EMPOWERING CAMPUS SAFETY THE CUS ESCALATION METHOD

Have you ever seen an unsafe situation and wanted to speak up, but weren't sure what to say? CUS gives us a standardized way to raise immediate safety concerns clearly and respectfully, ensuring the focus stays on keeping everyone safe rather than challenging authority. If you observe an unsafe work practice, use the CUS escalation model to voice your concern immediately. Report persistent or unmitigated safety hazards to your manager or supervisor.



THE CUS SAFETY ESCALATION SEQUENCE

- **C - "I am CONCERNED":** Clearly express your unease about a work practice, providing a specific reason for personnel to address it.
- **U - "I am UNCOMFORTABLE":** If the concern isn't resolved, escalate the discussion by stating your discomfort with the activity.
- **S - "This is a SAFETY issue - Stop the work!":** If dangerous conditions persist, declare it a safety issue and demand an immediate halt until hazards are addressed.

EFFECTIVE SPEAKING-UP PRINCIPLES

- **Focus on the Safety Concern, Not Competence:** Avoid phrasing that questions personal capability or framing the issue as a personal disagreement. Keep language centered strictly on the hazard to prevent defensiveness.
- **The Two-Challenge Rule:** You have a responsibility to voice your safety concern at least twice to ensure the message is acknowledged and understood by the personnel involved.

MANAGING PUSHBACK, ESCALATION & CLARIFICATION

- **Handling Pushback:** Stay persistent and use standardized phrasing while focusing on campus safety.
- **Openness to Clarification:** Acknowledge valid safety protocols if explained by workers, allowing work to continue.
- **Escalating Issues:** If safety concerns are ignored, escalate to UND Supervisors and Environmental Health & Safety (EHS).

