LAB SAFETY UPDATE FALL 2021

RECENT LAB COAT RELATED INJURIES
Two researchers were injured recently in separate incidents. In both cases they were not wearing the appropriate PPE while working in the lab. **Chemical Exposure:** A researcher was preparing chemicals for disposal when the lid to a chemical powder container opened. The contents of the chemical container spread onto the researcher’s face and arms causing redness and irritation to the throat. The researcher was not wearing a lab coat. **Glass Cut:** A glass column in a fume hood ruptured during use. A glass shard of the column struck the worker in the arm causing a gash. The worker was not wearing a lab coat at the time. Lab coats and proper PPE must be worn at all times when in a laboratory. Always contact EHS Lab Safety in the event of a lab-related injury or near-miss.

INCIDENT DATABASE
Introducing the new Incident Investigation Database! This system is used by students, employees, researchers, contractors, and visitors to notify safety professionals of injuries, illnesses, property damage, spills, and near misses on campus. Upon notification, we will follow up on the incident to find ways of preventing similar occurrences. Help make safety a priority at UT Austin by notifying us of hazards you see. Incidents may be reported anonymously. See the EHS website or the QR code at the bottom of this page.

SUBPART K
EHS is expecting to adopt new waste management regulations specific to academic laboratories by January 2022. What does this mean for you?

- A new OH 202 Hazardous Waste Management training will be offered and required.
- A laboratory waste management plan will be provided by EHS, as part of the laboratory safety manual and a stand-alone document.
- Laboratory waste will be required to be submitted at least every six months. Accumulation start date is already required on each waste container.

WASTE WATER PERMIT
UT Austin’s wastewater permit prohibits chemicals from entering the drain. Please collect chemicals in the appropriate containers and dispose of them by submitting a disposal request to EHS.

Contact EHS for questions at 512-471-3511.

Do your part to keep UT Austin compliant!

INCIDENT NOTIFICATIONS

LAB SAFETY QUESTIONS
512-471-3511
EHS-Labstaff@austin.utexas.edu

ILLEGAL AND UNETHICAL ACTIVITY REPORTING
877-507-7321
reportlineweb.com/utaustin
(Answered 24/7 - 3rd party operated)
NITRIC ACID INCIDENT

There have now been THREE incidents involving expired nitric acid. In one instance, a researcher picked up the plastic bottle of nitric acid from a fume hood when the handle broke off in their hand. The bottle fell to the floor, splashing some acid onto the researcher’s leg. In the two other incidents, the handle fell off the container when the researcher attempted to move the bottle, resulting in an acid spill onto the floor.

In all three cases, the container was past its expiration date by about two years. Regularly inspect chemical containers for proper condition and expiration dates. Promptly submit for disposal any chemicals that are past their expiration dates. A detailed notice about nitric acid containers is available on the EHS website.

PROPER SHARPS DISPOSAL

Reminder to everyone who works with sharps (needles, razor blades, etc.)!! These items should only be disposed of in a sharps container. There have been instances of sharps being thrown into regular trash cans. This can cause an injury and exposure to custodial staff. Do not throw sharps into trashcans: only throw them into proper sharps containers.

UT HERD AND ELECTRONIC WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEM (EMS)

EHS is pleased to announce the launch of two new web-based applications. UT Hazard Evaluation and Risk Database (UT HERD) has replaced EHS Assistant. The new database is easier to navigate and has a more user-friendly interface.

Environmental Management Systems (EMS) moves the submission of chemical waste requests to an online process and allows users to check on the status of submitted requests. See our webpage for more details. We welcome any feedback.

CHEMICALLY VS BIOLOGICALLY CONTAMINATED BROKEN GLASS

We have received questions regarding disposal of broken glass. Here is an easy breakdown of how to properly dispose of broken glass.

- Broken glassware that was not being used or contaminated by chemicals or biological material – Goes into the broken glass boxes provided by Custodial Services.
- Broken glassware that contained hazardous chemicals – goes in its own solid waste container and is immediately tagged as a chemical waste and a request for pick up is submitted through EMS.
- Broken glassware that was being used with biological material – goes in a sharps container and is submitted for pick up as a biological waste.

If you do not have an available empty sharps container for chemically contaminated glass waste, contact EHS.