

**MINUTES**  
**LABORATORY AND CHEMICAL SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
 Wednesday, October 27, 2004 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

**Members Present:** Lorraine Alexander, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Kimberlie Burns, Elizabeth Guthrie, Katherine Hamil, Kirby Zeman, Carolyn Bishop, James Gilbert, Ray Hackney, Brent Webber

**Members Absent:** Mike Fisher, Liska Lackey, Nikki Duncan, Richard Hanes, Bruna Brylawski, Diane Shugars, Jim Morken

Minutes from the meeting of July 7, 2004 were reviewed. The Committee asked that, in the future, minutes from previous meetings be sent out in advance to expedite the review process. The minutes were approved.

**New Formaldehyde Training Module**

EHS representatives discussed the new online formaldehyde training course, and provided a handout summarizing why the course was created, who would be expected to take it, and the other operations that would accompany the training course. One of these, air sampling based on job and task classifications, has already begun. Recent results of air sampling for formaldehyde during common tasks (perfusion, histologic tissue preservation, and gross anatomy) were shared with the Committee. The Committee was provided with slides from the online training and gave input on the content. A suggestion was made to include IATA-DOT training in the formaldehyde module, because several persons who use formaldehyde in the labs use it for preserving samples that are to be shipped. A note about shipping information and a cross-link to relevant sections of the IATA-DOT module will be added to the formaldehyde module. Strategies for informing affected personnel about the formaldehyde module and their need to take it were discussed, with a suggestion made that a listserv of laboratory coordinators, separate from the Labsafety listserv, be created for disseminating this type of information. Information primarily sent to PIs often does not reach affected lab personnel

**Eyewash Testing: Proposed Changes to Lab Safety Manual**

Proposed changes to Chapter 3 and Chapter 6 of the Lab Safety Manual (LSM) were presented to the Committee, in order to codify the need for monthly eyewash station testing which had been discussed at the previous meeting. Several alterations were suggested by the Committee, including: making it clear what constitutes a "successful" eyewash test, who to call if eyewash test fails, where to get replacement parts, and if there might be consequences (e.g. CLIP citations) for failure to do monthly checks.

**Accidents and Incidents in Lab Buildings**

The following injuries from July to September 2004 were reviewed:

Department	Injury
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING	Employee fell ill while working in SPH laboratory, and was transported to UNC ED, where symptoms receded. EHS discovered open waste line in lab and had it capped.
PATHOLOGY & LAB MEDICINE	Employee complained of "fume exposure" in laboratory. Source determined to be uncapped waste pipe probably overlooked during renovations.
PHARMACOLOGY	Employee was looking at cell culture plate against ceiling lights when drop of Trizol reagents dripped onto face. Washed face with soap and water and went to UNC ED. Employee received first-degree burn to right cheek.
ECOLOGY	Graduate student was snorkeling to collect algae for experiments and cut right knee on oyster bed. Received stitches.
CHEMISTRY	Employee was using small pipe cutter to cut metal instrument column when piece of metal dislodged into fingertip. Removed metal splinter and went to UEOHC next day complaining of tenderness, swelling, and redness.
CAROLINA VACCINE INSTITUTE	Research tech was cutting plastic cassette containing mouse tissue and razor slipped cutting left index finger. Received tetanus booster at UEOHC.
CELL & MOLECULAR PHYSIOLOGY	Research aide closed dishwasher door on hand resulting in inch-long laceration on right middle finger. Dermabond applied at UEOHC.

NUTRITION	Employee sat on chair in laboratory, which rolled away and employee fell on tailbone and injured back and left ankle.
BIOCHEMISTRY & BIOPHYSICS	Employee was inspecting chemical spill kit stored on high shelf and stepped onto ladder moved by other lab member and strained right ankle.
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING	Employee fell into water meter hole that was partially obscured by grass. Employee scraped skin off right big toe and cracked nail, and bruised left knee. Accident occurred at 9pm and area is not well-lit. X-rays negative for fracture.
LABORATORY ANIMAL MEDICINE	Employee complained of animal allergies. Employee assists with cat surgery and is exposed to rabbit dander. Will wear N95 respirator.
CAROLINA VACCINE INSTITUTE	Allergy to rabbits, work involves rabbit handling. Symptoms included watery itchy eyes, headache, and congestion.
CHEMISTRY	Post-doctoral employee was using a dry-ice freezing bucket and handle on container of isopropyl alcohol broke, splashing eye.
MEDICINE	Employee used UV source for 2 minutes without shield. Woke up at 11:30pm with eye pain. Went to UEOHC next week, and was referred to the eye clinic.
MICROBIOLOGY & IMMUNOLOGY	Post-doctoral employee received phenol splash to right eye. Eye rinsed with water for 15 minutes. UEOHC referred employee to eye clinic where erythromycin was prescribed.
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER	Employee complained of pain in right hand after pipetting more than 800 times into PCR plates. Went to UEOHC and was given restricted duty (no pipetting) for one week. Ergonomic evaluation performed.
CENTER FOR ALCOHOL STUDIES	While employee was holding rat in right hand, rat was able to bite right index finger. Rat then lunged and bit through nail on left index finger. Received tetanus booster at UEOHC.
THURSTON ARTHRITIS RESEARCH CENTER	Employee was attempting to make an injection into the abdomen of mouse when mouse bit employee on left index finger. Received tetanus booster at UEOHC.
PEDIATRICS	Employee seen at UEOHC due to allergies when handling animals. Employee will be fit tested for N95 respirator.
NEUROSCIENCE CENTER	Employee bitten by mouse on right index finger during handling. Seen at UEOHC where wound was cleaned and tetanus booster given.
NUTRITION	Research tech bitten by mouse while checking mouse for pregnancy. Given tetanus booster at UEOHC.
PATHOLOGY & LAB MEDICINE	Employee was cleaning out laboratory hood when large blue plastic barrel rolled off and hit employee on head. Went to UEOHC for treatment. Went to UEOHC for treatment, and to personal chiropractor for continued neck pain. UEOHC referred to specialist, who diagnosed cervical facet syndrome and prescribed Bextra 10mg daily.
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER	Research specialist was moving -20oC freezer down hallway when it got caught, causing it to slam into wall and crushing left hand between freezer and wall. Fingers on left hand bruised and abraded.

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

### **Glove Selection / Glove Hygiene**

The Committee discussed potential problems in labs due to selection of improper gloves and glove hygiene, particularly leaving gloves on too long. A laboratory coordinator listserv would provide a resource for sending out reminders about glove hygiene, such as regular changing and not touching telephones/elevator buttons/doorknobs with gloved hands. A cartoon strip or other similar posting might make an effective reminder of glove hygiene rules.