

FACT SHEET

General Laboratory Safety Rules

Listed are some basic guidelines for maintaining a safe laboratory environment.

1. To ensure that help is available if needed, do not work alone if using hazardous materials or performing hazardous procedures.
 2. To ensure that help is available in case of emergencies, laboratory personnel should not deviate from the assigned work schedule without prior authorization from the laboratory supervisor.
 3. Do not perform unauthorized experiments.
 4. Plan appropriate protective procedures and the positioning of all equipment before beginning any operation. Follow the appropriate standard operating procedures at all times in the laboratory.
 5. Always read the SDS and the label before using a chemical in the laboratory.
 6. Wear appropriate PPE, including a laboratory apron or coat, at all times in the laboratory. Everyone, including visitors, must wear appropriate eye protection in areas where laboratory chemicals are used or stored.
 7. Wear appropriate gloves when handling hazardous materials. Inspect all gloves for holes and defects before using.
 8. Use appropriate ventilation such as laboratory chemical hoods when working with hazardous chemicals.
 9. Contact your supervisor or the EHS office if you have questions about the adequacy of the safety equipment available or chemical handling procedures.
 10. Know the location and proper use of the safety equipment (i.e., eyewash unit, safety shower, fire extinguisher, first-aid kit, fire blanket, emergency telephone, and fire alarm pulls).
 11. 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.
 12. Make others in the laboratory aware of any special hazards associated with your work.
 13. Report all injuries, accidents, incidents, and near misses to your supervisor and complete the Employers First Report of Injury form through Human Resources.
 14. For liability, safety, and security reasons, do not allow unauthorized persons in the laboratory.
 15. Report any unsafe conditions to the laboratory supervisor.
 16. Properly dispose of all chemical wastes. Follow University policies for drain and trash disposal of chemicals.
 17. No pets are permitted in the laboratory. Note that service animals are not pets. They are highly trained and may be present in a laboratory. However, a clean, safe area should be provided where the animal can wait.
- To prevent some common laboratory accidents:**
1. Always protect hands with appropriate gloves when cutting glass tubing. To avoid breakage, do not attempt to dry glassware by inserting a glass rod wrapped with paper towels. Always lubricate glassware with soap or glycerin before inserting rods, tubing, or thermometers into stoppers.
 2. To reduce the chances of injuries from projectiles, when heating a test tube or other apparatus, never point the apparatus toward yourself or others.
 3. Be sure that glassware has cooled before touching it. Hot glass looks just like cold glass.
 4. Dilute concentrated acids and bases by slowly pouring the acid or base into the water while stirring.