National Institute of Standards and Technology
U.S. Department of Commerce

Safety Update for VCAT

Liz Mackey, Chief Safety Officer
Director, Office of Safety Health and Environment

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COVID Health and Safety– FY21 Focus on Keeping Current

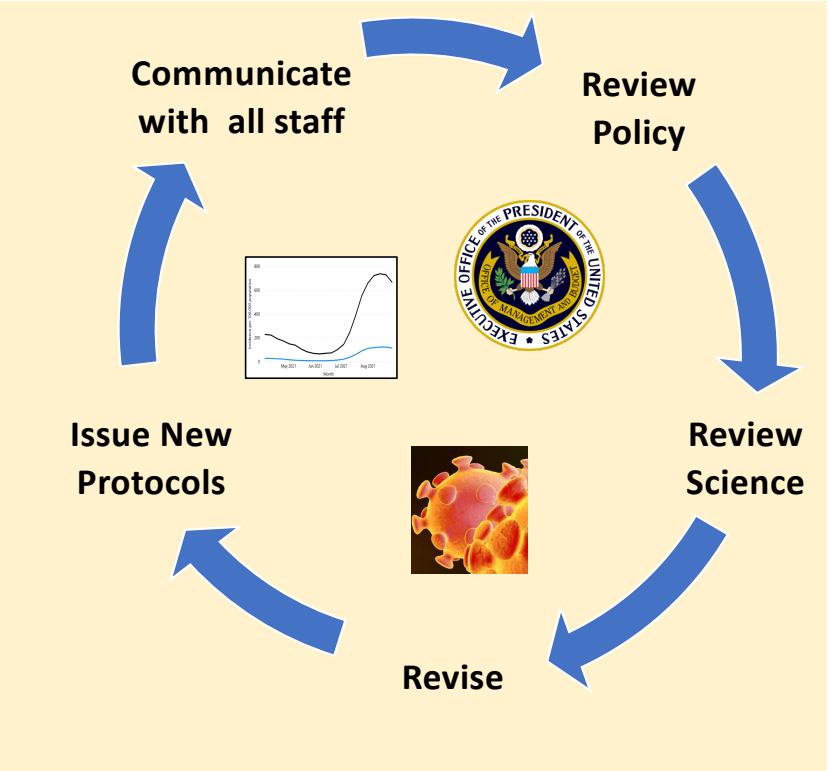
Prevention Protocols:

- Vaccines (voluntary)
- Daily Health and Travel Screening
- Basic Precautions: masks; distancing; personal hygiene
- Job specific controls (e.g., barriers, disinfecting shared tools, N95 masks)

Case management: close contacts, close/disinfect affected spaces and provide instructions on return to work criteria

Monitoring: CDC guidance, scientific literature on COVID-19

Communication: Town halls, all staff emails, NIST directives, guidance documents, website, FAQs, training, safety minutes



NIST COVID Case Metrics (2/1/22) Reflect Omicron Surge

>1000 symptomatic, positive, quarantine cases
211 cases required response plans

Total positive cases reported: **498**

- Physically present at NIST Gaithersburg: **79**
- Physically present at NIST Boulder: **23**
- Physically present at remote work site: **1**

