SAFETY FOCUS

This Safety Focus summarizes general laboratory safety rules and guidelines

GENERAL LABORATORY SAFEY RULES

1. All Principal Investigators (PIs) and laboratories must be registered in the EHS Safety Administrative Management (SAM) system.

2. Only authorized personnel may enter and/or work in the laboratory. Visitors are only allowed if escorted and briefed on the hazards in the laboratory.

3. Eating, drinking, and applying cosmetics are not permitted in a laboratory except for clearly defined areas where hazardous materials and potential contamination are not present (e.g. segregated office spaces).

4. Acceptable lab attire includes long pants and closed shoes; shorts and sandals are not appropriate for laboratory work.

5. A process-specific PPE hazard assessment must be conducted and included in the lab's Chemical Hygiene Plan or documented in SAM. Basic PPE in laboratories that work with chemicals, biological material, or radioactive materials includes lab coat (buttoned and sleeves down), gloves, and safety eye wear.

6. Exceptions to PPE requirements are allowed for certain processes or in designated lab areas, such as work stations, provided the requirements are documented in SAM and the designated areas are clearly defined.

7. All labs are required to maintain a current (within 1 year) inventory of all chemicals in the lab in the SAM system.

8. A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) must be available for all hazardous chemicals (as a link or file copy in SAM, or as a hard copy) and readily accessible to all lab members.

9. Non-University student minors are not allowed in laboratories unless they are working under a supervised program and have completed a University Risk and Insurance Services liability waiver: https://riskmanagement.utah.edu/intranet/contracts/liability-field-trip-waiver.php.

10. Minors less than 16 years of age are not allowed in Biosafety Level 2 (BSL2) or higher laboratories. Minors 16 to 18 years of age are not allowed in BSL3 laboratories, but may work in BSL2 labs if approved by the Institutional Biosafety Officer.

11. All laboratories using chemicals must be equipped with a spill kit appropriate for the chemicals in use in their space. All laboratory personnel must be trained in basic spill response methods.

12. Pets and emotional support animals are not allowed in laboratories. The only non-human animals allowed in laboratories are research animals (must be approved by IACUC) and service animals. Service animals must be provided with proper PPE and a clean, safe waiting area.

13. Transport of hazardous material outside of laboratories must utilize secondary containment, be properly labeled, and be done in a way that prevents spillage.

14. All injuries, incidents, accidents, unsafe conditions, and near misses must be reported to your supervisor as well as to EHS (https://oehs.utah.edu/incidentnear-miss-report).

15. Job-related injuries and illnesses must be reported to Workers Compensation by completing HR Form 122 (https://www.hr.utah.edu/forms/lib/E1.pdf.)

16. Unwanted and/or unused chemicals and regulated wastes must be properly labeled and disposed of through the SAM system.

17. All personnel have the right and responsibility to immediately STOP WORK if they consider the conditions or operation unsafe. Contact your supervisor and/or EHS to evaluate the situation and reauthorize the work.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE LABORATORY WORK

1. Always read relevant Standard Operating Procedures, Safety Manuals, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), and container labels before using a chemical, biological agent/material, or radioactive material.

2. Complete all required training before starting work in the laboratory.

3. Working alone is highly discouraged and not permitted for highly hazardous operations. Do not work alone if using hazardous materials or performing hazardous procedures without first obtaining approval from your supervisor and notifying the Lab Manager of your planned work and schedule.

4. Never reuse disposable gloves and do not wear gloves outside of labs.

5. Do not deviate from the assigned work schedule without prior authorization from the laboratory supervisor.

6. DO NOT perform unauthorized experiments. Stop work if your process will not conform to approved procedures. Continue work only if the procedures have been revised and approved.

7. Use appropriate ventilation such as laboratory chemical hoods when working with hazardous chemicals or biological safety cabinets when working with hazardous biological materials.

8. Contact your supervisor or the EHS Office if you have questions about the adequacy of the safety equipment available or chemical handling procedures.

9. Know the location and proper use of the safety equipment (i.e., eyewash unit, emergency shower, fire extinguisher, first-aid kit, fire blanket, fire alarm pulls, and Emergency Response Guide flip chart).

10. Maintain situational awareness. Be aware of the hazards posed by the work of others in the laboratory and any additional hazards that may result from contact between materials and chemicals from different work areas. Inform others in the laboratory aware of any special hazards associated with your work.

11. Do not use headphones or earbuds while working in the laboratory. Situational awareness is reduced to the extent that it could lead to compromised safety of the wearer and those around the wearer.

12. Always remove PPE and wash your hands thoroughly before leaving laboratory.