FALL LABORATORY SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Laboratory Medical Emergencies

Report all incidents and injuries to your supervisor. If an individual is contaminated or exposed to a hazardous material in your laboratory, do what is necessary to protect their life and health as well as your own. Determine what the individual was exposed to. The MSDS (SDS) for the chemical will contain special first aid information. Do not move an injured person unless they are in further danger (from fire, inhalation or skin exposure). Individuals with life threatening emergencies must dial Public Safety at (617) 373-3333 for emergency transport to the hospital. Please try to bring a copy of the MSDS with you to the hospital for the chemical involved. For non-life threatening injuries and incidents not involving hazardous materials, students may go directly to University Health and Counseling Services (UHCS) for evaluation and treatment. Anyone involved in an incident or injury must file an Injury Report Form with the Office of Environmental Health and Safety following the incident.

Safety Showers and Eyewashes

All laboratories in which hazardous chemicals are handled or used and could contact the eyes or skin resulting in injury should have access to eyewash stations and safety showers. As with any safety equipment, these can only be useful if they are accessible and maintained, therefore:

- Keep all passageways to the eyewash and shower clear of any obstacle (even a temporarily parked cart).
- The eyewash should be checked routinely to be certain that water flows through it at an adequate height and volume.
- The flow through the safety showers should be tested periodically to ensure sufficient flow (approximately 30 gallons per minute).
- The routine flushing of this equipment by lab personnel is important to keep the water clear and rust free.

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will check eyewashes and showers twice yearly to supplement the above work.
Footwear and Clothing in the Laboratory

Weather in New England can be quite variable and on warm days this autumn, you may be more comfortable wearing sandals or even shorts. Please remember that this type of apparel is not appropriate in the laboratory, so plan ahead and bring a change of clothing and shoes on days you plan to enter the lab. Accidents can occur anytime, so wearing proper clothing and footwear is imperative to protect yourself from exposure to infectious materials, bloodborne pathogens, chemicals and other hazardous materials. Protective footwear should cover your entire foot and no skin should be exposed. Flip-flops, sandals, crocs and ballet flats are not considered appropriate footwear for laboratory work, since exposed areas of skin are not protected against spills, sharps and contamination. Pants and long sleeve shirts should also be worn in conjunction with personal protective equipment, such as gloves, safety glasses and lab coats. Laboratory safety starts with proper attire, so before you enter the lab, please be sure to change into protective footwear and laboratory appropriate clothing.

Hazardous Waste Labeling

Problems with labeling of hazardous wastes are one of the most common problems that are encountered when EHS picks-up wastes or audits laboratories. All hazardous waste containers must be labeled at the time the waste is first placed into the container. Labels must include the following information:

1) the words, “Hazardous Waste”;
2) the full chemical name of the contents (e.g. “sulfuric acid”);
3) the waste classification (e.g. “corrosive”, etc.);
4) the date when the container becomes full or is no longer wanted.

Once hazardous wastes are dated, please schedule to have them picked up using our online form located at this address: [https://ehsa.nunet.neu.edu/Neu_WP/waste_pickup.aspx](https://ehsa.nunet.neu.edu/Neu_WP/waste_pickup.aspx)