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School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide

September 2007

Risk Control Bulletin

Recognition of laboratory safety and health problems has crystallized since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. This Act requires that certain precautions be observed to protect the safety and health of employees on the job. The employee designation includes all teachers employed by private and public school systems in states that have occupational safety and health plans accepted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the US Department of Labor (DOL). OSHA rules and regulations are provided to protect the employees and the facilities.

The importance of laboratory safety has been recognized for many years in industry. However, educational institutions have been slower to adopt such safety practices and programs.

An activity-oriented science program has potential dangers. With careful planning, however, most dangers can be avoided. Everyone involved – principal, teacher and student – must develop a positive approach to a safe and healthful environment in the laboratory. Safety and the enforcement of safety regulations and laws in the science classroom and laboratory require that everyone assumes their appropriate share of responsibility. Safety and health should be an integral part of the planning, preparation and implementation of any science program.

Below is the foreword to the recently updated "School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide", with a link to the guide itself.

In 1984, the Council of State Science Supervisors, in association with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, published the safety guide *School Science Laboratories: A Guide to Some Hazardous Substances* to help science teachers identify hazardous substances that may be used in school laboratories and provide an inventory of these substances.

Because school science curricula have changed since then, the safety guide has been updated and revised to reflect those changes. This guide on safety in the chemistry laboratory was also written to provide high school chemistry teachers with an easy-to-read reference to create a safe learning environment in the laboratory for their students. The document attempts to provide teachers, and ultimately their students, with information so that *they* can take the appropriate precautionary actions in order to prevent or minimize hazards, harmful exposures, and injuries in the laboratory.

The guide presents information about ordering, using, storing, and maintaining chemicals in the high school laboratory. The guide also provides information about chemical waste, safety and emergency equipment, assessing chemical hazards, common safety symbols and signs, and fundamental resources relating to chemical safety, such as Material Safety Data Sheets and Chemical Hygiene Plans, to help create a safe environment for learning. In addition, checklists are provided for both teachers and students that highlight important information for working in the laboratory and identify hazards and safe work procedures. This guide is not intended to address all safety issues, but rather to provide basic information about important components of safety in the chemistry laboratory and to serve as a resource to locate further information.

Above foreword by:
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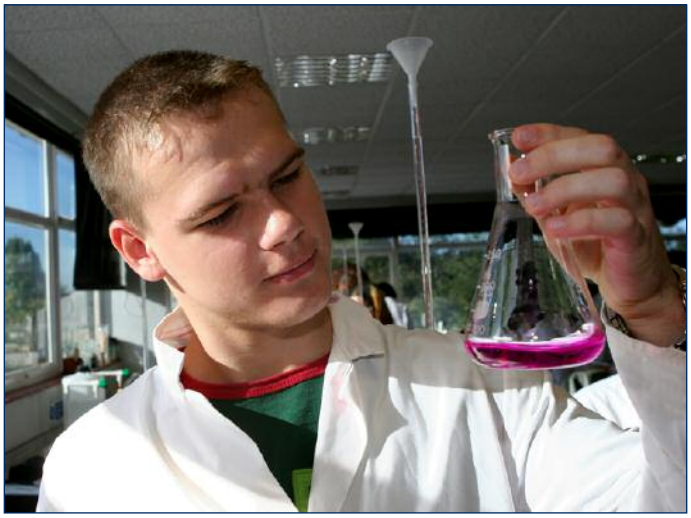
Web Link
Click on the following link to obtain the complete "School Chemistry Laboratory Safety Guide":
http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-107/pdfs/2007-107.pdf



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