, up to 2-3 times longer. Facilities hopes that this will significantly decrease the number of bulbs that we need to



purchase and dispose of, decreasing overhead costs and reducing our waste in the form of dead lightbulbs.

Fluorescent lamps also contain mercury, a neurotoxin regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency. While special care is taken to prevent mercury exposure and fluorescent bulbs are recycled to conserve resources, LEDs are a safer alternative. Recycling avenues exist for these new bulbs as well, and Reed will continue to manage them in an environmentally conscientious way.

## Welcome, Rowan!

Rowan Jeffrey '24, has joined Facilities Services in the Grounds Department. As a long time student employee for grounds, we are excited to have Rowan continue their excellent work as a full-time staff member.

A recent graduate from the Environmental Studies Program, Rowan is excited to put their academic background into practice in a place that they have a strong connection with. Rowan will be overseeing the northeast corner of campus including portions of the canyon, the sports fields, and the cross-canyon dorms.



## Heat & Wildfire Smoke Training

Annual high ambient heat and wildfire smoke exposure training will be sent out later this spring. This is a required training mandated by Oregon OSHA for all potentially affected employees. If you have questions about applicability or the training, please reach out to EHS.

## Moveout Donations

Reed Sustainability will be accepting donations of clothing and household goods from residents who are leaving on-campus housing. Please make sure items are clean and in good condition before donating. If you are interested in volunteering to collect items, keep an eye out for a signup in Reed Campus News.

## Contact Us

Facilities Services  
[facilities-services@reed.edu](mailto:facilities-services@reed.edu)  
503-777-7283

Environmental Health & Safety  
[ehs@reed.edu](mailto:ehs@reed.edu)  
503-777-7788

Physical Plant, 3rd Floor  
Mon-Fri 8am-12pm, 1pm-5pm



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## Methylene Chloride Rules

In May of 2024, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a final rule concerning Methylene Chloride, also known as Dichloromethane. Most uses of the chemical will be prohibited, but exemptions - such as use in academic research - are permitted. All groups wishing to continue using Methylene Chloride or products that contain greater than 0.01% Methylene Chloride by weight should contact EHS.

The new regulations, housed under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), are more stringent and wider-reaching than current Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements under the Laboratory Standard. For example, exposure limits are decreased to lower thresholds. Initial monitoring conducted by EHS has shown current laboratory use practices produced exposure rates well below the new TSCA limits. However, any use needs to be evaluated for exposure potential, so any users of the chemical should notify EHS to coordinate monitoring.

Economic impacts of the new rule are still unknown, but the price of Methylene Chloride will likely increase. Additionally, disposal costs are anticipated to rise for wastes containing the solvent. Laboratories that wish to get rid of any Methylene Chloride now before the full implementation of the rules can bring labeled waste containers to Chemistry 211, or contact EHS for help or with questions.

While monitoring and exposure controls can be put in place, the simplest way to comply with the new regulations is through elimination and substitution of the chemical. There are several alternatives to Methylene Chloride, including Ethyl Acetate, Methyl tert-Butyl Ether, or mixtures of other less toxic solvents.

Final implementation of the TSCA rules - meaning prohibition for non-exempt uses - goes into effect on April 28, 2026.

## Physical Plant Building Update

The Physical Plant is the latest building remodel project at Reed. The boiler room, originally built in 1912, contains the last bit of unreinforced masonry on campus. The update will add structural steel supports to those walls, and will be the culminating effort of decades of work seismically retrofitting buildings on campus.

The project scope also includes upgrading the central boiler system used to supply heat and domestic hot water to roughly 80% of campus. Three new boilers will replace two units installed in the 1950s. The new boilers will be more efficient and al-

low for greater flexibility in heating, which will reduce our energy usage and allow for finer controls.

During the upgrades, Grounds, Building Maintenance, and Building Services staff will be relocated to the Theatre Annex and the Warehouse.

Facilities administrative staff will remain on the third floor. Keys, vendor card swipes, and other services will be available at their normal locations on the third floor. We will maintain our usual business hours at the Physical Plant, Monday-Friday 8am-12pm, 1pm-5pm.

# CANYON DAY

**4.5.25**  
**11AM-**  
**2PM**

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