Level I Inspection

1. **Purpose / Background**
The objective of this SOP is to describe the process of conducting a Level I inspection in research and operational areas, as required by the Environment, Health and Safety Management System (EHS-MS). The EHS-MS serves to promote, monitor and reinforce compliance with regulations and best practices to protect health and safety of staff and students, and to prevent degradation of the environment. The Level I inspection is part of a three tiered approach to EHS inspections at MIT. More details on the EHS inspection system can be found in the EHS-MS manual at [http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/ehs-ms-manual](http://ehs.mit.edu/site/content/ehs-ms-manual).

2. **Scope**
Level I inspections are required in all registered labs in the EHS-MS system and operation areas at MIT and all satellite locations with the exception of Lincoln Laboratories (LL).

3. **Prerequisites**
None

4. **Tools**
Appendix A contains an inspection checklist to be used for performing these inspections. The Level I checklist includes both a required set of items which must be reviewed weekly and a set of items reviewed less frequently but still periodically. The required weekly and periodical items are grouped by EHS Program and state a specific condition. A DLC may choose to add one or more recommended items to the weekly list however each required item must be reviewed during inspections. This checklist can also be modified to remove questions that do not apply to an area, with the approval of the DLC EHS Coordinator or EHS Lead Contact. The checklist is to serve as a guide for potential hazards to look for during inspections, but does not preclude addressing other problems observed when making these inspections.

5. **Procedures**

5.1 **Frequency**
Level I inspections are completed on a weekly schedule in all areas with Satellite accumulation areas (SAA), and at least quarterly in other areas to be inspected. Where weekly inspections are required, the time period between consecutive inspections should not exceed seven days.
5.2 Inspection Team
Level I Inspections are typically conducted by the EHS Rep in laboratory operations, and by the supervisor in other operations. However, the PI, Supervisor, or in some cases a DLC EHS Committee may assign this role to other lab/operations personnel. The DLC EHS Committee may also ask that other personnel such as the DLC EHS Coordinator accompany the EHS Rep on some Level I inspections.

5.3 Recording Findings
Findings resulting from Level I Inspections are not required to be documented however the DLC may opt to maintain results for a designated time period if performance requires improvement. Results are not recorded centrally.

5.4 Responding to Findings
All conditions requiring correction must be corrected (or, for those things that cannot be readily corrected, an action plan must be developed to correct the item) at the time of inspection. Findings may be corrected by the EHS Rep or assigned to other lab members as determined by the PI, the EHS Rep or other lab member. Level I Inspections offer a unique training opportunity for all lab personnel and results, problems, and compliance issues should be discussed at lab meetings or other group activities. It is suggested that the individual responsible for creating a finding be the one to correct the problem, when a finding is specific to the actions of an individual.

6. Roles & Responsibilities
6.1 DLC EHS Representative (EHS Rep)
The EHS Rep is the individual typically assigned by the PI to conduct Level I inspections. The EHS Rep may be assisted by the EHS Coordinator or other lab personnel as needed. The EHS Rep may assign a finding for correction to an individual with their lab group.

6.2 DLC EHS Coordinators
The EHS Coordinator is responsible for supporting the EHS Rep in Level I inspections, including escorting them on inspections when they are new to the rep role. Examples of this support may include: training on specific issues, clarifying requirements and preparing for the Level II inspection.

6.3 EHS Office

An official hardcopy of this document exists in the EHS Office or on the EHS website. See Legal Disclaimer at: http://web.mit.edu/environment/shared_content/disclaimer.html
The EHS Office is responsible for accompanying the EHS Rep on the initial level I inspection, when requested by the EHS Rep or EHS Coordinator, and to provide training and other support and clarification as necessary.

6.4 Principal Investigator (PI)/Supervisor
The PI is responsible for establishing the safety culture in the laboratory/ space and identifying the individual responsible for conducting Level I inspections, and assuring that inspection findings are corrected. The PI may impose consequences if expectations are not met by lab members.

7. Training
The EHS Rep or other individual responsible for conducting Level I inspections must attend the EHS Representative Orientation training (EHS#00760). Training should be completed shortly after being assigned the EHS Rep responsibilities.

8. Monitoring Requirements
Monitoring of compliance in those areas covered by the Level I inspection questions should be done on a continuous basis. Compliance is a shared responsibility and all laboratory members have a role in keeping their laboratory safe and in compliance with MIT’s policies and external regulations. Monitoring may be done by the lab members, by the EHS Rep, the DLC EHS Coordinator, the PI, and or the DLC EHS Committee. All parties have a role in ensuring the safe and responsible conduct of research.

9. Record Management
Records of Level I inspection results are not required to be maintained. DLC’s may consider retaining records locally for a finite period if laboratory safety and compliance performance requires improvement.

10. References

10.1 Standards

10.2 Other SOP/ SOGs
10.3 Supplementary Documents

10.3.1 EHS Representative Orientation training course EHS00760c
10.3.2 EHS Management System (EHS-MS) Manual
10.3.3 EHS Level I Weekly and Periodic Checklist

11. Definitions

DLC - The Departments, Laboratories and Centers (DLC) are the primary organizations that implement and maintain sound EHS practices that assure EHS compliance.

Inspection Finding - An identified condition that requires an action to resolve it.