

MINUTES

LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members Present: Lorraine Alexander, Pat Boone, Catherine Brennan, Dan Elliott, Karen Hogan

Members Absent: Erik Alexanian, Bruna Brylawski, Kimberlie Burns, Rita Fuchs-Lokensgard, Katherine Hamil, Mary Beth Koza, Rihe Liu, Susan McMahan, Kirby Zeman

Meeting commenced at 3:08 pm.

EPA/NCDENR Inspection

Elliot described the recent 2-day inspection performed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) that focused on UNC's hazardous waste permit. The inspectors concentrated on the chemistry buildings and the Science Complex during the inspection. Elliot commented that it was a very rigorous inspection and we have not received a report back yet from the EPA or NCDENR but anticipate receiving these soon.

Chemical Safety Board (CSB) – Texas Tech Incident Investigation

Brennan sent the CSB case study summary report and also a link to their video detailing the Texas Tech incident prior to the meeting. Lessons learned were discussed and suggestions were made on how to increase lab safety culture at UNC. Suggestions included more informational materials being sent by direct mail (minutes from LCSC emailed quarterly and continue lab safety newsletter). One committee member said principal investigators should be encouraged to conduct safety group meetings and the more resources that are sent out will help facilitate this. Another suggestion was that the committee members go out into the field and do inspections to get a feel for the current safety culture. A final suggestion was made that the CSB video be shown during the next LCSC meeting.

Injuries and Incidents, 3rd Quarter (July-September) 2011

The Committee reviewed the log of injuries and incidents for the 3rd Quarter 2011.

INJURY
Employee was testing a rat and during testing it bit employee's left pinky finger.
An employee was taking blood glucose level from mouse tail and the mouse turned around and bit employee's hand
A rat scratched an employee's hand through PPE.
An employee wiped condensation from a glass desiccator and was cut by chipped glass.
Employee was drilling a self-tapping screw into a fiberglass boat deck with a cordless electric drill. A lot of pressure was applied to the drill to get the screw to self tap and the screw shifted and the bit went through employee's finger causing a puncture wound.
An employee was separating microtome blades to cut frozen sections and injured themselves.
An employee was cleaning a cover slip which broke and punctured employee's finger through protective glove.
An employee was dissecting intestines from a mouse infected with a Biosafety Level 2 agent when employee nicked left index finger with scissors.
Employee was processing a patient serum sample when finger slipped and was cut by the patient slide.
Employee was walking back to lab when employee's foot got stuck on the waxed floor. Employee started to slip and braced themselves against the wall and jammed right thumb.
Employee was walking through the laboratory after coming from the restroom to continue working on a western blot experiment and slipped.
During a chemical reaction, the reaction exploded with a huge sound and employee experience injury to right ear.
An employee experience injury after doing burn procedure repeatedly on mice.
An employee was checking and doing inventory on shelf when employee stepped down from ladder and sprained left ankle.
An employee was gathering supplies off bookshelf for use in biological safety cabinet and when knocked over partially full carboy of ethanol which fell off the shelf and struck employee's nose.

For incidents, there was 1 fume hood malfunction, 2 miscellaneous, 1 noise, 8 odor complaints, 1 radiation lost source, 5 chemical spills, 2 mercury spills and 1 radiation spill.

Other Committee Business

A suggestion was made that the safety inspectors need to be more thorough and have a more specific checklist. This checklist should also be provided and posted on the EHS website so the PI and Safety Supervisor know what is expected. The consistency and quality of the lab inspection process should be addressed. There was also a preliminary discussion about the committee meeting more often but since many members were absent this will be discussed at the next quarterly meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.