

SCISHIELD CUSTOMER STORY



SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## From the Unknown to Efficiency

How **SciShield** rationalized and elevated EHS and training at San Diego State University

For many Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) professionals, one of the hardest parts of the job is the ongoing worry that something might go wrong that could have been prevented. Jennifer Ramil, director of EHS at San Diego State University, is familiar with the feeling.

Prior to implementing SciShield, she was vexed by the unknown.

"I had no idea how many lab spaces we had," Jennifer said. "I mean, we could have found it in our facilities infrastructuresystem – but it was so outdated and inaccurate. I had no idea who was in which labs... or what they were working with." She could have spent months generating this information she said, but the minute it was generated it would be out of date.

"It was out of date yesterday."

“The visibility and transparency [from SciShield] has led to the PIs taking an active role in managing their labs.”

Jennifer desperately wanted the ability to send vital notifications to the *right* people. For example, if the water was down in an area due to repairs, or there was low pressure, to be able to let people know that safety showers are not working, or that eyewash stations wouldn't function.

## Turning on the lights

The sequential adoption of SciShield capabilities illuminated insight to a range of information that had previously been out of reach.

The EHS team started with the SciShield Unified Platform/Door Signs module but soon added ChemTracker and Safety Data Sheets (SDS), followed by Hazardous Waste and later Radioisotope Management. The revelations came quickly (“Wow, didn’t know that chemical was stored in that particular building, which is not sprinklered!”) but the new awareness allowed prompt, decisive action.

// If a person is in multiple labs, their training applies to all labs. Other systems were unable to make these kinds of relationships.”

Implementing SciShield meant gaining access to real-time, accurate information – about the labs, who was working where, and what hazards they were exposed to. SciShield was fundamental to eliminating the problem of the unknown.

“Having that sort of insight so chemicals can be stored in the appropriate places, was such a game-changer for us,” recalled Jennifer.

With SciShield the EHS team immediately had a better understanding of hazards and was able to accomplish more. Now they could report to the Chancellor's office with confidence that 100% of the spaces where chemicals are used had been inspected. They could identify exactly how many labs – and which ones – were working with biological materials or other specific hazards.



## Delivering results

With the systematic improvement of the Training module, the transformation has been profound.

For starters, now Jennifer and her team can relate the list of researchers with lapsed training to those still currently enrolled in a given lab. “We can see this in real time now,” she said. And the automated message capability in SciShield? “Amazing!” exclaimed Jennifer. The visibility and transparency has led to the PIs taking an active role in managing their labs. “Worth its weight in gold to have PIs take responsibility for their researchers.”

## Elevating problem solving

SciShield allowed EHS employees to more easily understand what was needed and execute their responsibilities more successfully. In this way, the platform powered a cultural shift in how her team approached their jobs and served their research community.

“People are more creative in how they solve other problems now,” said Jennifer. Previously there had been an attitude of, “as a compliance officer, I help people be safer in their labs.” With the new capabilities and insight from SciShield, the team can easily solve low-level problems and is empowered to find creative solutions to more complex challenges.

One challenge Jennifer sought to address was finding a way to provide appropriate training for people based on their job activities.

## Making training easy

“I wanted a way to excuse people from having to take ALL training,” said Jennifer. “I wanted to save them time by not taking training that wasn't appropriate for what they were doing.”

The EHS team evaluated the SciShield Training LMS module. The ability to relate multiple labs with one location (and multiple locations to one lab, or one person to multiple labs) led them to adopt it. “If a person is in multiple labs, their training applies to all labs,” said Jennifer.

“Other systems were unable to make these kinds of relationships.”

After a previous bad experience with another company's software implementation, Jennifer described the SciShield implementation as very easy, organized and informed by best practices. “(SciShield) kept things on time, if not ahead of schedule,” she said.



SciShield has made an expanding program much more efficient. EHS/Lab Safety previously had eight training courses and completed about 500 records in a year; it now offers 16 courses and completed over 4,600 records last year. Meanwhile, the training compliance percentage for the organization has increased from 56% to over 80%.

Jennifer and her team are now confident that the community is adequately trained for the hazards that their work exposes them to, and that training assignments are tailored to their personal exposures.

## Saving time

The improvements in delivering safety training to the research community have also led to benefits for the EHS team.

The savings in time to generate reports have been profound:

- Generating a report of users overdue for a course or a report of completed records for a course used to take an hour. Now it takes **3 minutes**
- Creating a training compliance report used to take 2.5 hours. Now it can be done in **3 minutes**
- Generating a training compliance report for a department head took 2 weeks. Now it takes about **10 minutes**



Even the task of looking up training records for an individual used to take several hours. Now Jennifer's team can access that information in a minute. As for identifying who is due for a particular training course, composing and sending a notification? That used to take several days. Now? **"It's automated,"** said Jennifer.



+



### ABOUT SDSU COLLEGE

Since its founding in 1897, the university has grown to become a leading public research university, and a federally-designated Hispanic-serving Institution and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

### ABOUT SCISHEILD

At SciShield, we reduce the burden on scientists worldwide while improving safety, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency in their organizations through our modular, enterprise software solutions.

Mitigating risk while increasing productivity has never been easier. **Unlock the possible [scishield.com/demo](https://scishield.com/demo)**