LABORATORY SAFETY FACT SHEET #22

Carcinogen Control

Since cancer in humans may result from exposure to chemical carcinogens, the following guidelines are designed to keep worker and environmental exposure to a minimum. In this two phase approach, good work practice is backed up by engineering controls. Good work practice is the primary method of protecting laboratory personnel from exposure to carcinogens.

- Substitute non-carcinogenic substances for chemical carcinogens wherever possible.
- Use and keep on hand very small quantities or dilute solutions of chemical carcinogens.
- Avoid inhalation as route of exposure:
  - Contain carcinogens in a fume hood or glove box.
  - Avoid practices which produce aerosols (blow-out pipets, sonicators, heating, stirring, pouring or weighing). Conduct these operations in a closed system).
  - Dry sweeping or dry mopping in the area is prohibited.
  - Wear EH&S approved respirators in areas where exposure may exceed the permissible level. Respirator users must be fit tested and approved by EH&S.
- Avoid skin contact as a route of exposure:
  - Wear gloves appropriate for the task. Change gloves often and remove before leaving the regulated area.
  - Wear a lab coat, but remove prior to leaving the controlled area.
  - Clean up spills and contaminated containers as soon as discovered.
  - Wash hands and arms after each use of chemical carcinogens.
  - Clean work surfaces after each procedure and at the end of the work day.
  - Shower immediately after any overt exposure to chemical carcinogens.
- Avoid ingestion as a route of exposure:
  - Do not eat, drink, or smoke in the lab.
  - Use mechanical pipettes. Do not mouth pipette.
  - Thoroughly wash hands and arms before eating or smoking.
- Chemical Carcinogen Waste Disposal:
  - EH&S will pick up carcinogen waste for proper disposal.
  - Do not dump carcinogens or toxic materials down the drain or evaporate
  - Do not dump carcinogens in the trash.