

One of the ways in which the Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety accomplishes its mission to promote the health and safety of the Case Western Reserve Community and its environment is by maintaining its website as a resource for faculty, students, lab volunteers, and university employees. The website is a collaborative effort undertaken by the entire staff at DOES through which the department endeavors to give you everything from basic safety instructions to the most up-to-date radiation, biological, and chemical safety information—all at your fingertips.

For example, the DOES website presents Material Safety Data Sheets on current construction projects as well as announcements about new emergency evacuation plans and opportunities for training online. Did you know, for instance, that if you have questions about biohood testing, serviceMaterpjeccue -teeod rencv,7tl6ec9cuatio,

Eating Food in the Lab--A Dangerous and Illegal Habit

“Federal and Ohio State Laws prohibit food and drink in all Case Laboratory areas...

Violation of this law and Case policy is a serious offense and can result in suspension of laboratory activities and privileges.”

While a little snack or drink may seem harmless enough, in the lab these items can be deadly. Ingestion is the primary means by which chemical, radiological, and biohazardous materials enter the human body. Federal and Ohio laws prohibit food and drinks in ALL Case laboratory areas. OSHA Reg.29 CFR 1910.1450, page 494, E.1.d. specifically states, “Avoid eating, drinking, smoking, gum chewing, or application of cosmetics in areas where laboratory chemicals are present.” This includes standard laboratory, warm rooms, equipment rooms, common use and other laboratory-related areas.

The reasoning behind this regulation is simple: accidental **fatal** ingestion or contamination of food can occur **easily** without realizing it, no matter how careful you are.

In order to ensure your compliance with these rules, make sure these guidelines are followed:

- **Establish well-defined areas** for storage and consumption of food and beverages. This must be in a FOOD-ONLY area. There can be no chemicals in this area whatsoever.
- **All food or drink used for research purposes** (dried milk, iodized salt, etc.) must be clearly labeled as follows:

“NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION”

- **Prominently mark any area** where food is permitted and post a warning sign (e.g. **EATING AREA--NO CHEMICALS!**). No chemicals or lab equipment should be allowed in this area.
- **Never use glassware or utensils** to prepare or consume food or drink that have been used for laboratory operations. Similarly, laboratory refrigerators, ice chests, and cold rooms should never be used for food storage unless clearly designated for this purpose and kept off-limits for the storage of chemicals, blood or blood by-products, and radioactive materials.

Food, drinks and their corresponding containers found in laboratory areas will be confiscated and disposed of as biohazardous waste. Moreover, anyone found in violation of this law will be reported to the Chairman and Primary Investigator in charge of the area where the policy violation occurred. Violation of this law and Case policy is a serious offense and can result in suspension of laboratory activities and privileges.

Safety should be the first priority of all members of the Case research community. If you note violations of this policy, please respond promptly by contacting DOES at 368-2907.

Compliance Issues: Reminders

General Training: The Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety offers many classes that are not only mandated by the University but also by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). You must make sure that your training is up-to-date and that it is renewed annually. General training classes include Lab Safety, Standard and Regulated Chemicals, Bloodborne Pathogens, Respirator Training, and Shipping, Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations.

DOT Training: The Department of Transportation (DOT) requires specific training for those that ship or receive materials defined by DOT as “hazardous.” This training must be renewed every three years. DOES offers in-house DOT training.

Outside Contractors: Contractors must be made aware of all hazards when working in unfamiliar environments. Contact DOES if there is a need to have equipment removed or discarded. Also, make sure to ask if there is a need to have any area monitored for hazards, e.g., chemical, radiation, or safety.

Safety Plans: Does Your Lab Need a Chemical Hygiene or Exposure Control Plan?

If you think that your safety plan may need to be updated, your first course of action should be to contact DOES. By visiting our website at does.case.edu, you may access a link for “Forms/Manuals.” Here you will find all the important Chemical Safety and Radiation Safety materials you will need.

Of particular importance are the documents which allow you to detail the safety procedures in use in your specific laboratory: The Chemical Hygiene Plan and the Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens. The goal of these documents is to provide the necessary guidance to the employees required to maintain a safe work environment through the avoidance of physical and health hazards related to working with chemicals and bloodborne pathogens. Both Chemical Hygiene and Exposure Control Plans must be updated on a yearly basis. Plans also need to be updated whenever there is a major change in the process and/or new hazards are introduced.

Updated plans which include all changes should be submitted to the Safety Department at DOES. These forms and other required information should be completed by the lab PI and returned to the DOES office, as well as provided to the laboratory staff.

“The Chemical Hygiene Plan and the Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens—The goal of these documents is to provide the necessary guidance to the employees required to maintain a safe work environment through the avoidance of physical and health hazards related to working with chemicals and bloodborne pathogens.”

“Timely reporting to DOES is key to the proper documentation of all accidents, near-misses, and incidents... If a report is not filled out properly and in a timely fashion, it may lead to fines from OSHA or unpaid insurance claims.”

***As always, consult our website (<http://does.case.edu>) for a full schedule of training sessions**

New Radiation Safety Training

DOES conference room - Service Building 1st Floor

PREREGISTRATION IS *REQUIRED* ! - Please call 368-2906

Wednesday, October 12, 2005, 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 27, 2005, 9:00 a.m.

The separation of background scintillation vials from radioactive scintillation vials is a very important step in reducing costs. When laboratories contact the Radiation Safety Office at DOES regarding scintillation

DOES STAFF

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