

The Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management Newsletter

OALM

[DCIS Helpline](#)
866-319-4357

OAMP

- [Div of Acq Policy and Evaluation](#)
- [Div of Financial Advisory Services](#)
- [Div of Simplified Acq Policy & Services](#)
 - [Purchase Card Program](#)
 - [Purchase Card Helpline](#)
301-435-6606
 - [Simplified Acquisition Helpline](#)
301-496-0400
 - [BPA Helpline](#)
301-496-5212

OLAO

- [Div of Logistics Services](#)
301-443-7977
 - [Property Management Branch](#)
301-496-5712
 - [Supply Management Branch](#)
 - NIH Supply Center
301-496-9120
 - Self-Service Store—Bldg 10
301-496-2051
 - Self-Service Store—Bldg 31
301-496-4430
 - [Transportation Management Branch](#)
301-496-4511
- [NITAAC](#)
888-773-6542

NIH RESEARCH HALTED DUE TO MERCURY RELEASE

Mercury and its compounds are neurotoxic, accumulate in animals, persistent in the environment, and subject to increasingly stringent regulations governing their use and disposal. NIH Manual Chapter 3033 prohibits all unnecessary acquisition of mercury, mercury added products, and the use of mercury and mercury compounds in its facilities; and seeks to ensure that all mercury containing equipment and waste is managed and disposed in a manner that is safe, protective of the environment, and compliant with all applicable regulations.

Recently, research at an NIH Laboratory was halted due to the release of mercury into the sanitary sewer. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) which conducts periodic testing of sanitary sewer discharges from industries, including Federal Facilities, notified the NIH of a mercury violation in November 2017. Through subsequent investigation, several sinks and the connected plumbing in the NIH facility revealed significant mercury contamination. When or how the contamination occurred is not known. NIH is in the process of resolving the Notice of Violation (NOV) which requires restricting laboratory operations while sewer lines go through a series of special cleaning and testing.

This incident highlights the need to reinforce adherence to NIH policy on two NIH manual Chapters:



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| NIH Research Halted Due to Mercury Release | 1 |
| Update on New Clinical Trial and Human Subject Requirements | 2 |
| Have You Heard that Thresholds Are Changing? | 2 |
| GSA Issues 2018 Mileage Reimbursement Rates | 3 |
| NIH BPA Lists Available Online | 3 |
| Training Information | 3 |
| Acquisition Training Information | 5 |

- [NIH Manual Chapter 3033-Procurement, Use and Disposal of Mercury and Its Compounds](#)
- [NIH Manual Chapter 3032-Waste Minimization and Management at the NIH](#)

These policies were developed in an effort to prevent incidents described above. Violations such as this expose NIH to the risk of having a sewer authority revoking its discharge permit, which would adversely affect our research mission.

NIH RESEARCH HALTED DUE TO MERCURY RELEASE

Continued from page 1

Examples of mercury uses affected by NIH Manual Chapter 3033 include, but are not limited to, research on mercury toxicology, calibration of measurement instruments, fixatives used in histology, and water baths and similar equipment or property with mercury containing components, unless an exception has been granted. Also prohibited without written exception include “Mercury Added Products” such as: Barometers, Calomel electrodes, Coulter counters, High intensity discharge (HID) lamps, Laboratory and diagnostic reagents, Manometers, Neon signs, Sphygmomanometers, Thermometers, Thermostats, Tilt switches etc.

Before purchasing such items, the purchaser is required to apply for an exception from the Division of Environmental Protection. The exception application can be found in the NIH Manual Chapter 3033 cited above.

Fortunately, in the incident described, there were no occupational exposures. However, the environmental exposure will be costly. The cost of decontaminating laboratories currently doubles the annually cost for normal disposal of hazardous waste. The price of lost research time, while the labs are closed, is significant.

UPDATE ON NEW CLINICAL TRIAL AND HUMAN SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

As you know, OER has released [new clinical trial and human subject requirements](#) for contract proposals and grant applications due on or after January 25, 2018. In anticipation of these new requirements, the NIH Office of Acquisition Logistics and Management (OALM) worked with OER through the Clinical Trials Operations Workgroup, collaborating across the NIH contracts community, to implement new clinical trial

and human subject requirements.

The [Document Generation System](#) has been updated to incorporate clinical trials and human subjects solicitation and contract clauses. Additional context for the topic areas can be found in [Office of Acquisition Management and Policy \(OAMP\) R&D contract awards policy changes](#) website and on [NIH Extramural Intranet for R&D contracts](#).

HAVE YOU HEARD THAT THRESHOLDS ARE CHANGING?

On December 12, 2017, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018 P.L. 115-91 was signed into law. The 2018 NDAA includes, among other provisions, increases to the Micro-Purchase Threshold (MPT), the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT) and the Convenience Check Limit.

- The most impactful threshold changes include:
- Increasing the Simplified Acquisition Threshold to \$250,000;
- Increasing the Micro-Purchase Threshold to \$10,000; and
- Increasing the Convenience Check Limit to ½ the MPT or \$5,000.

While the NDAA increased the MPT and SAT and Convenience Check Limits, no changes can be implemented unless or until the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council acts to modify the FAR. Contracting Officers and Purchase Card Holders may not act independently to implement the new threshold changes included in the 2018 NDAA. All Contracting Officers and Purchase Card Holders must comply with the *current* Federal Acquisition Regulations. OALM will provide additional guidance as it becomes available.

