

INTRODUCTION: SAFETY PRECAUTIONS



- Mechanical rooms and air-handling units will be unfamiliar territory for many on the environmental management team. Like any area with operating machinery, safety is the first priority. Let the facilities staff be your guide, follow their instructions, and learn from their experience. The following are a few tips to keep in mind.

When working around or with Air Handling Units (AHU)

1. Always follow your facility's safety procedures.
2. Follow the buddy system, and always have a facility or HVAC representative on hand.
3. Always carry a flashlight and your cell phone.
4. Leave everything in the unit as you found it.
5. Be aware that some mechanical rooms can be small and your mobility may be limited.
6. Many mechanical rooms have low pipes or ductwork inside. Always watch your head inside of a mechanical room.
7. Many mechanical rooms have plumbing running along the floor. Be sure to watch your step when navigating a mechanical room.
8. Mechanical rooms can be noisy. Be sure to have the proper hearing protection if necessary.
9. Keep your hands and feet away from any moving parts. Be aware of any loose clothing or accessories.
10. Do not touch any part of the unit you are not familiar with. If you have the authority to enter the unit:
 - a. Watch your head when entering or exiting any unit.
 - b. Ensure the units are turned off before opening any access door.
 - c. While inside of any chamber, be aware of any screws or nails that may rip or tear clothing or could cause physical harm.
 - d. Be careful of where you place your hands – fins on heating and cooling coils, edges of dampers, and other parts of the unit can have sharp edges.
 - e. When opening any access door, be sure not to wear any loose or dangling items (i.e. ties, lanyards, scarves, necklaces, etc.) as these items may be pulled downstream by the air or become entangled in the fan or motor.
 - f. Be careful when working in or around a humidifier – the lines may be hot and can burn very quickly, and steam discharge can easily scald. If the system is still operating, there is the possibility that the humidifier may operate while you are working near it.
11. Do not leave any foreign objects inside the units (ladders, cups, tools, wrappers, etc.).
12. Do not attempt to make any changes or adjustments to the units on your own.
13. If any issues are noted with a unit do not attempt to repair them. Report the issue to a facilities representative as soon as possible.
14. Always turn the system back on when you are done.