

MINUTES
LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, January 25, 2006 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members Present: Kimberlie Burns, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Bruna Brylawski, Lorraine Alexander, Elizabeth Guthrie, Katherine Hamil, James Gilbert, Brent Webber

Members Absent: Richard Hanes, Mike Fisher, Liska Lackey, Diane Shugars, Jim Morken, Kirby Zeman, Nicole Duncan, Ray Hackney

Others Present: Donii Fox and Deb Howard, EHS

Meeting commenced at 2:30pm. Minutes from the meeting of October 26, 2005 were reviewed and approved, with suggested amendment to clarify that non-vented hoods in Histology labs must get EHS Director's approval prior to installation.

Infectious Waste Rules: Donii Fox and Deb Howard talked about several infectious waste rules and practices. Examples included requirements for biohazard outer container lids, autoclave spore-strip testing, and steam sterilization rather than bleach-treating microbiological waste. Committee members voiced concerns, such as: EHS policies are not regularly communicated to the general lab population, and messages to PIs often do not make it downstream to affected personnel; a listserv for personnel who have taken training sessions might be necessary; testing protocols for autoclaves must be explicit – perhaps a poster to affix near autoclaves would be beneficial; and what are (and where can users find) “approved” biohazard disposal products such as outer containers with tight lids? Donii suggested that EHS could devise a “recommended” list of products, and that each user group should test the autoclaves that are common/shared, but it would not be necessary to “hold” the autoclaved waste bags pending the results of the spore-strip tests.

Injuries and Incidents, October-December 2005

The log of injuries and incidents for the 4th quarter 2005 was reviewed and discussed. For injuries, there were two cuts, two animal bites, and one each of the following: burn, inhalation, blood exposure, strain, flask explosion, and striking against injury. For incidents, there were nineteen odor calls, fourteen chemical spills (ten of which were mercury), two explosions, and one each of the following: fire incident, natural gas leak, radiation source lost, radiation spill, and miscellaneous incident.

New Signage System for Lab Entrances

A trial department has been selected. During Spring Break, prototype signs will go up in Phillips Hall, at the entrances to each research lab, teaching lab, and shop in the Dept. of Physics and Astronomy. At the end of the sign trial period (June 2006), EHS will distribute a questionnaire to Phillips Hall occupants to gauge their opinions of the signage system.

Other Business

The Committee suggested that EHS should be included in the interview process for new Principal Investigators, so that PIs can get a head start and understand the institution's expectations for safety and health in research. In order for this to occur, EHS would require notification from departments that were contemplating faculty additions. This could come from the Department Manager, Chair, Grants Manager, or other personnel.

Meeting adjourned 3:30pm.