





## What a WASTE!

### Styrofoam: How and Where?

Chemicals shipped to us from various scientific companies often come in styrofoam coolers with return postage and labeling included. Take these coolers to the Mail Room located in the Cedar Service Building to be sent back.

Note that this is the only mail room that has the capacity to handle these containers. The mail room in the Medical School, for instance, is just a sorting facility and is not large enough to handle this kind of shipping or receiving.

If a hazardous chemical was shipped in a cooler, any labels designating the container as hazardous must be removed or defaced. If the chemical bottle broke inside the cooler, it cannot be sent back -- contact DOES for proper disposal procedures if this occurs.

We encourage all researchers to mail back as many of these containers as possible. Since return postage is already included, it costs nothing to mail them back, and saves a lot of room in landfills, where such containers can take 500 years to decompose. This goes for styrofoam and EPS packing -- send them back!

### Fluorescent Bulbs

You may hate their cold, unearthly glow, but fluorescent bulbs are a part of CWRU. But did you know that ALL fluorescent bulbs contain a small amount of mercury? Since mercury is a dangerous and regulated material, **fluorescent bulbs cannot be thrown in the trash** when they burn out -- the mercury within them must either be recycled or disposed of in an environmentally-sound way.

The University does have a recycling program in place to take care of these bulbs. You should take your burned-out bulbs and put them in a box (somewhere safe) where they will not be broken. When Plant Services comes to replace the bulbs, they will pick up the old ones for you. If the bulb in question is a high-power lab light -- give to DOES for disposal.

If a bulb has already broken, exercise some caution (gloves) when cleaning it up, and **DO NOT** throw away in the regular trash -- put it in a rigid box and notify Plant Services (x2580).

## Radioactive Iodine: Reducing Volatility



The dangers of radioactive iodine are well-known: from its everyday capacity as a severe skin irritant to its propensity for thyroid damage in its radioactive state, iodine in any form should be as respected as it is scientifically-useful. If you use radioactive iodine in your lab, there are some steps you can take to make its waste less dangerous.

Often, I-125 and I-131 solutions in the form of sodium iodide are used to label proteins and peptides. Once labeled, these molecules (though still requiring appropriate precautions) are relatively safe. However, the waste solutions resultant of radioactive labeling are NOT.

Any waste solution which contains free iodine is dangerous for several reasons:

*(continued on next page)*

## Upcoming Training Sessions

### Radiation (x2906)

- New Training: March 14, 29 (call for times)
- Retraining: March 7, 22 (call for times)
- X-ray Training: call office to set up training

### Chemical (x2907)

- OSHA Lab Standard: Mondays 1-3 (Service Building Conference Room)

### Bloodborne Pathogen (x2907)

- New Training: Mondays 3-4 (Service Building Conference Room)
- Retraining: March 15, March 21 (call for times -- Service Building Conference Room)

Don't forget: rad re-training is now also ONLINE at our website: <http://does.cwru.edu>.

As always, call us for upcoming dates and times.



## HOT TIPS



### Read the Signs

If you work with or store radioactive materials, you should see signs and labels posted on all required equipment. Do you? There has been some concern lately about who issues safety labels; specifically, radiation safety labels.

Proper signage is a vital component of any safe lab and **is required** for all chemical, biological, and physical hazards. The following general sequence has been informally adopted by DOES





### The Envelope Please...

It's that time of year again: when your favorite movies (and some French subtitled one you never heard of) get nominated for various awards and honors. But instead of going to see these movies, why not also hold your own Safety Film Festival in your lab? DOES has a wide variety of films to choose from that can address any safety issue you might have -- often in colorful, exciting ways. Here is a sampling of titles and run times:

#### Fire Safety

How Fast it Burned (dorm fires): 22 min.  
 Fight Fire With Prevention: 12 min.  
 Fire Extinguishers: Fight or Flight?: 17 min.

#### Confined Space Entry

Danger Within: 12 min.  
 The Confined Space Entry Series

#### Electrical Safety

Shocking Experience: 12 min.

Electricity: Unseen Danger: 22 min.  
 Electrical Safety (OSHA Standard): 24 min.

#### Chemical Safety

Practicing Safe Science: 20 min.  
 Reactive and Explosive Materials  
 Commitment to Safety: 15 min.  
 Working with Hazardous Materials: 10 min.  
 The Safety Deck: 26 min.  
 Hazardous Materials Transportation: 20 min

#### Right-to-Know

Hazardous Communication Training

#### Bloodborne Pathogen Safety

BPs: The OSHA Standard  
 BP Training for the Lab (retraining): 9 min.

So they may not have the most accomplished actors or the best special effects, but you will leave having learned something. Can you honestly say the same about *Pokemon*?

All of these films and more are available to lend out to labs or departments. Call us or stop by and make it a DOES Safety Video Night.

## Monitor your MONITOR:

### Tips for Reducing Computer-Related Eyestrain



Eyestrain is a common ailment for anyone working with things up-close, whether they be test tube or a computer screen. Besides the obvious (getting an eye exam -- annually after age 40!), there are a few ways to reduce computer-related eyestrain all by yourself.

1. **Vampires Don't Have Eyestrain.** Turn your monitor off and examine the dark screen for reflection -- and arrange your environment to minimize them. Can you see **yourself**? If you can, remove your image by reducing the general light level (ambient illumination). This is (unfortunately) near impossible with fluorescent lights, but remember the upswing of fluorescence -- the bright light is essential for the body to maintain its 24-hr. rhythms during the grey Cleveland winters.
2. **"Surround" Yourself.** A color scientist or video engineer uses the term "surround" to refer to the area that is perceived by your peripheral vision. Try to establish a visual surround that is quite a bit darker than the brightest white of your screen. Try also to have a visual reference to the outside world (such as a window) nearby. For many of us, this is a fantasy. So put up a picture of your dog instead.
3. **See No Pixel.** Just like photographs (or pictures of Superman) are reproduced using tiny dots, so are computer screen pictures and text -- but if you can see them you are too close! Arm's length is a good rule of thumb. If not, try a larger font or increase your viewing size percentage.
4. **Brightness is Blackness.** Anything you can do to make the screen blacker will reduce eyestrain. Switch your monitor on, turn the Picture control all the way down, and display a picture that contains as much absolute black as possible. Also use a black desktop background or a screensaver that displays mostly black. If your central screen is lighter than the margins, you have a black level problem -- adjust the display's Black Level control (misleadingly labeled Brightness) and adjust your white level accordingly so that its not *completely* dark.

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**Safety News For the Campus Community**