

Lesson Learned Briefing

No.: LL12-0014

Title: Housekeeping in Laboratories

Event: LBNL Event

Event Date: 10/20/2011

Category: ES&H - Chemical Hygiene

Lesson Learned Statement:

Laboratory safety inspections have shown that while work practices and knowledge of chemical hazards and controls are generally good, periodic lapses in housekeeping occur. It is important to remain vigilant about this because good housekeeping practices provide better (uncluttered) work environments and help to minimize inadvertent contact with spilled chemicals and residues.

Discussion:

In general, it is recognized that good housekeeping is conducive to laboratory safety. Controlling clutter in fume hoods and on bench tops minimizes the risk of fire and spills, and helps assure the integrity of your research. Wiping up drips on work surfaces and from chemical containers reduces the chance of inadvertent employee contact with chemicals. Maintaining aisle clearance and minimizing obstructions allow for unhindered access and egress.

Please remember to follow these simple practices:

- 1) Keep work areas clean and free of obstructions.
- 2) Wipe drips and residues from chemical containers. Clean surfaces (counter tops, bench tops, fume hoods, and floors) of drips and residues. Inadvertent skin contact with residues may cause dermal absorption, chemical burns, skin irritation, and possible accidental ingestion as a result of hand-to-mouth transfer.
- 3) Clean spilled chemicals immediately and dispose of all wastes properly. Spill cleanup procedures are found in the Chemical Hygiene and Safety Plan (CHSP), which is accessible via the Lab's A-Z index. These are also summarized in the Emergency Response Guides, which should be posted in work areas. Also remember to use secondary containment for liquids. This helps minimize the spread of spills.

- 4) Maintain access to exits, emergency eyewash and safety showers, electrical panels and emergency shut offs.
- 5) Avoid using stairways and hallways as storage areas. Store boxes, equipment and other items on shelves that have restraints to prevent these materials from falling.

Contact the Division Industrial Hygienist who provides service to your Division, if you have a question about housekeeping. Consult your Waste Generator Assistant Specialist with questions about disposal.

Priority Boxes: ORPS Reportable OSHA Recordable PAAA Other

ISM Code:

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