GSA ISSUES 2018 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

GSA issued the 2018 privately owned vehicle mileage reimbursement rates and standard mileage rate for moving purposes. [Federal Travel Regulation Bulletin 18-03](#) establishes the following rates for CY2018 (in rate per mile):

- \$0.545 for privately owned automobiles (POAs)
- \$0.18 for a POA when a government-furnished automobile is authorized
- \$0.515 for privately owned motorcycles
- \$1.21 for privately owned airplanes
- \$.018 for moving purposes

For additional information, please reference [GSA Privately Owned Vehicle \(POV\) Mileage Reimbursement Rates](#).

NIH BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT (BPA) LISTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Lists of all NIH Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) can be found at the NIH Blanket Purchase Agreement [webpage](#).

This location contains Two BPA Lists:

1. Complete vendor alphabetical list;
2. Vendor list sorted by commodity; and

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the BPA helpline at 301-496-5212 or [email](#).

TRAINING INFORMATION

OLAO Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Training

The Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations (OLAO) will host a 5-day training course for federal employees on Lean Six Sigma, a process improvement methodology, to help you address challenges in your daily responsibilities.

What is Lean Six Sigma (LSS)?

Lean Six Sigma is a set of methodologies used to systematically improve processes by:

- Emphasizing quality and/or speed of product or service delivery.
- Eliminating sources of variation and waste (defects).
- Targeting process improvements around issues voiced by the customer and the organization.
- Measuring performance against original process requirements (baseline).

Continued on page 4

TRAINING INFORMATION

Continued from page 3

What will I learn?

In this 5-day training course, you will learn the LSS DMAIC methodology (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control) to improve quality, productivity, customer satisfaction, and/or efficiency while reducing cost and/or waste. This course will include:

- Application of the DMAIC methodology
- Proper identification of the scope and problem
- Appropriate method to measure current and future processes
- Tips and techniques to uncover root causes for problems
- Data for decision making through statistical analysis
- Lean techniques to reduce '7 Forms of Waste'
- Techniques to properly institutionalize improvements

What is the certification process?

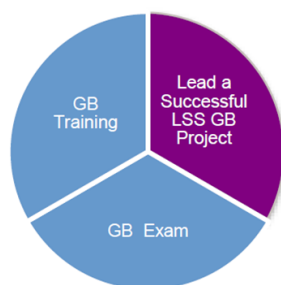


Figure 2: Pie Graph Showing Three Sections of Certification Process

Green Belt Certification requires the three steps illustrated in the pie chart above. At the completion of this course, you must take the LSS Green Belt Exam. To receive your 40 CLPs, you must earn an 80% or higher. In order to obtain a Green Belt certification, you must also complete a Green Belt project, which will need to be mentored by a certified Black Belt. All employees will have to pay for 52 hours of project mentoring over six months to become certified. Projects used for certification should be geared towards organization needs and have an impactful ROI.

Course Details:

- When: Monday, February 5 - Friday, February 9, 2018 from 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- Where: 6001 Executive Boulevard Rockville, MD - Training Room A
- Who: Enrollment is open to all federal NIH Employees. Class size is limited to 25 attendees. Sign up today!
- Cost: \$800 for the five day course that can be paid through a direct CAN citation to OLAO. There is an additional fee if interested in the 52 hours of project mentoring to become Green Belt certified.
- CLPs Awarded: 40

For more information, please e-mail: LeanSixSigma@od.nih.gov

To register, please click on the following link – https://pwc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6nGp809TvuwqGX3

ACQUISITION TRAINING INFORMATION

Acquisition Training at NIH

Acquisition Training Classes that are offered by the NIH Training Center can be accessed at the following link:

[Acquisition Management Training](#).

Federal Acquisition Certification Coursework

CON courses and other Federal Acquisition Certification required courses can be found at the [NIH Training Center](#), [Federal Acquisition Institute](#), and [Defense Acquisition University](#).

Section 508 Accessibility Training

Section 508 Accessibility Training courses can be accessed at:

[CIT Section 508 Accessibility training website](#).

Green Purchasing Training

Green Purchasing Training and other Green Training courses can be found at: [OALM Green Purchasing Website](#).

As a reminder, per HHS policy, all contracting officers, contract specialists, purchase cardholders, card approving officials, CORs and acquisition staff in job series 1102, 1105, and 1106 are required to take the Green Purchasing training every two calendar years. The training includes online training modules for your convenience.

Questions regarding Green Purchasing Training should be sent to:

GreenPurchasing@mail.nih.gov.

Děkuji

“Thank You” in Czech

SPECIAL THANKS

**We'd like to thank all those who contributed to this issue
and to future editions of the OALM Newsletter.**

The OALM Newsletter will be published six (6) times in calendar year 2018. OALM invites your comments and suggestions for future articles. We encourage staff to submit articles that would be of interest to our readers. We will do our best to include such articles in future editions of the OALM Newsletter.

Please address all correspondence to the editors: Jesse Lee, Jesse.Lee2@nih.gov, Michele McDermott, McdermottMI@od.nih.gov, Milton Nicholas, NicholaM@od.nih.gov, Annette Romanesk, RomanesA@od.nih.gov, Tracy Scott, Tracy.Scott@nih.gov or Barry Solomon, SolomonBJ@od.nih.gov.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the information, policy and/or procedures published in *this* issue, you may contact Jesse Lee at the email address above. For future issues please contact the Simplified Acquisitions Helpline on (301) 496-0400 or via email at OALMNewsletter@mail.nih.gov and you will be referred to the appropriate editor.