Reorganization Plan

The Campus Operations reorganization plan involves moving Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) staff and responsibilities from the central shops to the zones. This will increase the overall scope of work for the zones and make them responsible for nearly all of the systems in their zone. This is an important step. The zones will need to make sure their staff understand these new systems, assets and the associated PM plans. Cross-training between zones and within current zone staff will be critical. Zones will also need to capitalize on efficiencies of location to maximize PM routing of staff throughout the zone. Considerable planning will need to take place to make sure the right people are in the right place at the right time so all PM can be performed effectively, efficiently, and asset reliability can be maximized.

Preventive Maintenance is an essential part of any building operations organization. Traditionally, Facilities Services (FS) has been primarily a reactive organization. FS has made great strides over the past year to increase PM efforts, but a more organized and systematic approach is necessary to ensure full asset accountability. More importantly, a cultural change is necessary in FS to convert from the current ‘reactive / corrective’ mindset to one of ‘proactive / continuous improvement’. Industry-standard estimates an effective preventive maintenance program saves between 4 and 20 times the cost of reactive/corrective maintenance.

A PM program is only as good as the staff and leadership participating in it – a team approach is necessary. This is why changing the overall culture in FS/Campus Operations is critical. Currently, there is not an ‘incident review’ plan in place. An effective incident review program should document: What asset failed? How did it fail? What other assets were affected by this failure? What campus activities or operations were affected by this failure/downtime? What are the (estimated and actual) repair costs? And most importantly, what can we learn from this? – How do we implement change to drastically minimize the probability of recurrence in this and any other similar situations across campus? I feel confident that with this great organization we can move forward in this direction and be successful. If you have any questions, please visit with your supervisor, manager or stop by and visit with me. Thank you for all you do.

Campus Operations

Who is Campus Operations?

The Campus Operations team consists of the associate vice provost of campus operations, Barry Swanson, and a small team of business operations staff to help oversee the units within campus operations. These units are:

- Facilities Services (FS)
- Design and Construction Management (DCM and KU Construction)
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Parking
- Purchasing
- Sustainability

All of these groups are charged with working together to ensure a safe and effective campus environment for faculty, staff and students.
Prevention is a State of Mind

Over the past few years, a lot has been made of the term Preventive Maintenance (PM). In this article, I want to split the two words up: “Prevention” and “Maintenance”. Maintenance is easy, it’s something we all do. Building mechanics, carpenters, painters, custodians, garage mechanics, landscapers, even storeroom staff and work management staff – we all help and work together to help maintain the campus. (Does the Environmental Health and Safety staff, DCM staff, KU-Construction staff, and other campus operations groups help “maintain” – absolutely.) But why is prevention such a big deal? We all see the news and read the papers. State budgets for higher education across the country are declining. I’ve spoken with other universities and heard some creative ways they are cutting budgets, but NOTHING is better than this statement:

Effective preventive maintenance saves between 4 and 20 times the cost of reactive maintenance.

Please read that line again and let it sink in. How could FS use those savings? – Tools, staff, better/lower lasting materials and equipment? Could DCM use some of that savings to fix some of those deferred maintenance projects to improve some building systems on campus? Remodel an area that we spend entirely too much time maintaining? What else?

Now, how can we prevent? Building mechanics can answer this one easily, “change filters, check and change belts, change oil, etc.”. If you don’t change the filters on a unit, they could ruin the whole unit very quickly. That’s an easy answer – but try expanding the word ‘prevention’ out further. Think of a current project or work-related issue you might be having – something you’re spending more time on that maybe you feel like you shouldn’t. Could this have been prevented? How?

In my short time here in landscape, as a zone manager and as the manager of work management, I’m constantly evaluating reactive issues that come up and immediately thinking “how could this have been prevented?” I’ll never forget my first week on the job as a zone manager; smoke had been reported in McCollum lab. The building was evacuated and dozens of emergency responders were on the scene. The Fox 4 helicopter was overhead reporting a “Fire at a major lab building at KU”.

What happened? An air compressor belt had burned up. My maintenance supervisor sent 3-4 staff to the scene to work the rest of the afternoon and evening to get in a temporary unit, fix the old one and get everything back on line so building staff could return as soon as possible. This problem likely cost the university tens of thousands of dollars in repair, paid staff absences (evacuation), and other cleanup costs. Let’s say, in total, it cost $15,000. We could have spent 15 minutes a week checking this belt for almost 8 years to equal the cost of this incident! Here’s a different angle: We could have replaced that belt once a month for 27 years to equal the incident cost! (no, we do not need to start replacing belts once a month, this is just an example.)

We must learn from these incidents and finding ways to reduce reactive maintenance. Prevention is a state of mind. Let’s start using it to our advantage. Please share your ideas on prevention with your supervisor, manager, director, or to me directly. We want to hear from you!

Preventative Maintenance

I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow hasn’t arrived yet. I have just one day, today and I’m going to be happy in it.

