

# Safety Notes

Newsletter #11

JULY 2000

## LAB INSPECTIONS

**As some of you may have noticed, a team of safety specialists has been inspecting the research laboratories recently. The reasons for these inspections are many.**

First, it is mandated in state law (California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5191) that "formal housekeeping and chemical hygiene inspections should be held" periodically; "informal inspections should be continual." Secondly, new State of California legislation (AB 1127), which went into effect January 1, 2000, has expanded the authority of the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA). As a result of this legislation, the University and other state agencies are no longer exempt, as they had been previously, from Cal/OSHA monetary penalties that may be imposed for issues of non-compliance. Under the new legislation, Cal/OSHA can impose fines up to \$7,000 for each "non-serious" and up to \$25,000 for each "serious" health and safety violation. Departments whose activities lead to a citation will be responsible for any penalties

imposed on UCLA. Other institutions of higher learning such as Stanford, Yale, University of Georgia and Georgetown have had steep fines imposed from EPA inspections.

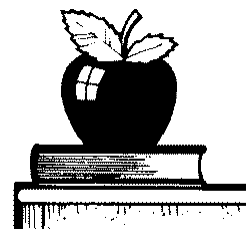
### INSPECTIONS:



Labs are inspected for compliance with regulatory and UCLA standards. Most of the standards are contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, General Industry Safety Orders and Title 19, State Fire Marshal and in the Environmental Protection Agency, Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40. Some of the requirements are Departmental and help in assessing the conditions of the laboratories.

The ten major categories inspected for are:

1. **Emergency and Safety Information**
2. **Safety Equipment and Supplies**
3. **Hazard Communication**
4. **Housekeeping/ Personal Protection**
5. **Chemical Waste Disposal and Transport**
6. **Chemical Storage/ Compatibility**
7. **Fume Hoods**
8. **Fire Safety**



9. **Seismic Safety**
10. **Mechanical and Electrical Safety**

Of these ten categories, the department is responsible for maintaining some of the items, while the laboratory is responsible for the other categories. A laboratory survey checklist is available from the Chemical Safety Office, and can be used to self inspect before the actual inspection takes place, or as a guide for self-improvement.

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### The Top Seven Most Frequent “Violations”

Of the approximately 50 laboratories inspected so far, the most common items not in compliance with our guidelines were:

1. **First Aid kit present and stocked** - Each laboratory should have a small first aid kit in each laboratory. It should be stocked with commonly used items in case of cuts, burns etc. in the lab. The department maintains some minimal supplies in the first aid kits in the corridors.
2. **Chemical spill material or spill kit available** – Each laboratory should have some material available to clean up spills in their laboratory. Usually, small containers of sodium bicarbonate and citric acid are sufficient to clean up acidic and basic spills. Vermiculite should be kept on hand to absorb liquids.
3. **Containers labeled.** – Containers used for stock solutions, solvents, mixtures, transfer containers etc. must be labeled with the following specific information:  
The name of the chemical – written out, not abbreviations or structures.  
The concentration – expressed as %, molarity, normality, etc.  
The date solution was prepared  
The initials of the person preparing it  
The hazard warning associated with it. – i.e. flammable, corrosive, reactive, toxic.  
An exception is made for small vials or research products, where either the label won't fit on the container or the name,

or concentration is not known. In these cases, each container should have a unique number assigned to it and that number should be used to explain the requirements in a notebook.

4. **Annual training, inspections, accidents documented.** Many of the OSHA regulations are concerned with documentation. In many cases, the documentation is very important. For laboratories, a notebook, or logbook should be kept for administrative actions. It should include the accident record for a laboratory, the inspections performed, training given to research groups. For example, when personnel receive training in respirator use, or when the lab gets inspected, or when researchers give training to undergraduates, it should be documented. Finishing the first year safety course should be documented! A notebook can be set up near the other safety information in the lab.



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5. **Waste cans and containers properly labeled and dated.** The chemical waste containers must have a tag or label with the words “Hazardous Waste” attached to it. There must be a method of keeping track of what goes into each container and how much of each chemical is in the container. A good way to keep track is to maintain a separate form, where the identification, amount of each addition, and the date waste is first placed into the container is listed. For disposal, the information must be transferred to a Hazardous Waste Identification Tag and the container disposed of through the Chemical Safety Office or through the EH&S technicians. Solvent waste is collected Tuesday and Friday mornings, 9:00 - 9:25 am.
6. **High overhead storage is secured.** - Only empty boxes should be stored on top of cabinets or in high places. All other items should be stored in lower cabinets or shelves.
7. **Equipment, cabinets, etc. should be anchored or restrained.** - Tall equipment or furniture such as bookcases, tall file cabinets, flammable storage cabinets, etc. must be anchored to the wall for seismic safety. Equipment in danger of falling in an earthquake should also be secured. Contact the Operations Manager, Ron Baron, to request anchoring or restraining of furniture and equipment.

Any questions pertaining to the inspections or requirements? Please contact Bill Peck, Chemical Safety Officer at extension 6-3661.