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GENERAL LABORATORY SAFETY
Self-Assessment Checklist

The Environmental Health and Safety Office encourages laboratories to conduct safety surveys of their areas on a regular basis. In order to guide you in this self-assessment, we have created a checklist of general laboratory safety items that are relevant to most research laboratories at Yale University. We encourage you to do this safety survey at least twice a year and discuss the results with others in your laboratory.

This survey does not include biological safety or radiation safety issues. Please contact your Safety Advisor if you have any questions or need assistance with these self-assessments. This self-assessment does not replace the annual laboratory safety inspections that are conducted by your Safety Advisor.

Chemical Storage and Handling	
	Label all chemical containers and equipment containing chemicals with identity of contents
	Handle volatile/hazardous chemicals inside fume hood
	Wear gloves to protect against potential skin contact – refer to section 2 in the Yale Chemical Hygiene Plan for glove material selection. Alternatives to latex, such as nitrile, should be readily available in a variety of sizes
	Wear safety glasses in the laboratory
	Wear lab coats when working with hazardous materials in the laboratory
	Use chemical carriers to transport liquid hazardous chemicals between labs
	Store chemical containers properly – not on floor, away from edges of benches
	Store flammable liquids in flammable cabinets or flammable-rated refrigerators
	Store corrosive/ flammable/ toxic liquids below eye level (~5 feet)
	Verify that all containers are labeled
	Verify that all chemical containers are in good condition
	Verify that all chemicals containers are securely covered/ closed
	Store chemicals segregated by hazard class
	Verify ethers and other peroxide-forming chemicals are dated/ not expired (1 year after receipt if an expiration date is not indicated by the manufacturer on the container). See Section 3 in the Yale Chemical Hygiene Plan for further information on peroxide formers
	Verify satellite accumulation areas are located at or near the point of generation – chemical waste cannot be transported in the hallways by laboratory staff
	Verify all chemical waste containers are closed – funnels cannot be left in waste bottle
	Label chemical waste containers properly with the words “Hazardous Waste” and the complete chemical name

Compressed Gas Safety	
	Secure gas cylinders properly, keep capped when not in use
	Segregate gas cylinders by hazard class
	Use toxic gases inside ventilated cabinets /fume hoods
	Verify CGA connections on regulators are appropriate for gas(es) in use
	Verify regulators in use are not leaking and in good condition
	Verify regulators in storage are bagged and protected from damage
	Verify cylinder change out procedure is posted at gas manifold systems

Emergency Equipment	
	Verify eyewash/shower stations easy to access and clear (16” around)
	Test/activate eyewash stations weekly
	Ensure fire extinguishers are accessible
	If flammable metals are used or stored in lab, ensure Class D fire extinguishers available
	Ensure chemical spill kit/clean up material available

Laboratory Fume Hoods	
	Keep all work and material located at least 6 inches inside fume hood
	Ensure air flow is not blocked by equipment/materials stored in hood
	Keep sash lowered/closed when not being used
	Keep sash at or below arrows when in use, as applicable – refer to Safe Use of Chemical Fume Hood sticker on hood for proper sash positioning
	Check EHS certification sticker to verify fume hood inspected within past year

Physical Safety	
	Verify furniture sturdy/appropriate
	Verify equipment set-up secure/ appropriate
	Keep aisles clear and uncluttered
	Ensure there are no trip and/or slip hazards in lab
	Verify machine guarding in place/adequate
	Verify electrical cords in good condition, not frayed
	Ensure no extension cords are used as permanent wiring