-Groucho Marx

Safety Program

Safety programs rely on incident data for many reasons. We all have heard that if nothing is measured, nothing gets done. Not only does data tell us how we are doing, but it also helps point to root causes and to trends in injuries, so we can focus our efforts where they are needed the most. For example, training topics have been chosen based both the type of incidents we have (ergonomic in particular) and where the greatest potential for injury is (forklifts and lockout tagout).

One of the things a comparison of the last two years (fiscal year from July 1 to June 30, not a calendar year) shows us is a nice reduction in incident severity. Lost time injuries are down over 40%, restricted duty incidents are down 17%, and recordable injuries (incidents that require treatment by a licensed health care professional) are down 20%. The time it takes us to report an injury is down to roughly 12 hours, last year it was 32 hours. These numbers indicate that you, and your teammates, are working hard at being safe. You should all be proud of the effort you are making. I know I am.

So where do we go from here? The data also tells us that the most frequent cause of injuries is “hazardous conditions”. Hazardous conditions cause more than one third of our injuries. These include many things, including difficult to open hatch covers, water leaking from A/C units, equipment problems, bad door closures, splinters from steel wool pads, exposed metal lathe, and items that were poorly packed by the shipper. One of the issues is that, in general, hazardous conditions are generally not reported until they hurt someone. While a few of you have come forward with these kinds of issues, a great many go unreported. National data from the Department of Labor tells us that there are 600-700 hazardous conditions for every serious (ie recordable, restricted duty, and lost time) incident. We’ve discussed how an oil spot can cause anything from an observation of the condition, to a broken bone, or a fatality. In fact, by comparing our data to national data it appears that we may be underreporting both hazardous conditions and injuries that require first aid only.

Only counting accidents is the equivalent of the basketball team reporting only losses. Going into the next fiscal year, we will also be tracking reported and corrected hazardous conditions. A big win in the safety program is preventing an incident by removing a hazard. In safety geek language, accident totals are called negative lagging indicators. Corrected hazards are positive leading indicators. Setting and striving for positive goals is the next step in our safety program.

Here’s another way to look at it: we know that every hazard has the potential to seriously injure someone. If something might trip someone, and you pick it up, you’ve saved someone from getting hurt. This is a true random act of kindness. It feels good to help people, even if you don’t know whom you’ve helped. The more we do this, the better off we are. Have a great summer, and remember the safety program’s motto: Never Ignore A Hazard.
Meet Cassidy Reimer, the Center of Sustainability’s newest team member. As the Energy Conservation Behavior Specialist, Cassidy will work closely with the Energy Program Office to address technical and behavioral opportunities for energy conservation. Cassidy was raised on a small farm near Ulysses, Kansas. Her family grew corn, wheat, and milo as well as raising sheep, hogs, and bucket calves for 4-H. Soil and water conservation was a way of life on the farm in Southwest Kansas, which led to her interest in environmental initiatives in college.

Cassidy graduated Summa Cum Laude from Southwestern College with a degree in physics with minors in mathematics, environmental studies, and leadership studies. Her involvement in service learning organizations led her to initiate a hands-on energy efficiency project in Winfield, KS involving walk-through audits and completed efficiency upgrades. She further impacted and inspired others with energy efficiency initiatives as she competed for the title of Miss Kansas. She advocated from classrooms and boardrooms that efficiency did not have to mean using less, but wasting less. Cassidy put into action energy efficiency initiatives as the program director for the Climate + Energy Project. She directed the Take Charge Challenge initiative, an energy efficiency competition between cities in Kansas and Missouri, where she engaged and helped diverse participants and stakeholders implement energy efficiency practices, reduce energy consumption, and save money on energy bills. Cassidy also lobbied for renewable energy at the Kansas State Legislature and coordinated grassroots advocacy and outreach.

Please help us welcome Cassi to KU!

No Butts!

Think Twice Before You Toss Your Butt
In honor of Earth Day 2015, on April 22nd the Center for Sustainability partnered with the KU Peer Health Educators to pick up litter. Not just any litter, specifically cigarette butts that had been littered on campus. During the four-hour “Kick Butts Clean Up” event volunteers collected more than 7,700 individual cigarette butts from campus grounds. Several hundred of these butts were picked up around the Facilities Services buildings on main campus, with 200 of those removed from the Iris bed just to the north of the Facilities Administration Building.

The Center for Sustainability joined this clean-up effort in hopes of educating the campus community that littering cigarette butts is not a harmless act. Many assume that a product made from paper and plant material will quickly biodegrade and disappear, but this is not the case with cigarettes today. The filters contained in cigarette butts are made of cellulose acetate, a plastic that does not break down in the environment. If you look closely you will see their tattered remains in sidewalk cracks and plant beds throughout campus. This creates an undesirable aesthetic and adds to the workload of our landscaping and custodial crews.

Additional harm comes from the residual chemicals in the filter that we cannot see. The filter collects carcinogens and toxins as a smoker inhales. When a cigarette butt is discarded on the ground, rain will often carry it into storm drains and eventually to the Kansas River. There the chemicals leach from the filter, poisoning small organisms that are part of the food chain of larger mammals and fish. The pending Tobacco Free Campus policy calls for the removal of smoking areas and ashtrays. Considering that cigarette litter is already a widespread issue, the Center for Sustainability is concerned that removal of proper disposal containers will lead to an increase in this behavior. It is our hope that by educating all campus constituents about the repercussions of cigarette litter and developing additional programs to prevent litter, we can address the problem before it gets worse.