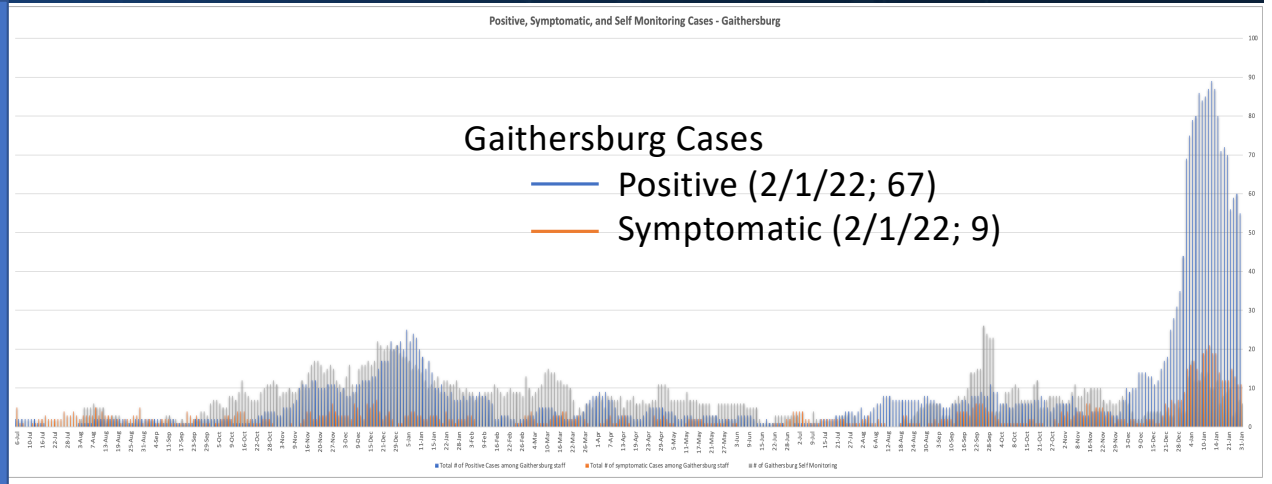
181 close contacts of the **103** on-site cases:

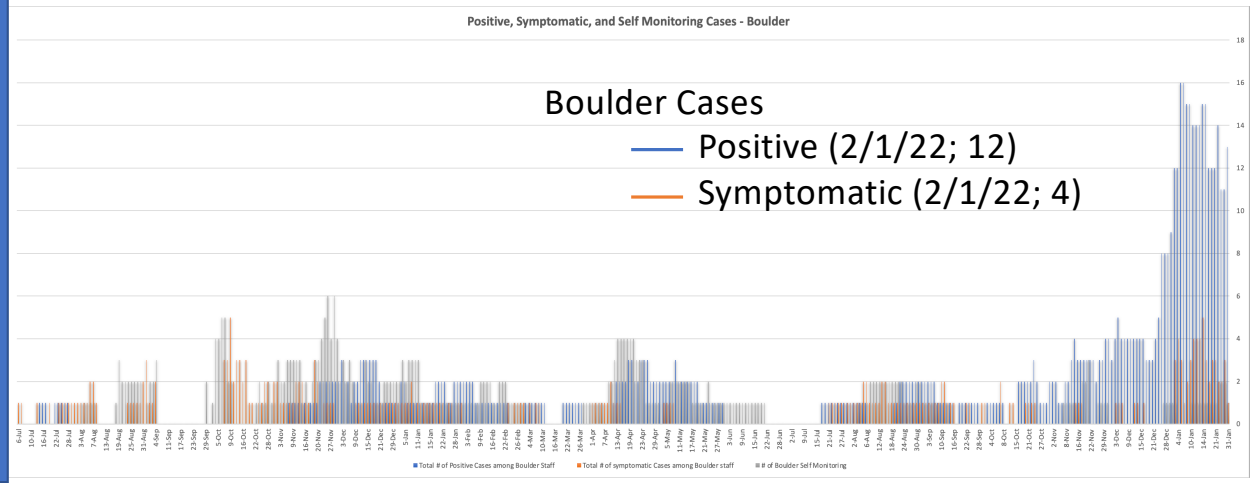
- **128** in Gaithersburg
- **42** in Boulder
- **11** on remote work sites

Workplace transmission:

