

Training Topics of the Month: Chemical Maintenance and Inventory

There are requirements under both OSHA and the EPA for laboratories to maintain all chemical containers in a safe manner and also to ensure that an accurate chemical inventory exists for the lab.

The first step for compliance is to ensure that **ALL** containers have a proper label.

- The label must indicate the identity of the contents, using the full, proper name(s). Sample numbers or chemical formulae are not permitted.
- Labels must not be faded, torn or otherwise unreadable. (The EPA will consider these items to be hazardous waste and fines may ensue due to improper chemical management.)
- Material in containers that are no longer in good condition or do not properly contain the chemical must be disposed of or transferred to suitable containers.
- Containers where the contents are no longer usable, either by having reacted, expired, polymerized, separated, crystallized or in any

other similar way are no longer suitable for storage and must be disposed of

- All chemical containers must be stored in suitable cabinets or shelves, and away from incompatible materials. For example, flammables in flammable storage cabinets, corrosives in corrosive storage, flammables separated from oxidizers, acids and bases separated.

Additionally, the university requires that all chemical owners maintain a current inventory in the Chemtracker system. This online system, accessible through the EH&S web page, is essential in helping the university manage its requirements regarding building code limitations, fire and emergency response, as well as locating hazardous materials.

With some great nagging and hair-pulling, most of our chemicals owners are now complying with the inventory requirements, though there are some stragglers left behind. We will evaluate inventory compliance in each lab's annual EH&S inspection.

Disposal of "Empty" Chemical Containers

At least two or three times a year, EH&S gets contacted by a panicked facilities worker, custodian or visitor who has encountered a "nearly empty" chemical container in the trash or in the hallway. They are panicked because the container label often lists serious hazards or often the container "just looks dangerous". And sometimes, they **ARE** still indeed dangerous. To prevent both real and

perceived hazards related to disposed chemical containers, please do the following:

- Empty the container as completely as possible, either by use or by disposal of the contents into a hazardous waste accumulation container appropriate for the hazard.

Laboratory Safety and Hazardous Waste Training

June 7, 2007	9:30 AM to Noon	Hamburg 1003	June 20, 2007	9:30 AM to Noon	MI 348
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To register, go to: http://ehs-alert.fms.bap.cmu.edu/EHSWebSite/Training/ClassDescriptons/training_laboratory_safety.htm

- For water soluble materials, rinse the remaining traces of chemical into the sink with COPIOUS amounts of water. If the material is a high hazard item, omit this last step and turn the container itself in as hazardous waste.
- Remove, obliterate or obscure the container label. Alternatively, you can mark the container label "clean and empty".
- The cleaned, unidentifiable container may be then placed in a glass recycling container, or in

your broken glass container (regardless of whether it is broken or not).

Please contact EH&S with any questions you may have about this important process.

Did you know that PYREX lab glass is NOT recyclable? The processes used to make PYREX render it unsuitable for standard glass reprocessing.

Hazardous Waste Pick-up Schedule		
Mellon Institute	June 5, 19, July 2, 17, 31	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Wean and Doherty Halls	June 5, 19, July 2, 17, 31	12:30 PM to 3:30 PM
All other main campus locations	June 6, July 3	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM
PTC	June 6, July 3	12:30 PM to 3:30 PM
Penn Ave., Robotics Consortium	Aug 29	
Computers	June 7, July 5	

To request a waste pick-up or receive waste labels or tags, go to:
http://ehs-alert.fms.bap.cmu.edu/EHSWebSite/Waste_Recycling/HazardousWaste.htm

Summer Interns

Do you have interns/students this summer in your laboratories? Temporary workers are often most prone to accidents and injuries in the laboratory due to the inexperience many of them have with the lab environment. Please take extra caution to ensure that they have been advised of the hazards particular to your laboratory, that they have the proper safety equipment (goggles, lab coats, gloves) necessary for their work, and that they understand our prohibitions on eating in lab areas and wearing open toed shoes or sandals in the lab.

Also, since the interns are paid, they are employees under OSHA regulations and **MUST** receive Lab Safety and Hazardous Waste Generator training from EH&S. We have trained a number of department's interns already, but if we have missed your interns, they must attend one of our regularly-scheduled training classes (see the bottom of the first page of this newsletter.)

