Safety Bulletin

November 2013

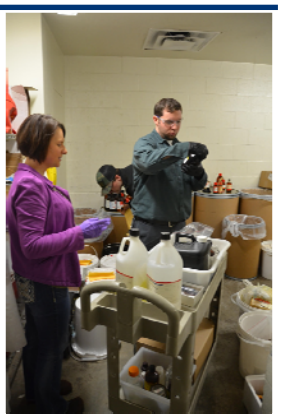
Environmental Health & Safety

What's Inside

Glove Etiquette

Gloves are an important piece of personal protective equipment (PPE) in laboratories and clinics. Along with lab coats and safety glasses, gloves complete the triad of basic safety equipment in most laboratories. As important as gloves are, they are not meant to be worn in hallways or throughout buildings in common access spaces. Gloves and other PPE that you believe could be contaminated need to be removed *before* leaving the lab and collected for disposal along with other waste materials. While it is one thing to keep non-contaminated gloves on when traveling to an adjacent laboratory or support room, wearing gloves in wider public areas (especially hallways, stairways, and elevators) is unacceptable. Even if you know the gloves are not contaminated and you are only wearing them to protect your research materials from the enzymes on your hands, it gives the appearance to others that you are handling hazardous materials and potentially spreading contamination throughout the University. If you need to transport any potentially hazardous research materials beyond your laboratory room, please ensure that they are properly packaged and contained before leaving the laboratory. For more information about gloves, other personal protective equipment, or proper containment and packaging for hazardous materials, please visit our website (ehs.yale.edu) or contact your Safety Advisor.

Chemical Clean Out Day



Yale Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) organized a Chemical Clean Out Day for the Anlyan Center laboratories on Thursday, Oct 31, 2013. All labs were allowed to bring their hazardous chemical waste to a specified room where trained disposal chemists packaged the chemical waste. As an incentive, labs did not have to write up a hazardous waste tag for each bottle or an inventory of all of the waste, since the waste was directly packaged and sent off site that day.

As part of the program, Yale EHS rewarded the lab that brought the most waste with a pizza party. The Weismann Lab TAC S320, was the winner, disposing of 423 bottles of chemical waste. In total, 15 labs participated by bringing a total of 2827 lbs of chemical waste!

This is the first chemical cleanout event hosted by Yale EHS at the Yale School of Medicine. Yale EHS has organized chemical cleanout events for the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences in spring 2013 and the Chemistry Research Building two years ago.

For more information on disposal of chemical waste, please visit:

ehs.yale.edu/chemical-waste.

Incident Report

Description: Fishy Chemical Odor in Lab

EHS received a report of a fish-like odor in a lab where there is research using amine based chemicals, which have a fishy odor. Researchers confirmed this work is done only inside a chemical fume hood. Investigation revealed that there was a low level of amines in the air in the lab.

Resolution:

There had been a very small amount of amine solution spilled in the hood earlier. The researcher cleaned up the spill appropriately, leaving the spill cleanup material in the hood, but disposed of his gloves in the regular trash. The amine odor was coming from the contaminated gloves in the trash. The trash bag was sealed and disposed of as hazardous waste.

Lessons Learned:

EHS met with the lab group to discuss fume hood safety and safe handling of amines. The importance of keeping the fume hood sash lowered and working at least 6" in from the face of the hood was discussed, as well as keeping the fume hood clear from clutter to allow it to function as designed. Spill cleanup procedures, including disposal of contaminated material and gloves, were also discussed.

EHS Info @ Your Fingertips

EHS Integrator

Home › PI Profile › Principal Activities

EHS is proud to announce the launch of EHS Integrator, a web tool for researchers. Use EHS Integrator to:

- Update your lab and assistant data
- Respond to survey findings
- Request biomedical waste pickup services
- Submit clean air device contract PTAEOs
- And much more

Other new features are in the works, including authorization submission and functionality for non-lab areas.

Click here to begin using EHS Integrator. Contact EHS at 203-785-3550 if you need help using this new web tool.

