

MINUTES LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 7, 2009 (2101-G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members Present: Lorraine Alexander, Pat Boone, Catherine Brennan, Kimberlie Burns, Howard Fried, James Gilbert, Katherine Hamil, Jeffery Johnson, Mary Beth Koza, Rihe Liu, Kirby Zeman

Members Absent: Bruna Brylawski, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Rita Fuchs-Lokensgard, Susan McMahan

Meeting commenced at 3:05 pm.

Discussion of Minors in Laboratories Policy

An updated copy of the *Minors in Laboratories Policy* was passed out after revision by Legal. Sections that were modified by Legal were highlighted and discussed. A few minor changes were recommended and a vote was taken for approval. All members at the meeting were in favor of instituting the policy and it was approved by the committee. The policy will be presented at the June USSC meeting for final approval. If approved, implementation will be immediate to ensure that researchers who have summer students who are minors are in compliance.

EHS Nanotechnology Action Plan

Brennan discussed the new EHS Nanotechnology Action Plan. The purpose of the plan is to proactively address and establish a framework for ensuring the health and safety of laboratory employees that handle and perform operations with nanomaterials. The action plan will result in a Nanotechnology Safety webpage with online training, educational materials, a risk assessment tool and links to other nanotechnology safety websites. As a result of the action plan, EHS will also develop a Nanotechnology Safety Policy. The policy will be brought to the committee in the future for approval. Committee discussion and suggestions focused on investigating other university and college nanotechnology policies. A sub group of committee members (Jeff Johnson, Rihe Liu and Kirby Zeman) agreed to serve as consultants to EHS while the plan is developed.

Injuries and Incidents, January-March 2009

Prior to reviewing campus injuries and incidents, the committee received an updated article on the recent UCLA fatality and the fines issued by Cal/OSHA. The Committee reviewed the log of injuries and incidents for the 1st Quarter 2009.

INJURY
A graduate student was trying to inject an un-infected mouse with a syringe. The mouse was housed with infected mice in same cage. The animal bit the employee but the bite did not go through employee's glove. The employee washed their hand with soap and water and reported the injury.
A graduate student working in a chemical hood added nitric acid and isopropanol to a bottle and capped the bottle. The bottle exploded and the employee received lacerations to the chin and left hand. Concentrated nitric acid splashed on the employee's left thigh causing burns. The employee's cuts were treated in the ER and she was admitted to the hospital for excision of burn site and xenograft.
A graduate student was changing nitric acid baths in a teaching lab and felt stinging on left eyebrow. The area was rinsed with water off and on for a total of 5 min. The employee was wearing goggles and a face shield.
A graduate student removed a two-part tube from a centrifuge and the bottom part containing 1 mL of RLT buffer (consisting of 25-50% guanidine thiocyanate) spilled onto the bench. A small amount of liquid dripped off the bench and soaked through left shoe. The employee noticed itching, removed shoe and sock and observed skin had turned black and green. The foot was rinsed for 20 minutes and the employee was transported to ER. The employee was treated initially with Bacitracin and subsequently with Neosporin.
A research specialist in a Biological Safety 2+ lab cut their left index finger on glass cassette when wiping excess acrylamide gel. The finger was rinsed in the lab and antibacterial ointment and bandage were applied at UEOHC.
Several lab employees were using a non-functioning chemical hood while staining slides. The hood was installed contrary to EHS lab hood policy. There was a possibility of employee exposure to formaldehyde and xylenes for 3 months. Monitoring will be conducted when new hood is functioning properly.

A research associate was injecting cells into the tail of a restrained mouse. When the mouse jerked, the employee punctured their right index finger.

A post-doctoral scholar in lab was using a vacuum line to degas a small flask containing a silane. The apparatus was located in a chemical hood. The flask exploded and the employee received cuts to hands, arms, and face (nose bridge and forehead). The employee was wearing safety glasses and two cuts on the left hand required stitches.

For incidents, there were 14 lab hood alarms/repairs, 9 mercury spills, 6 odor complaints, 6 natural gas leaks, 5 chemical spills, 2 fire incidents, 2 explosions, 2 biohazards, 2 requests for investigation and 1 miscellaneous.

Other Committee Business

One member brought up issue of new building complaints. The discussion led to a suggestion that EHS Lab Design Guidelines be required for all new or renovated buildings. A sample template of design guidelines will be sent out to the committee over email for review and will be discussed further at the next meeting. Koza passed out the EHS Annual Report and gave an update on the swine flu and University's pandemic planning.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.