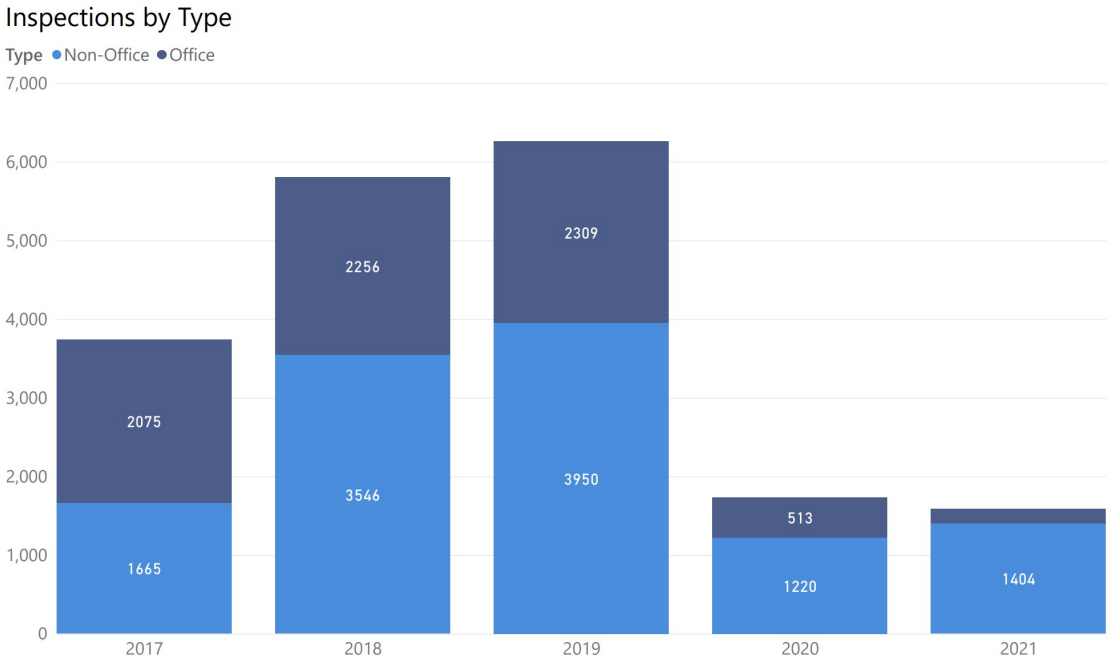
- **2** on remote site
- **2** on Gaithersburg campus

Note: OSHE investigates case data to look for clusters that may indicate related cases



