Lab Safety Awareness for Non-Laboratory Personnel

Duke University
Occupational & Environmental Safety Office
Objective

- Potential Lab Hazards
  - Biological
  - Chemical
  - Radiological
  - Physical Hazards
- Emergency Procedures
- Spill Procedures
Hazard Signage
(Biohazards)

- Indicates that potentially infectious materials are utilized
- Doorway sign may include the identity of the agent, the name & contact information of a responsible person, and any requirements for entry
Hazard Signage
(Chemical Hazards)

- Chemical container labels
- Doorways
- Storage cabinets

- Hazard Classes
  - Flammables
  - Corrosives
  - Reactives
  - Poisons

- Chemical Hygiene Plan and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) available
Office Products
(i.e. toner, markers, Windex, air-fresheners)

- May contain a hazardous component
  - if used according to label, should not pose a significant health risk to the user
- Material Safety Data Sheets are not required
Hazard Signage
(Radiological Hazards)

- Typically indicates the use of radioisotopes
Physical Hazards

- Wet floors
- Electrical hazards
- Burns
- Back injuries
- Trip hazards
- UV lights (sunburns)
- Others…
Lab Worker Responsibilities

- Maintain a safe work area!
- Establish (and follow) safety protocols with all hazardous materials
  - Includes entry and exit requirements
- Segregate regulated (hazardous) waste from regular trash
- Make decisions on the proper handling of spills
- Communicate potential lab hazards to any non-lab personnel (i.e. housekeepers, visitors)
Non-Lab Worker Responsibilities

(when entering a lab)

- Enter labs only when necessary, preferably when lab personnel are present
- Review hazard warning signage, and follow any noted entry requirements
- Do not hesitate to ask questions
- Notify lab staff of any concerns (i.e. spills)
- Wash hands before exiting lab if you have touched anything
Non-Lab Worker Responsibilities
(when providing maintenance services)

- Speak with a laboratory representative about the potential hazards
- Get a *Hazardous Work Permit* thru OESO: 684-8822
Non-Lab Worker Responsibilities
(when providing housekeeping services)

- Wear gloves when pulling trash
- Pull the trash bag and replace with new one
- Notify lab representative when inappropriate waste disposal is found (i.e. sharps in regular trash)
- Don’t hesitate to ask questions!
Exposure Procedures

- Wash the affected area with soap and water
  - Except for eye exposures (flush using eyewash)
- Notify a responsible laboratory representative
  - May need to clean up spill, or to implement some other emergency procedure
- Notify your supervisor
- Complete Occupational Injury or Illness Form
  http://www.hr.duke.edu/forms/injury.html
Emergency Procedures

- For all emergencies, you may dial 911 for immediate access to Duke Police
- Find a laboratory representative
Spill Procedures

- Report identified spills immediately to a laboratory representative.
- Remove yourself from the area since the spilled material may be volatile and pose an inhalation risk to you.
- Lab representative will determine whether to clean-up spill or request “outside” help.
Wash Your Hands!

- Before exiting the lab and immediately if hands are believed to be contaminated
- Perhaps the most effective way of preventing cross-contamination of work areas
- Proven method for infection control
OESO- Lab Safety Program

684-8822