The Center for Sustainability would like to ask for everyone’s help keeping our campus and our rivers clean and healthy. As part of that effort, we would like to hear your opinions and ideas about cigarette litter. Regardless of whether or not you smoke, please complete this brief survey to help us better understand littering behavior and consider how we can prevent it: www.sustain.ku.edu/litterbutts. We can also make paper copies available for staff that do not have regular access to a computer. Thank you for your help in finding solutions to this campus challenge.

Success makes so many people hate you. I wish it wasn’t that way. It would be wonderful to enjoy success without seeing envy in the eyes of those around you.

-Marilyn Monroe
Praise for Facilities Services

Zone 4:
I am Very Pleased to say that housekeeping called Kathy between 1 and 1:30 this morning to say that the freezer was alarming and at -58. It had been having trouble during the day, but apparently has run out of gas back-up now and is just warming. I have thanked housekeeping many times and even hugged her when she came back to check on it again just a few minutes ago. Hopefully, we can get it fixed easily and quickly – or I guess we will be buying a new one if not. I will let you know when we can move back out of the “extra” -80.
Audrey Lamb, Molecular Biosciences

Zone 2 & 6:
Grant and Gerry – Thank you for the leadership you provided and the FS contribution to a successful end-of-year move-out. Your staff did a great job of coordinating trash removal associated with move-out. I know its hard work, and I’m grateful for everyone giving it their best! The quick turnarounds between move-out and move-in for summer were also well-coordinated, and are also much appreciated! Kudos to all!
Dr. Diana Robertson, Director, Student Housing

FS:
I got this email and I definitely wanted to share. I’m sure it isn’t very often that students take the time to say “thank you”, so please pass this on to all the busy custodial staff. We all thank them very much for the work they do.
Kelsy Hamilton, Administrative Assistant

Zone 4:
I sent this message late last Monday afternoon, and when I was in that 3rd floor Wescoe men’s restroom, the latch had bee quickly and professionally replaced. Thank you to each of you who responded so well and so promptly.
James B. Carothers, Conger Gable Teaching Professor of English

Zone 5:
The job is done, and I am very happy! Thanks to everyone at FS for your prompt response!
Charlene Muehlenhard, Ph.D., Professor

Zone 4:
Our Facilities people-Tommy and Crewreally went the extra mile yesterday afternoon, evening and into the night to get things cleaned up. Gary was on top of it as well as was our Mike Flaig. I left a VM for Cass before I left last night. Again-it was a real team effort.
Bernie Kish, Ph. D., Director of Facilities/Lecturer

Zone 3:
I wanted to pass along a compliment for a member of your work crew. I called in a clogged drinking fountain this afternoon and not 10 minutes later, Joe (I’m afraid I don’t recall his last name) showed up and had the clog fixed in a matter of minutes. Joe has frequently been called to Anschutz Library for any variety of facilities/plumbing problems over the years, and always quickly and courteously fixes whatever is broken.
As a further note, I have found over the years that facilities personnel have always demonstrated great responsiveness and dedication to their jobs and keeping a very busy and aging campus building running. We couldn’t get much done around here in Anschutz without their hard work, and we are grateful to Joe, to you and the rest of your crew for all the hard work! And feel free to pass along this message to whoever you think might benefit from it.
Mark Lasnier, Anschutz Library

Zone 2
Thank you for your job!!
Yesterday I had been working for whole day at JRP hall and was not presented. When I came back home and found this, I knew your job had been completed.
Big thanks!
Yi Liu

Zone 5:
Just wanted to send a big thank you (Darlene Hall) to you and your team, for all of the great extra work you did on the 804 Studio. Many guests commented on how neat and clean the studio space and warehouse floors looked. Everything looked nice and professional, especially all of the glass and desks. So please tell your team and supervisors how pleased we are with the extra time and attention you gave and the outstanding results!
Doug Callahan, for Studio 804
EAC Employee of the Month April:
Sam Gunther
Sam is a plumber in Zone 4. Sam has been at KU for twenty years. Sam is great with customers and people in the buildings. Sam helps people out in any situation that comes about and often help in the Central Shop. Sam is a real people person who often goes above and beyond. Sam was nominated by Dave Henricks.

EAC Employee of the Month May:
Michael Franks
Michael is an equipment mechanic at the garage. He helps to maintain and service fleet vehicles including body work and repair. Mickey recently took on additional responsibilities at the garage and has done them well. Mickey works well with customers and staff. Mickey was nominated by Jack Shafer and Craig Brooks.

EAC Employee of the Month June:
James Stramer
James is a custodian in Zone 3 working third shift. James gets along well with his coworkers and is always the go to guy to get things done. He is efficient and always goes above and beyond. He is always eager to help others to get the job done. James is a great addition to the team he works with. James was nominated by his supervisor, Brian Alfers.

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

- John F. Kennedy