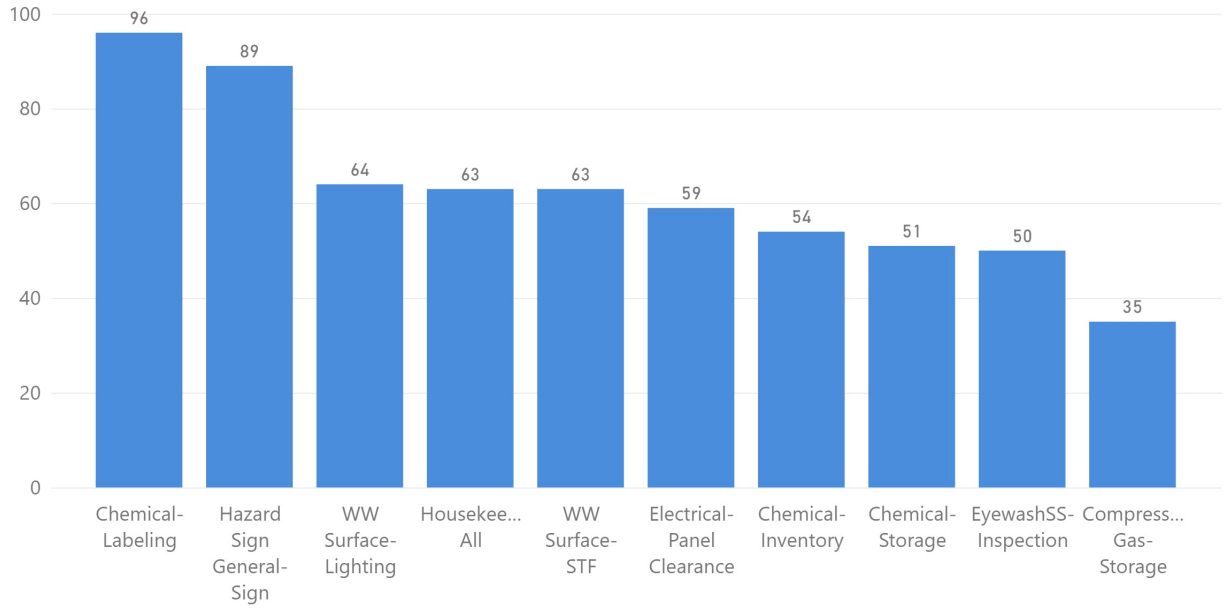


FY21 Workplace Inspections



- In-use spaces with known hazards, first priority
- Unused spaces with potential hazards, second priority
- Office inspections lower priority
- Note: Safety walk-throughs of many occupied spaces were conducted but not recorded as workplace inspections

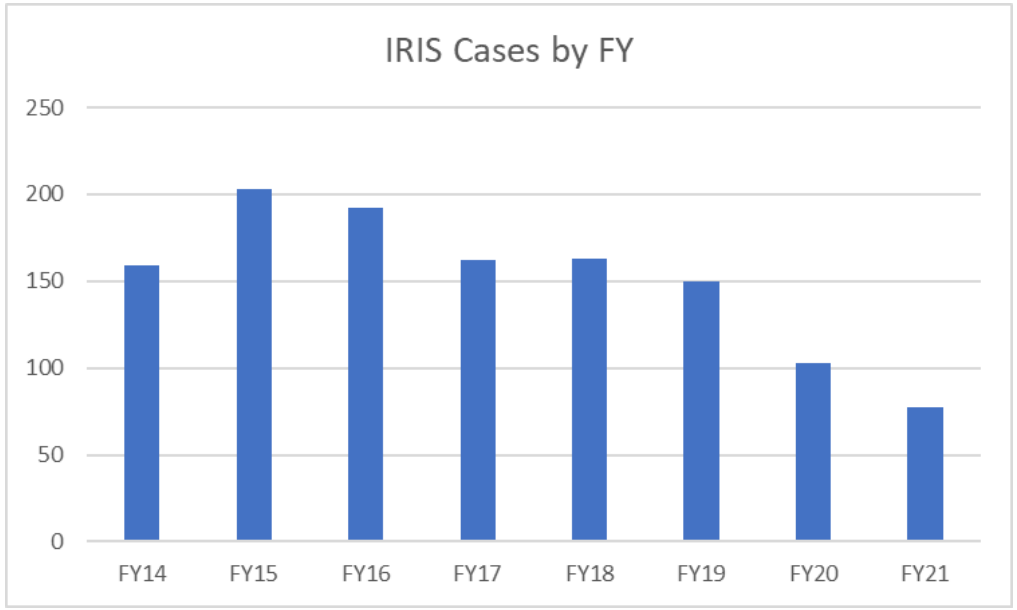
Ten Most Frequent Hazards Found During Inspections

