Emergency and Accident Procedures

Emergencies and accidents are never planned, but as researchers, we can be prepared for the potential disasters that we may encounter. This month’s Safety Gram will focus on preparing for the emergencies, accidents, and injuries that may occur in our labs.

All injuries and incidents need to be reported within 24 hours (see page 2 for procedures on lab accident reports). All fires, injuries, and spills (4+L) need to be reported as soon as possible, even if they are minor and require no further action. Some of the individuals injured during an accident should be accompanied to the Health Center.

Chemical, Biological, or Radioactive Spills
- Alert all persons nearby.
- Use the emergency shower or hose for at least 15 minutes on any exposed area. Remove any contaminated clothing to minimize further exposure.
- Always consult the chemical’s Safety Data Sheet (SDS) when deciding whether or not to seek medical attention. When in doubt, seek medical attention.
- If you have spilled a small amount, know that the substance is of minimal hazard, and can clean it up, do so. If not, report the spill as soon as possible.

Exposure to a Bloodborne Pathogen
- Exposure can occur from broken skin, eye, mucous membrane, needle sticks, human bites, cuts, and abrasions.
- If potential exposure happens, clean the wound thoroughly and seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Report any exposure to blood of other potentially infectious body fluids immediately, even if the presence of infectious materials on an item or surface is only suspected.

Fire or Explosion
- If safe, put out all open flames using the correct fire extinguisher and turn off oxygen and flammable gasses. If not, alert others and evacuate as soon as possible.
- Notify BYU or Provo City police and fire as soon as possible by dialing (801) 422-2222 or 911.

Safety Committee

The Chemistry and Biochemistry Department Safety Committee purpose is to help protect researchers, workers, and students in the department. Please contact us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions about lab safety.

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Reporting Accidents

It is vital that accidents are reported as soon as possible. The Chemistry and Biochemistry Department has two classifications of injury reports: (1) for students, visitors, or other general categories and (2) for paid students and employees. In both cases, lab supervisors are responsible for ensuring that these reports are filled out accurately and turned into Matthew Allen as soon as possible.

General Report
To access the General Injury Report form, visit the Safety tab of chem.byu.edu and click the Student option under Accident Reporting. Print and fill out the form. Turn it into Matthew Allen within 24 hours of the incident.

Employee Report
To access this electronic form for student employees and other BYU faculty and staff, visit the Safety tab of chem.byu.edu and click the Employee/Student Employee option under Accident Reporting.

In order to accurately fill out these forms, please be prepared with details about the incident such as basic information about the injured person, details of the incident including a summary of how it happen and how it might be prevented, details of the injury type, as well as information regarding the subsequent medical treatment, if any.

Where Should I Go?

It is easy to panic during an emergency, especially if you are uncertain of the health repercussions of exposure to certain chemicals. Luckily, there are medical professionals nearby that are prepared to help with the problems we may encounter in laboratories.

BYU Student Health Center
The Student Health Center Urgent Care is open to students or employees who are injured at work. Their hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:30pm and Saturdays from 8:00am to 12:00pm. This Urgent Care facility is prepared to deal with injuries that may occur in labs. It is located on the corner of 900 E and University Parkway, Provo, across from the Missionary Training Center (MTC) – just a two minute drive from the Benson Building.

Utah Valley Regional Medical Center Emergency Room
The Emergency Room at UVRMC is open 24 hours a day and can treat any accident or chemical exposure. It is located at 1034 N 500 W, Provo, less than a 10 minute drive from the Benson Building.

In an emergency situation, contact the BYU Police immediately at (801) 422-2222 or the Provo City Police by dialing 911. This is the fastest path to medical care.

Transportation
If an SDS or a responders recommends that the injured individual seek further medical treatment, there are some things to consider. The Department car can be used to transport someone up to the Health Center. If the department car is unavailable, BYU’s EMS team cannot transport people to the Health Center. However, BYU Police can transport people to the Health Center. If the situation is life threatening, then BYU’s EMS will contact Provo’s EMS who will have an ambulance.