

MINUTES

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE, LABORATORY ENVIRONMENT

Tuesday, December 5, 2000 (2101G McGavran-Greenberg)

Members present: Lorraine Alexander, Bonnie Taylor-Blake, Bruna Brylawski, Mike Fisher, Paula Murphy, James Gilbert, Ray Hackney, Kathrine Hamil, Kirby Zeman

Members absent: Todd Gambling, Richard Hanes, Liska Lackey, Jim Morken, Diane Shugars, Sheldon Wiggins, Lola Reid

Minutes for the meeting held on September 26, 2000 were approved.

REVIEW OF INCIDENTS/INJURIES IN THE LABORATORY ENVIRONMENT

During September through November there were 12 laboratory injuries, which are listed below:

- Glassware broke during washing, cut finger.
- Dog bit employee's hand while being positioned for radiographic procedure.
- While attempting to give subcutaneous injection to dog, employee punctured thumb with needle.
- While decapitating rats, employee cut upper left hand/thumb.
- While cleaning freezer, a crack in the lid of a container of PC15 developed, exposing employees to HCl gas.
- When employee dropped a bottle of acetonitrile, some splashed onto leg.
- Rat used in laboratory experiment bit employee on finger.
- Employee developed tendonitis in right forearm/wrist/hand from routine handling large/heavy objects.
- Hand going numb very quickly and some pain from pipette use. Pipette user for 9 years, six hours a day for two days a week.
- Employee tripped on cables and cords. Fell on chair and floor. Received scrapes and bruises.
- Employee experienced sudden, sharp pain in lower back while lifting 30-40 lb pan with anatomical specimens.
- Equipment being moved on a laboratory cart tipped and fell on employee when wheels locked in space at elevator landing.

Twenty-seven laboratory incidents were also reviewed. There were 11 odor complaints, 9 mercury spills, 2 chemical spills, 1 radioactive spill, 3 natural gas leaks, and 1 explosion.

REVIEW OF NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION TRAINING

James Gilbert presented a portion of the new laboratory employee orientation program. The committee suggested giving more of an explanation of biosafety levels for labs working with infectious agents.

LABORATORY CLIP INSPECTIONS SUMMARY

A summary of the laboratory CLIP inspections for June through August 2000 was reviewed. The most common violation was not providing and documenting the annual training on the lab safety plan. The results are summarized below:

Rating	Definition	Percent of Labs Inspected
Outstanding	2 or more consecutive inspections with no violations	40 %
Excellent	1 inspection with no violations or only 1 <i>de-minimus</i>	28%
Good	1 non-serious violations and/or < 5 <i>de-minimus</i>	30%
Poor	2 or more Non-serious or ≥ 5 <i>de-minimus</i> ; repeat violation	1%
Unacceptable	1 or more serious violations (corrected immediately)	1%

EATING AND DRINKING POLICY IN LABORATORIES

The eating and drinking policy in laboratories was reviewed. Other universities' policies were also reviewed. Some prohibit eating and drinking while others allow it in designated areas. A policy of no eating and drinking would be easier for labs to comply with if they were located in buildings with break rooms. Some laboratory buildings have no break rooms available where lab personnel may eat lunch or take a coffee break. Others have desk space built into the laboratory benches, which puts typical areas where food or drink is consumed in close proximity to where hazardous materials are handled. The committee suggested sending out a survey to lab personnel getting feedback on the feasibility of implementing a policy of no eating and drinking in their laboratories. This issue will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.