

LABORATORY SAFETY COMMITTEE

July 12, 2012

TO: All Laboratory Personnel

FROM: John Park, Laboratory Safety Committee

SUBJECT: July 9, 2012 Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Participants: Peggy Campbell, Anne Chandler, Joe Jurgevich, Heather Morgan, Max Overman, John Park, Mark Starr, Beth Swanson

CHP Revision 2012: For this year's revision of the laboratory's Chemical Hygiene Plan (CHP), John said that he, Max, and Anne will do the review and edits. When a final draft is ready, it will be submitted to any committee members that would like to review the draft or specific sections of the CHP.

Fume hoods: There was discussion about the ASHRAE certification of the lab's fume hoods following the completion of the lab renovations. The ASHRAE hood tests were conducted by ECT, and involved a combination of air flow measurement, visual smoke test, and tracer gas test (with mannequin). For each fume hood, labels were placed at the sash door height at which full containment was certified. Also, for each hood there is a label with information from the ASHRAE test.

The older Hamilton fume hoods, which were retrofitted during the renovation project, were certified for full containment at the approximate mid-point for the sash door. This raises a safety issue, since the sash doors for these hoods have to be nearly full open during analytical set-up procedures (e.g., extraction, distillation). But with the sash door at full open, full containment is not guaranteed. So there will need to be an assessment of how to provide full protection for lab personnel using these hoods when working with hazardous chemicals and solvents. Several ideas were discussed, including possible ways to use the glass sash doors, filtration masks, and possibly using different extraction procedures.

Note: We will be working with ECT to see if the Hamilton fume hoods can be re-tested and certified at a higher sash door position. The current level is about 15 to 16 inches (from hood counter to bottom of sash door). If a sash door height of 22 to 24 inches could provide full containment, then that would allow easier access to the hood counter-top while providing full containment.

Accident report: Anne reported that there was an accident in the extraction area in June. The employee cut his hand while washing glassware. The wound was cleaned and bandaged, but the following day the employee was sent to an immediate care facility to have the wound further checked. The appropriate forms were completed to document the accident and initiate Worker's Comp, and the completed forms were sent to Steve Kaasa.

Solvent Waste Drums: The 2 solvent waste drums and some old chemicals from the acid storage room were removed for disposal in June. Two new drums were installed.

Weather Radios: Two new weather radios were purchased; one radio was placed in the certification modular building, and the second radio was placed in the front office of the lab building.

Fire Alarm: The fire alarm for the laboratory building sounded on June 20; the alarm was activated due to low water pressure in the fire suppression line. Everyone evacuated the building within about 30 seconds. It was observed that the fume hood motors decrease its pull by about 50% when the alarm sounds, then returns to normal when the alarm is reset. Employees returned to the building when cleared to do so by the Raleigh Fire Department. It was also discovered that the fire alarm can barely be heard in the chlorophyll dark room, so that will need to be fixed. Note that this is an add-on for the minutes – this wasn't discussed at the meeting.

A reminder to safety committee members: checks of the safety devices for each lab unit should be conducted and documented on a monthly basis. This includes eyewashes, safety showers, fire extinguishers, and smoke detectors. For safety hoods, please check every three months with the velometer (located in John's office).

The next safety committee meeting is scheduled for August 13th, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. Minutes were prepared by Max Overman and John Park on July 10, 2012. MO/JP