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Observatorio Astronómico Nacional

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instituto de astronomía

UNAM

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To all personnel and users of the OAN-SPM,

In spite of its natural beauty, there exist important workplace hazards at the Observatorio Astronómico Nacional in the Sierra de San Pedro Mártir (OAN-SPM). Given that the OAN-SPM is more than three hours' travel from the nearest medical centre, it is essential to adopt safe work practices to minimize the risk of accidents. Safety begins with one's actions and habits, so please use common sense to help keep yourself and others safe. Please also remember that everyone's safety is a shared responsibility.

1. Always carry a flashlight and use it when you are in dark places, indoors or out (dormitory, telescopes, parking lots, etc.). If you do not have a flashlight, ask the site supervisor for one.
2. The supervisor may supply you with a vehicle for use within the observatory (valid driver's license required). If you must drive at night (please minimize this), use the car's normal headlights. Ask someone else to drive when the road is snow-covered if you lack experience driving under these conditions.
3. At the end of the night, wait for the telescope operator to finish all operations (close the dome, fill the dewar, etc.) so that everyone can go to the dormitory together. Many of the highest-risk activities undertaken by the telescope operator occur at the beginning and end of the night, so it is best that he be accompanied.
4. Inform others of your activities, especially at night or if you will be far from commonly frequented areas (buildings). If you are accompanied at the telescope, notify others of your whereabouts. If someone is away longer than expected, check and make sure that all is well.
5. If you leave the main observatory areas (dormitory, workshops, telescopes), to go hiking or walking, it is best to do so accompanied. Always notify the supervisor; request a radio and instructions of how to use it so that you may call for help if needed.
6. Obey all signs as well as instructions from the site supervisor. If any sign's meaning is unfamiliar, ask for an explanation, but never ignore it.
7. In case of any emergency or dangerous situation, immediately notify the site supervisor or other observatory personnel.
8. If you feel ill or if someone tells you they are ill, notify someone immediately (at all hours), preferably the site supervisor. If you have a medical condition, even if it allows you to travel, notify the head of the observatory before going up to the observatory and bring all your prescription medicine with you.

Sincerely,

Michael Richer
Head, OAN-SPM.