

Spring Term 07: Chemistry Department Safety Memorandum

- **Enforcement of PPE safety policy in teaching laboratories**

It has come to our attention that a minority of instructional staff and graduate student TA's are not adequately enforcing rules concerning the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in teaching laboratories. It is vital that all personnel engaged in any kind of laboratory teaching role lead by example and wear appropriate PPE in the labs and also play their part in the consistent enforcement of departmental safety policy. Any undergraduates spotted flouting PPE safety rules (safety goggles not correctly in place for example), should be brought into line immediately. Disciplinary action will be taken against instructors/TA's not taking this duty of care responsibility seriously.
- **Moratorium on distribution of potentially hazardous chemical samples in classrooms**

Demonstrations of chemical experiments during class play a valuable role in enhancing the educational experience we offer to our students; however, while such activities are to be encouraged, they must never endanger the student participants. A recent incident involving an accidental chemical release during a class in Gilbert 124 has highlighted the risks of allowing chemical substances to be passed around among students. In future, demonstrations in classrooms involving potentially hazardous chemicals must be confined to the front bench only. The appropriate venue for students to gain first hand knowledge of chemicals is within a teaching laboratory, where proper PPE and engineering controls are available, not within a classroom environment.
- **Conveyance of waste materials via the Gilbert Addition elevator: Revision to policy**

The Gilbert Addition elevator may now be used at anytime on Monday's during Spring, Summer, or Fall Term for the purpose of conveying non-chemically contaminated waste down to the dumpsters. On other weekdays, and for MTWRF during Winter Term, the posted restrictions on the use of this elevator for all but personal transport, apply as before. Please make sure that all empty solvent containers are properly aired and free from solvent residues before they are taken out for disposal.
- **Over-crowding in lecture rooms**

Over-crowding in our larger lecture rooms continues to be a problem. Instructors, to avoid over-crowding, please remind students that they should attend only their assigned class sections whenever possible. If severe (and potentially dangerous) over-crowding is routinely encountered, we suggest checking random student IDs to confirm that only legitimate students are present during a given class section. The Safety Committee are monitoring the situation and welcome input from instructors on how we may best tackle this difficult issue.
- **Glove and laboratory coat use**

Laboratory personal protective equipment provides a common vector for the spread of chemical contamination. Please remember to remove gloves and lab coats when leaving laboratories and roaming elsewhere in the building. Be especially mindful not to contaminate door knobs and elevator buttons with dirty gloves (an all too common occurrence).