VCSU SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES: 
Housekeeping

All VCSU facilities should be kept in a clean and orderly condition- requiring both custodial-type skills and management skills. Proper housekeeping techniques help to prevent injury, illness and fire causes. Proper housekeeping techniques can also help to decrease energy costs, maintain the best use of limited space, and keep stored inventory to a minimum and to help control property damage. Above and beyond the obvious, good housekeeping techniques also help to present a good appearance encourage better work habits and reflect a well-run facility to our students, guests, and other faculty and staff.

General Procedures

- The floors of every room will be maintained in a dry condition. If the floor is in an area where it will get wet, proper drainage will be used and maintained. “Wet Floor” signs will be used when wet processes are in place.
  - To facilitate cleaning the floors, all floors, work spaces and passageways should be kept free of excess miscellaneous storage, loose boards and rugs and unnecessary holes and openings.
  - The floors of every room should be maintained - free of debris and accumulations of dust. All spills should be cleaned immediately. Worn carpet, ripped or damaged flooring that poses a tripping hazard should be replaced in a timely manner.
- Dust and dirt should be cleaned on a regular basis to help prevent health-related issues, such as asthma and allergies, etc.
- Building entrances, exits, and passageways should be clear of obstructions at all times. Entrances that cannot be cleared (due to weather conditions) on a continuous basis should have anti-slip flooring. All weeds, bushes and other greenery should be kept neat and trimmed to expose potential tripping hazards.
- Trash receptacles should be well-constructed, to prevent leaks and be thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis to maintain a sanitary condition.
  - All waste should be removed in a timely manner to avoid creating health issues and un-sanitary conditions.
- Aisles and stairways should be kept clear of object that can cause slips, trips and falls. Worn or damaged stairway treads or railing should be reported to Facilities Services immediately. These conditions will be repaired in a timely manner to eliminate the risk of an incident. Aisles and stairways should also have adequate lighting.
  - Stairs should also be equipped with rails and proper tread.
- Tools, cords and equipment should be maintained in good working order and used appropriately. Tools and equipment related to a specific job should be maintained in the area of work.
  - Employees should regularly inspect, clean and repair all tools and take any damaged or worn out tools out of service until they are repaired.
- Restrooms, locker rooms, toilets, drinking fountains and other like facilities will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Windows and lighting should be cleaned and kept in working condition. Light fixtures that contain combustible material, that are in storage, should be protected from breaking. (Light fixtures that contain these materials should also be exposed of in the proper manner,)
- Heating and cooling systems should be maintained by the appropriate personnel. They should be kept clean of dust and other contaminants.
- Food storage and consumption should only be done where approved by the department or supervisor.
  - Food consumption will not be allowed in a bathroom facility.
  - Food consumption will not be allowed in a storage area for chemicals or other toxic material.
- Employee food storage facilities will be both clean and sanitary. Refrigerators and freezers will be kept clean and sanitary.
- A continuing and effective extermination program will be in place and utilized by the University when needed.
• All storage should be marked. Stored materials must be at least 18 inches from the ceiling to allow for the sprinkler heads to function properly. Stored material should not obstruct aisles, stairs, exits, fire equipment or other emergency equipment.
• A clear, 3 foot space should be maintained in front of all fire extinguishers and electrical panels.
• Custodial rooms should be maintained and kept in a clean and organized fashion. All chemical containers should be clearly marked with the contents. Mops should be clean and hung to dry.
• Emergency spill kits should be maintained as well as other spill clean-up materials.
• Compresses air should not be used for removing dust, dirt or other particles from employees, equipment or work surfaces.

Snow Removal (Shoveling)
If the area to be cleared of snow is small, or if you do not have a snow blower, you will likely have to shovel by hand. Only persons in good physical condition and good general health should shovel.

When shoveling, mentally divide the area into sections and clean one part; then rest before going onto the next section. Whenever the snow begins to feel especially heavy, take a break. A few things to keep in mind when shoveling are:
• As with any moderate to strenuous activity, you should warm up before shoveling. Start by walking for a few minutes or marching in place. Stretch the muscles in your arms and legs, as warm muscles will work more efficiently and are less likely to be injured.
• Wet snow is much heavier than dry snow. Govern your shoveling accordingly.
• Push or sweep away as much of the snow as possible.
• Drink plenty of water. Dehydration is an issue in cold winter months just as it is in the summer.
• When shoveling, stand with your feet about hip width for balance and keep the shovel close to your body. Bend from the knees (not the back) and tighten your stomach muscles as you lift the snow. Avoid twisting movements. If you need to move the snow to one side, reposition your feet to face the direction the snow will be going.
• Wear appropriate footwear, and exercise caution to avoid slipping or falling.
• Make use of ice-melting materials to make the job as easy as possible. Make certain that the melting material is friendly to the environment and appropriate for the icy surface.
• Dress warmly while shoveling to protect against frostbite. Don’t bundle yourself up so heavily that it is hard to move.
• If you experience chest pain, weakness or other signs of physical distress, stop shoveling at once and seek medical attention.

It is everyone’s responsibility to help maintain a safe work environment for you, co-workers, students and guests. Please report and hazardous conditions to your supervisor or Facilities Services.