

**MINUTES**  
**LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
Wednesday, July 7, 2004 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

**Members Present:** Kimberlie Burns, Richard Hanes, Bruna Brylawski, Katherine Hamil, Kirby Zeman, John Archer (for Carolyn Bishop), James Gilbert, Ray Hackney, Brent Webber

**Members Absent:** Mike Fisher, Liska Lackey, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Lorraine Alexander, Nikki Duncan, Elizabeth Guthrie, Diane Shugars, Jim Morken

**Also Present:** John Rawlings (AIS)

Minutes from the meeting of April 14, 2004 were approved, with amendment that the conditions of the space used by the Office of Chief Medical Examiner in Brinkhous-Bullitt were also discussed on 4/14/04.

**Eyewash Testing**

Brent Webber discussed a recent incident of an employee in MEJ that received a chemical splash to the eye and tried to use an eyewash facility in the hall but found it to be inoperable. A suggestion to require all research groups to conduct weekly checks of eyewash stations was discussed. Potential problems were noted, such as: several buildings (including MEJ) have eyewash stations that are not within particular laboratory spaces and are instead in common corridors; some eyewash stations do not have plumbing or floor drains; how to document checks, and the burden of doing this weekly. The Committee agreed that each research group should check its eyewash stations monthly, whether they are within laboratory space or in the halls. This program will be covered by CLIP inspections, pending approval of CLIP program head. Documentation tags of various materials will be tested in the coming months to determine which work best for recording the monthly inspections. Due to many safety and logistical concerns, it was agreed that only Facilities Services should inspect safety showers.

**Chemical Inventory**

With the future conversion to an online Laboratory Safety Plan (LSP), the Committee was asked its opinion on requiring each research group/Principal Investigator to include a full chemical inventory with its LSP. Benefits and problems were discussed. A tremendous amount of front-end work would need to be done in order to create a chemical selection database that included most chemicals used by all labs on campus. Fortunately, some labs already maintain databases that could be used for initial data. These data might also simplify the process of submitting reports to NC Department of Insurance to show that room and building limits for hazardous chemicals are not being exceeded. The Committee agreed that this capability should be included in the online LSP, but should not be mandated. The new online LSP should offer two options for chemical inventory: the present system (estimated mass quantities per compatibility group, individual listing of Carcinogens, Highly Toxics, and Compressed Gases) and the new system (individual listing of all chemicals).

**Accidents and Incidents in Lab Buildings**

James Gilbert distributed a list of the incidents and injuries occurring in laboratory buildings during April, May, and June 2004. The following injuries were reviewed:

Department	Injury
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY	Employee was using vacuum pump on desiccator. Glass tip broke and cut middle finger on right hand. Employee went to ER and received stitches.
CYS FIBROSIS/PULMONARY RES	Prior to laboratory move, employee was using a razor to remove radioactive danger label after decontamination of equipment. Received 5 stitches at hospital.
MICROBIOLOGY & IMMUNOLOGY	Employee was making a fixative solution of formaldehyde and when a stir bar was added to the solution a drop splashed into her eye. Was not wearing safety glasses.
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER	Employee was unloading autoclave after unmarked bag was autoclaved. Apparently laboratory discarded tubes with phenol in biohazard bag and employee was exposed.
PSYCHIATRY	Employee cut finger with scalpel while taking tissue samples from lab mice. Received two stitches in ER.
GENETICS	Employee was using scissors to remove radiation label from box and cut tip of left ring finger.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE	Lab tech in SHS was recycling materials from lab and lid from recycling bin fell on right hand and thumb.
MICROBIOLOGY & IMMUNOLOGY	Glass slip covering hemacytometer cracked and cut thumb through gloves.
PATHOLOGY & LAB MEDICINE	Employee nicked left third finger with scalpel while preserving a pneumonectomy spectrum.
ORTHOPAEDICS	Employee cut little finger with scalpel while dissecting knee specimen.
PATHOLOGY & LAB MEDICINE	Employee placed hand inside cryostat to adjust something and cut hand on unprotected blade.
NUTRITION	Employee was pouring formic acid and noticed sharp pain on thumb about an hour later. Small blister observed on tip of left thumb.
PHARMACOLOGY	Glass pipette broke and penetrated gloves and poked into hand.
NEUROSCIENCE CENTER	Employee was setting up mouse breeding when cage was dropped. Bedding material flew into eye. Flushed eye but next day woke with red and tearing eye.
MEDICINE	Researcher was working with gonorrhea culture and contaminated needle injected left hand.
BIOLOGY	Employee was concerned that recovery from back injury at home would be compounded by repetitive motion at work.
CENTER FOR ALCOHOL STUDIES	Employee moved empty oxygen tank but didn't realize cylinder cap was not on tightly. Tank moved in an unexpected direction and tank struck employee in the leg causing the employee to fall on the floor. Employee received contusion on leg and complained of pain in right lower back and buttock.

Laboratory Incidents April 1-June 15 2004: 1 gas leak, 12 odor complaints, 7 spills (1 blood spill, 4 mercury spills, 2 chemical spills), and 4 miscellaneous incidents.

#### **Other Business**

The facilities of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) on campus were discussed. EHS has visited the histology lab and recommended a change to extraction ventilation.