When the Power Goes Out

One of the biggest fears of any Laboratory Manager or Research Scientist is the thought of a power outage. A power outage creates the potential for loss of valuable specimens and years of research. You can lessen the effects of a power outage, and your chances of losing your hard work by being prepared and following some easy procedures.

PRE-POWER OUTAGE:

Make sure your laboratory has a contingency plan in place, and that staff members are trained on the plan. For more details on how to put together a Business Continuity Plan go to http://emergency.yale.edu/coop and click on "Guide for Laboratories". The plan should include but not be limited to:

- The location of emergency lighting (i.e. flashlights, glow sticks, etc.).
- A list of essential equipment that may be damaged by a power surge when the power is restored. Consider unplugging or turning off this equipment during the outage to avoid harmful effects when the power returns.
- A list of all of your temperature sensitive specimens and the approximate time period before the specimens will be adversely affected by the temperature rise.
- A list of all of the equipment containing your specimens (i.e. refrigerators, freezers, etc.).
- A plan to keep your specimens safe.
- The procedure should outline what to do with your specimens and how to shut down your workstation and laboratory.

WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT:

- Stay calm. Proper preparation and training regarding your contingency plan will make that much easier.
- Stop or stabilize all experiments immediately.
- Secure all chemicals that are being used.
- Turn off all heat sources (gas or electric burners) to prevent fires.
- If you are using a fume hood cap or close all containers and shut the fume hood sash to improve containment.
- Prepare all specimens for storage or securing.
- Follow the steps in your contingency plan on protecting the equipment in your laboratory.
- If the evacuation notice has been given then calmly leave the building.

WHEN POWER RETURNS:

- Follow your contingency plan regarding restarting the laboratory.
- Check for unusual odors. They could be the sign of a leak or spill.
- Check the temperatures in your cold storage units. Reset alarms if needed.
- Reset or plug in all the equipment as needed and check to make sure they are functioning properly.
- Check fume hoods for proper flow before using.
- Contact EHS if you need help with a spill or clean up.

For more details or if you have any questions or would like help with your contingency planning please contact EHS (ehswebmaster@yale.edu), Risk Management (risk.management@yale.edu) or Emergency Management (oem@yale.edu).

Phil Cundiff, Manager of Claims and Loss Control

Office of Environmental Health & Safety
135 College Street, Suite 100, New Haven, CT 06510
Telephone: 203–785-3550 / Fax: 203-785-7588
http://www.yale.edu/ehs
Director: Peter Reinhardt

EVALUATION • RESPONSE • PREVENTION
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT • TRAINING

Safety Bulletin Contributors:

Brenda Armstrong Philip Cundiff Deborah Farat Cathleen King Robert Klein Stephanie Perry

Rules of the Road

The holiday season is about spending time with family and friends, good food and laughter, and the additional amount of travel. So while the holidays can be an exciting time, here are some important things to consider to help keep you and your guests safe this season while traveling.

- Don't drive impaired by any legal or illegal drug or medication.
- Don't ask anyone who has been drinking, "Are you okay to drive?", because you know that they really aren't. Have cab numbers at hand if needed.
- Be the designated sober driver for your friends or family whenever they ask and support the sober driver in your group.
- Give your kids a safe ride home – no questions asked.
- Turn off your phone or put it out of reach when you're driving so you don't get distracted.
- Make sure everyone in your car is buckled up on every ride, day or night.
- Follow speed, red light, safe turns and all other traffic laws.
- Be a courteous commuter.
- Share the road with motorists, motorcyclists, bicyclists and pedestrians alike.

Absorbing Waste

Historically, the CT Drug Control Division and the US Drug Enforcement Administration required laboratories to dispose of expired and unwanted controlled substances by witnessed flushing into a lab sink. In response to requests from Yale EHS and after meeting with both agencies, state and federal officials have approved a modification to the disposal procedure for these materials. Now instead of drain disposal, controlled substances are returned to one of Yale EHS's waste facilities where they are opened and absorbed into vermiculite under witness by the state drug inspector. The absorbed material is then sealed in plastic and packaged for off-site incineration along with other expired drugs. Despite the dilution effect of drain discharge, this change eliminates a recognizable release to the sewer system and helps protect the downstream marine environment.