

Hello and Happy May!

Congratulations to those of you who have finished a semester of classes; and, welcome to any fresh faces to the department! We are starting a bi-monthly Safety Newsletter to inform our staff, faculty, and students of all of the happenings in our department in order to keep everyone informed and safe.

Incidents:

The Workers Compensation Act (WCA) defines an incident/accident to include: an accident or other occurrence which resulted in or had the potential for causing an injury or occupational disease. All incidents should be reported even if there was no injury. There are NO consequences for reporting an incident but they can be valuable as a learning opportunity for everyone.



Recent incidents (learning opportunities):

- **Broken Reference Electrode:** A lab user found a broken reference electrode in an old box in their lab. Unsure of if the electrode was mercury or silver, it was reported to the safety coordinator and was reported and disposed of as if it were mercury.

Takeaways:

- If unsure, always err on the side of caution – better safe than sorry!
 - Include all hazardous materials in the lab in your chemical inventory (and have its SDS)
 - Set a housekeeping standard and dispose of old equipment and chemicals
- **Unintended Gas Release:** A lab user did not realize the process system pressure was high and opened a sample valve. Gases containing small amounts of H₂S gas, was released setting off their monitor and causing a pungent smell. To mitigate the smell and “air out” the room, the chamber and the lab doors were opened.

Takeaways:

- NEVER open lab doors to increase ventilation. The labs are negative pressure spaces so opening doors reduces ventilation effectiveness (and releases lab air into the hallway)
 - Have the SDS of all chemicals in reactions from your experiments – even the products
 - Document all experiment and unit training
 - Always have appropriate PPE on – it is the last defense to protect you from hazards
 - Have appropriate shut down and start up checklists for units accompanied with hazards
- **Smoldering in Oven:** Samples were placed into an oven to dry and, later, more samples were placed on the rack directly above. These blocked the airflow in this convective oven causing overheating of the bottom samples. Smoke and smell were detected, the samples were appropriately doused and disposed of.

Takeaways:

- Be sure to familiarize yourself with any piece of equipment that you are using – especially high temperature and/or high pressure

How to report an incident? Get first aid if required and once injuries have been attended to, immediately advise your supervisor and safety@chbe.ubc.ca . Report using [UBC CAIRS](#).



Quizzes:

Be sure to complete the CHBE Safety Quizzes on the [CHBE Safety Orientation Canvas page](#) (under quizzes). There will be a new quiz posted with each new newsletter that comes out. With the quiz comes all of the material you would need to complete them, as well as some fantastic resources for even more information to help you complete your research SAFELY!



Help protect the environment by managing waste appropriately. The quiz on Hazardous Waste and disposal is still available. There are some really great resources on the SRS: [Hazardous Waste Management | Safety & Risk Services \(ubc.ca\)](#) and also a more CHBE-specific document attached.

The newest quiz is on Emergency Response, particularly in reference to 2022 Building Emergency Response Plan (BERP): <https://apsc-chbe.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2022/05/CHBE-BERP-2022-final.pdf>. The BERP provides direction on how to respond to emergencies such as fire, earthquake and any other possible emergency situation that may arise. BE PREPARED - give the BERP a read and complete the associated quiz to make sure you are always prepared for any emergency in CHBE!

If you are a Person Requiring Assistance evacuating the building in the event of an emergency, please fill out the survey here: https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9WGqqiBbaLpX3k9 so that appropriate accommodations can be made for you.

Safety Tip:

Liquid nitrogen Transportation in the Elevators

Liquid nitrogen should NEVER be accompanied by persons in the elevator. These pose a serious asphyxiation risk.



If you are transporting liquid nitrogen, you need **two** people. One will push the dewar into the elevator, press the appropriate floor button, pull the safety strap across, and **get out** of the elevator. The second person is to be at the corresponding floor to unfasten the strap and unload the dewar from the elevator.

If you are waiting for an elevator and you see a dewar inside, do NOT enter the elevator.

Safety Updates:

- **COVID-19 Protocols:** The safety plans have all been replaced by a single Communicable Disease Prevention Framework (attached), as of May 1st. Please note that masks are still required on campus and in any academic activities *outside* of campus as well.

Should you have any comments, questions, concerns, or otherwise on any safety material, please be sure to reach out to the Safety Coordinator – safety@chbe.ubc.ca.

Thank you!

Erin Hagen ☺

Safety Coordinator