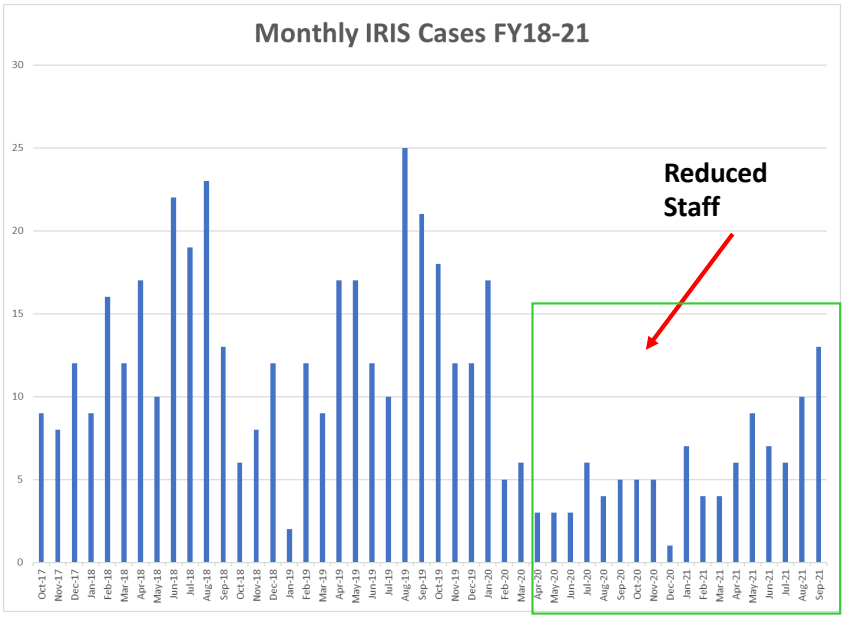


Top 10 Deficiencies Fixed FY21

1. Chemical Labeling (101)
2. General Hazard Signage (58)
3. Lighting (62)
4. Housekeeping (68)
5. Slips, Trips, and Falls (43)
6. Electrical Panel Clearance (43)
7. Chemical Inventory (45)
8. Chemical Storage (49)
9. Eyewash and Safety Shower Inspection (Under Contract)
10. Compressed Gas (30)

CY21 Incident Trends: Total reports (includes near misses)

