

MINUTES

LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 12, 2011 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members Present: Lorraine Alexander, Erik Alexanian, Pat Boone, Catherine Brennan, Bruna Brylawski, Dan Elliott, Karen Hogan, Mary Beth Koza

Members Absent: Kimberlie Burns, Howard Fried, Rita Fuchs-Lokensgard, Katherine Hamil, Rihe Liu, Susan McMahan, Kirby Zeman

Other Attendees: Jonathan Moore

Meeting commenced at 3:03 pm.

CLIP 2010 Summary

Moore gave the 2010 annual update for the Collaborative Laboratory Inspection Program (CLIP). The presentation highlighted the demographics of the safety inspectors - Biological Safety (3), Chemical Safety (1), Fire Safety (2), and Radiation Safety (4). Also outlined were the number of annual CLIP inspections performed in 2010 (536) and a summary of the top ten variances found during inspections. Several of the top variances continue to be documentation issues (such as lab workers not completing annual blood borne pathogen training). Moore also discussed the CLIP improvement process during 2010 that included: reviewing and making changes to the list of University citations, segregating Hazardous Waste inspections from annual CLIP inspections in the EHS internal database and updating informational documents that CLIP inspectors take into the field for inspections.

Injuries/Incidents 2010 Annual Review

Brennan presented an overview of incidents and injuries from 2010 so that the committee could examine yearly trends. In injuries, the highest numbers were seen in animal bites (20) and cuts/punctures (27). Discussion on injuries focused on the fact that the increase of animal bites could be related to better reporting of small animal and tick bites. Related to this, a *Tick Policy* is being put in to effect for those that work in the field and Brennan will bring the document to the committee as soon as it is finalized. For incidents, the highest numbers were seen with odor complaints (25), hood malfunctions (22) and chemical spills (21). Brennan commented that odor complaints and hood malfunctions are always historically high and will continue to be but chemical spills could decrease. Several of the chemical spills in 2010 had to do with hazardous waste being collected in steel cans. The committee raised the issue of whether safety cans should be used for hazardous waste instead. Also a suggestion was made that CLIP inspectors identify labs that use these steel containers for waste be made aware of the problem.

Injuries and Incidents, 4th Quarter (October-December) 2010

The Committee reviewed the log of injuries and incidents for the 4th Quarter 2010.

| INJURY |
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| A Research Specialist was lifting a dog onto an examination table and the dog unexpectedly turned around and bit the right side of the employee's face. The employee received treatment at UNC Hospital. |
| An employee was moving a rat from its home cage to an operant box and in the process the rat bit the employee's right hand. The employee received treatment at the UEOHC. |
| A Research Specialist was handling a mouse and was bitten on the right index finger. |
| Three employees (Research Associate, Vet Technician, and Research Specialist) were possibly exposed to dogs infected with <i>Bartonella</i> during general animal care. |
| A Research Assistant sprayed <i>E.coli</i> in eye and nose while conducting an experiment and using a pipette. The employee went to UNC Hospital for treatment. |
| A Research Specialist carrying out a reaction with a pyrophoric reagent (lithium aluminum hydride) was adjusting the reaction apparatus and the reaction solution ignited and burned part of employee's cheek. Employee went to UNC Hospital Emergency Room for treatment. |
| A Lecturer preparing for a medical student class was placing gross specimens in filing area and did not see formalin spilled on floor due to a cracked specimen container. The employee began to experience nose, eye and lungs irritation and went to UEOHC. |
| A Research Assistant pricked their finger tip when the employee's hand slipped while inserting a syringe needle in to a rubber septa. No medical treatment was needed. |
| A Postdoctoral Research Associate cut left index finger after the employee accidentally dropped a razor blade into backpack. Employee went to UNC Hospital Emergency Room to receive a tetanus shot. |

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| A Postdoctoral Research Associate was trying to find some tools to do mouse work and was stuck by sharp tools improperly wrapped in foil. The employee injured the middle finger of the right hand and received care at UEOHC. |
| A Research Assistant washing glassware picked up a cracked flask which broke and cut left hand. |
| A Research Technician dropped a razor blade on right thumb, while preparing to slice tissue. Employee went to UEOHC for treatment. |
| An employee was removing a pipette from a pipette holder and cut right thumb. Employee received care at Taylor Student Health. |
| A Postdoctoral Research Associate working in departmental machine shop was drilling a piece of metal for an electrochemical experiment and cut index & middle finger of left hand when metal started spinning. The employee received treatment at UNC Hospital. |
| A Research Technician was preparing clean glassware to be autoclaved and some of the exterior paint came off and a splinter injured left pinky finger. |
| A Research specialist was cutting paraffin blocks without stopping for more than six hours and experienced pain in right shoulder, elbow and hand. Employee was evaluated at UEOHC. |
| A Research Associate was carrying lab notebooks from the lab to office. The lab notebooks started to slip and in the process of getting control of the notebooks the employee twisted right ankle. |

For incidents, there were 6 requests for investigations/complaints, 4 gas leaks, 4 odor complaints, 3 fire alarms, 3 hood malfunctions, 3 chemical spills, 1 biohazard and 1 fire.

During the discussion of incidents and injuries, committee members suggested coming up with some type of incentive to help further a safety culture at the University. A "Bright Idea" award or highlighting a particular lab in a newsletter or on the EHS website could help share best practices amongst labs. Hogan gave an example of tie dyeing lab coats to make people want to wear them and have some fun with safety. A question was also raised about the injury that occurred in a departmental machine shop and if this shop was still in business. Brennan will follow-up to determine if the shop in question is still operational.

Other Committee Business

Brennan informed the committee that the updated *Minors in Labs Policy* was approved at the last USSC meeting. An updated EHS brochure was also passed out to committee members. The brochure will be given to new employees to help explain what EHS does. The *Avert* laboratory specific newsletter was also discussed as it had just been sent out to Principal Investigators. Suggestions for future editions included highlighting specific incidents or having a "Lessons Learned" section and best practices as discussed above.

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 pm.