

MINUTES
LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE
 Wednesday, April 26, 2006 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members Present: Lorraine Alexander, Kimberlie Burns, Nicole Duncan, Bruna Brylawski, Kirby Zeman, Carolyn Bishop, Ray Hackney, James Gilbert, Brent Webber

Members Absent: Richard Hanes, Mike Fisher, Diane Shugars, Jim Morken, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Elizabeth Guthrie, Katherine Hamil

Others Present: Jonathan Moore, EHS

Meeting commenced at 2:30pm. Minutes from the meeting of January 25, 2006 were reviewed and approved.

CLIP Inspection Summary: Moore gave a presentation on the Collaborative Laboratory Inspection Program (CLIP) results from 2005. From 2003-2005, the percentage of violations that were deemed serious remained steady (11.8% in 2003, 11.4% in 2004, 11.4% in 2005). The percentage of labs that received a CLIP assessment grade of "unacceptable" due to one or more serious violations decreased in the past three years (3.3% in 2003, 2.8% in 2004, 2.3% in 2005). The five most-cited variances in 2005 were (one to five): lab safety plan not updated, documentation of annual training for Lab Safety Plan contents not available, infectious waste not handled properly, improper handling of needles, and chemical waste in the lab not properly identified. The Committee inquired whether the serious violations/unacceptable lab grades were from the same department or lab group, and suggested gearing EHS-CLIP education toward "repeat offenders".

Labels for Printout on EHS Website: Gilbert announced an upcoming new service on the EHS website, to make labels available for printout. For all situations referenced in UNC manuals that require signs/labels, this page would provide a template for printing out with the appropriate Avery® Label sheet. Gilbert emphasized that this was NOT a change in policy, and that labs were free to use other sources for these signs and labels, but they still had to use signs and labels where required by regulations. The Committee suggested an additional sign for cold rooms to prohibit storage of liquid nitrogen dewars. The Committee agreed that the preferred verbage for labels on containers that hold non-biohazardous, non-radioactive glass or needles should be, "Non-Hazardous Materials".

Injuries and Incidents, January-March 2006

The Committee reviewed and discussed the log of injuries and incidents for the 4th quarter 2006.

INCIDENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION
BURN OR SCALD, HEAT OR COLD: CHEMICALS (e.g. picked up battery, got acid on hand)	Employee was vortexing tube of chloroform/phenol in hood when cap popped off and some contents splashed on arm. Employee washed with soap and water, rinsed arm for 10-15 minutes under water, then washed off with ethanol. UEOHC noted several small blistered areas no larger than 1-2 cm. Burn was soaked for 30 min and Silvadene dressing was applied.
BURN OR SCALD, HEAT OR COLD: CHEMICALS (e.g. picked up battery, got acid on hand)	Research technician was performing phenol extraction when eppendorf tube slipped and phenol splashed on left forearm. Rinsed arm under cool water for 15 minutes and went to UEOHC. Clinic observed 20mm x 3.5mm area of light redness and applied Silvadene cream covered with Teflon pad.
CUT, PUNCTURE, SCRAPE: BROKEN GLASS	Clean flask broke and piece of glass went into right hand. Glass removed but went to UEOHC one month later with concerns about problems healing and residual glass. X-rays were negative. Referred to surgery clinic.
CUT, PUNCTURE, SCRAPE: BROKEN GLASS	Research Associate was preparing buffer at sink and tried to catch a glass cylinder that was knocked over. Broken glass cut left hand and palm. Employee went to ED where X-rays were negative for foreign bodies. Received 3 and 2 sutures on cuts.
CUT, PUNCTURE, SCRAPE:	After researched dosed several sterile FVB mice with 21ul of BrdU at 50 mg/ml, tried to recap needle before walking across room to dispose needle in sharps container, stuck needle in finger. Employee was counseled to keep sharps container next to work area and to use a one-hand method for recapping needles if necessary.

CUT, PUNCTURE, SCRAPE: HAND TOOL, UTENSIL (not powered, e.g. screwdriver fell on toe)	Assistant Professor was opening package for catalog with a pair of scissors and cut palm of left hand. Clinic cleaned wound, injected it with 1% lidocaine and placed two sutures.
FALL, SLIP, OR TRIP:	Employee was trying to sit in chair while embedding renal tissue, but chair moved and employee fell to ground, injuring hips and back. X-rays were negative for rib fracture. Restricted to lifting 5-lbs. Paraffin wax buildup on floor could have contributed to incident.
MISC: ABSORPTION, INGESTION, OR INHALATION	Employee was concerned about mercury exposure from unnoticed broken thermometer in lab and went to UEOHC for consultation.
MISC: ABSORPTION, INGESTION, OR INHALATION	Employee is complaining of IAQ problems associated with off-gassing of new furniture. Referred to IAQ specialist.
MISC: BLOOD EXPOSURE - NEEDLESTICK	Postdoc working with cowpox virus stuck finger with sterile needle through dirty gloves. Called UEOHC for advice.
STRAIN: REPETITIVE MOTION (carpal tunnel syndrome)	Employee opening and closing several hundred microtubes while preparing normal human serum collection for long term storage. Employee will share work with others in future.
STRIKING AGAINST OR STEPPING ON:	Employee was using syringe with needle to remove mouse plasma from hematocrit tubes. While attaching a small tube to the syringe needle, the needle punctured the plastic tubing and pierced left thumb.
STRIKING AGAINST OR STEPPING ON:	Employee hit right elbow on door knob in PCR room. Pain noticed the next day but worked in lab pipetting to meet research deadline. Improvement noted upon visit to UEOHC.
STRUCK OR INJURED BY: ANIMAL OR INSECT	Technician was bitten on knuckle of left thumb while attempting to give oral dose to mouse. Employee received tetanus booster at UEOHC.

Burns suggested that, for areas where paraffin wax builds up on floors such as histology laboratories, rumble strips can help prevent the type of accident documented above.

For incidents, there were ten odor calls, eight chemical spills (four of which were mercury), and one miscellaneous incident.

Entrance Sign Update

Gilbert announced that the trial signs for lab and shop entrances were up in Phillips Hall. The greatest challenge had been that several persons did not want their after-hours contact information on the door. The Committee agreed to allow discretion/selectivity in posting this information, except in situations where regulatory requirements mandate posting after-hours info for the PI, safety supervisor, shop supervisor, etc.

Lab Safety Manual Update

The Committee reviewed a sample chapter of the proposed new edition of the Laboratory Safety Manual (Chapter 3: General Safety Principles and Practices). The Committee approved of the basic layout and design, and had suggestions for further elements of contents: expansion of cryogenic/liquid nitrogen safety information, more specific information about compressed gas cylinders and single chains supporting multiple cylinders, and storage in hallways. These elements will be added to this chapter.

Meeting adjourned 3:35pm.