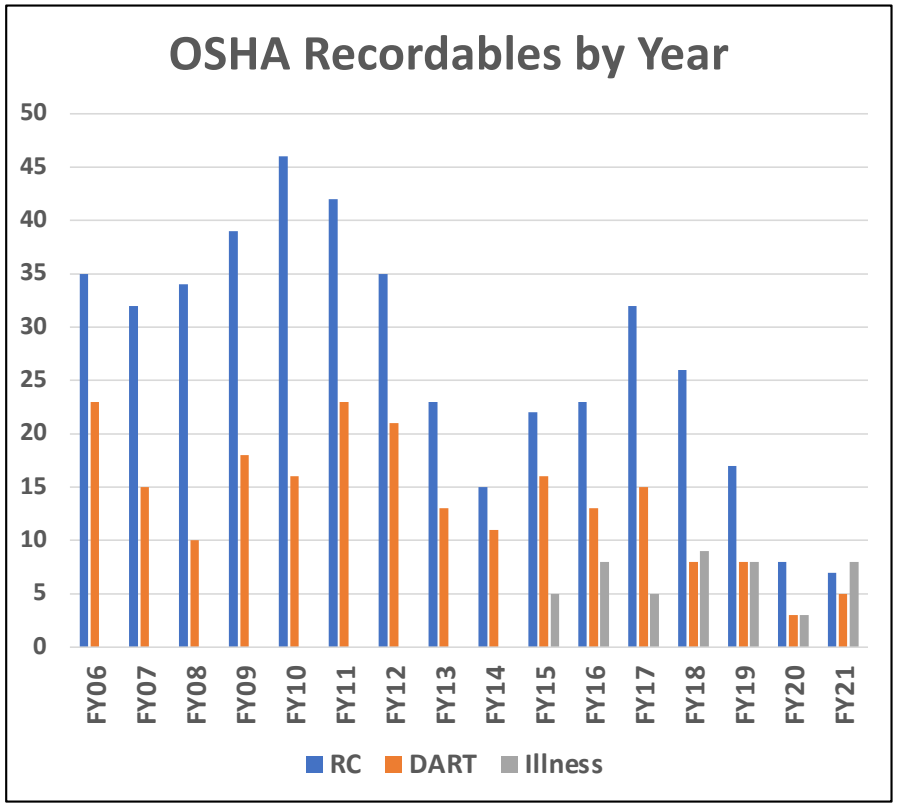


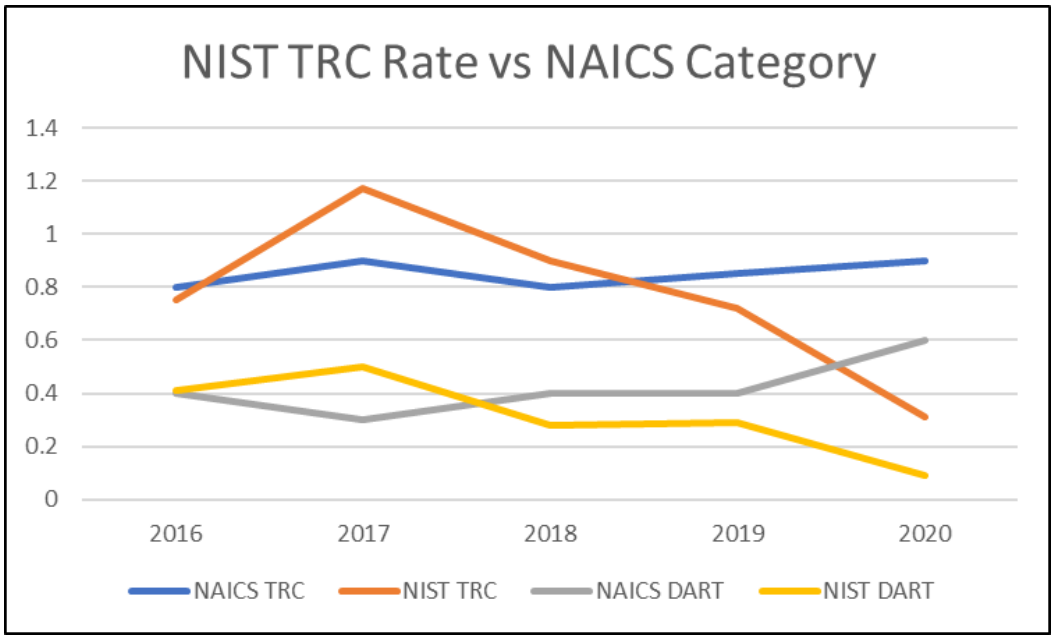


Trend Identified: Increasing number of incidents involving contractors

Key Corrective Actions: Develop Contractor Safety Program; improve oversight of contractors

CY21 Incident Data: OSHA Recordables, TRC, DART





OSHA Recordable Injuries: 2 STF; 3 material handling; cut; spider bite
OSHA Recordable Illnesses: 6 STS; 2 COVID transmission cases

Communications – Safety Minutes and INET Announcements

Safety Minutes (n=9)

- ✓ New or revised safety requirements
- ✓ Lessons from incidents, inspections, events
- ✓ Notice of training events
- ✓ Boulder only (n=2)

INET Announcements (n=9)

- ✓ Product Alerts (n=4)
- ✓ Workplace Inspection Learning Series Kick-off (3)
- ✓ Flu shots at NIST HU
- ✓ COVID Shots at NIST HU

NCNR Event – Update on Recent NIST and OSHE Actions

- NIST-level Incident Response Team (ongoing)
- OSHE assisted NCNR with with Safety Culture assessment
- NCNR Director discussed event at Executive Safety Committee meetings
- Two planned safety programs will be informed by NCNR lessons learned
  - Change Management
  - Monitoring, Measuring and Assessments
- Planned: Better integration of OSHE-managed and NCNR-managed safety
- Underway: NIST Director engaged external Subject Matter Experts for an independent assessment of NIST response to the event

Current Focus Areas

- COVID management and Return to Campus/Transition to Hybrid
- Complete Safety Management System program elements
- Foster continual improvement of safety culture at NIST
- Institutionalizing lessons identified

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Questions or Feedback