

# General Code of Safe Practices, Laboratory and Laboratory Support Employees

(Attachment 7 of the Injury and Illness Prevention Program)

The following list includes General Codes of Safe Practices applicable to the Laboratory. It is each department's responsibility to evaluate job tasks to identify specific hazards associated with the job tasks and develop additional Codes of Safe Practices as necessary for the specific hazards. Please refer also to the document entitled General Code of Safe Practices, Office/Administrative Area Employees (IIPP Attachment 6).

1. All employees shall read and familiarize themselves with the following safety-related resources:
  - [Emergency Preparedness Web site](#)
  - [Injury and Illness Prevention Program](#)
  - [A Violence-Free Workplace Policy](#)
  
2. Employees assigned to work in a laboratory or laboratory support area shall read and familiarize themselves with the safety-related documents that pertain to their jobs, for example:
  - Chemical Hygiene Plan
  - Radiation Safety Manual
  - Biosafety Manual
  - Specific laboratory guidelines or procedural documents
  - Hazard Communication Standard

Documentation of review shall be maintained in each specific department.

3. All employees shall be provided with training as it pertains to their job tasks. Employees shall receive training in the use of hazardous substances prior to beginning work with them.
  
4. Employees shall report all unsafe conditions and equipment immediately to the Supervisor or Environmental Health and Safety.
  
5. Employees shall report all accidents, injuries or occupational illnesses immediately to the Supervisor.

6. Department Chairs, Directors, and Managers are responsible for overseeing that their employees obey rules and regulations as necessary to ensure a safe work environment and taking action as necessary to obtain compliance from their employees.
7. Horseplay and other acts that tend to place individuals at risk or affect the safety of others in the workplace are strictly prohibited.
8. Substance abuse or other conditions that adversely affect the employee's safety, health, and behavior are not allowed at the workplace.
9. Weapons are not permitted in the work environment.
10. All equipment such as fans, paper cutters, and shredders shall have built in guards to prevent cuts and abrasions.
11. Use of ladders or step stools shall comply with all safety instructions and design specifications of the equipment.
12. Work areas shall be kept free of debris and trash shall be placed in appropriate receptacles.
13. Floors shall be kept clean and dry to prevent slipping hazards.
14. Proper lifting and carrying techniques and equipment shall be used. For example, when lifting heavy objects, the large muscles of the leg instead of the smaller muscles of the back shall be used.
15. Employees shall not handle chemicals, toxic substances, radioactive materials, biological substances, carcinogens, or any other hazardous materials except as required by their assigned work.
16. As required, all experiments involving hazardous materials shall be performed inside a laboratory hood (biological or chemical as appropriate).
17. Fume hoods and biological safety cabinets shall have current certification.
18. Fume hoods shall not be used for the storage of equipment or chemicals.
19. Emergency shower and eyewash stations shall be available with unobstructed access and tested at least monthly to ensure they are in proper working order.
20. Adequate aisle space shall be maintained.
21. Storage of chemicals on the floor shall be avoided.
22. Eating and drinking are not permitted in areas where hazardous materials are used or stored.

23. Compressed gas cylinders shall be securely fastened (by straps or welded chain) to an immovable object, e.g., a wall. Cylinders with regulators shall be individually secured. Those with safety caps may be secured in groups of up to three. When securing more than one cylinder, two straps shall be used (one placed 1/3 distance from the bottom of the cylinder and one placed 1/3 distance from the top of the cylinder).
24. Compressed gas cylinders shall not be stored in areas that are exposed to sources of heat.
25. Trussed handcarts shall be used for transporting compressed gas cylinders from storage into the lab or support area.
26. Employees shall not roll cylinders or handle them by their valves.
27. Compressed gas cylinders not in use (not equipped with a regulator) shall have the safety cap in place.
28. Employees shall be aware of the location and proper use of the hazardous materials spill kits.
29. All spills shall be wiped up promptly using appropriate materials and reported to the Laboratory Manager.
30. Hazardous waste shall be handled in accordance with state, federal and local regulations and the SDSU standard operating procedures. Hazardous waste containers shall be labeled with a hazardous waste label and stored with compatible materials.
31. Trash, garbage or waste containers shall not be allowed to overflow.
32. Hazardous materials shall be stored according to their physical state, compatibility with other materials and hazard classification in order to prevent the possibility of fires or other reactions.
33. Flammable liquids shall be stored away from ignition and radiant heat sources.
34. Aggregate quantities of flammable liquids over ten gallons shall be stored in an approved flammable storage cabinet.
35. Quantities of stored hazardous materials shall be kept to a minimum. When feasible, quantities shall be ordered that can be readily used in 2-3 months.
36. Chemicals containers shall be closed/capped at all times.
37. Hazardous chemicals shall be stored on the lowest shelves or below eye level and the shelves shall have proper seismic restraints to prevent toppling.
38. Chemicals shall be properly labeled and stored to prevent accidental misuse and spills.

39. Employees shall be knowledgeable about how to access a Material Safety Data Sheet.
40. Employees shall review the MSDSs and other references relevant to the hazardous materials to which they may potentially be exposed and abide by the instructions and recommendations.
41. Personal protective equipment shall be available at all times for use in the laboratory. This includes, but is not limited to safety glasses, goggles, gloves, and lab coats.
42. Employees shall wear safety glasses, goggles or shields when there is a possibility of splashing or an eye injury.
43. Lab coats shall be worn in laboratories.
44. Gloves shall not be worn outside the labs unless transporting material from one location to another, in which case one hand shall be gloved.
45. Environmental Health and Safety shall issue respirators as appropriate for use when hazardous exposure cannot be controlled by engineering designs or administrative controls.
46. Employees shall be aware of the instructions in the [SDSU Emergency Preparedness Web site](#) and know how to respond in the event of a fire or other emergency evacuation/situation.
47. In the event of a fire, employees shall sound the alarm and evacuate using designated escape routes.
48. Upon hearing a fire alarm, employees shall stop work, proceed to the nearest clear emergency exit, and gather at the designated assembly point.
49. Portable fire extinguishers shall not be operated, tampered with or removed except in an emergency and in accordance with [safety procedures](#). If a fire extinguisher is used, the department shall contact Physical Plant to recharge the extinguisher.
50. Materials and equipment shall not be stored under egress stairways. Items shall not block access to fire extinguishers, fire pull stations or other firefighting equipment.
51. All routes of egress shall be kept clear. Items shall not block or obstruct emergency exit doors, aisles, hallways, or stairways.
52. When storing high materials of any description, a minimum clearance of 18 inches between the top of the storage and the fire sprinkler head is required.
53. All electrical equipment shall be plugged into appropriate wall receptacles. Extension cords are permitted for temporary use only.

54. Electric cables and cords shall be secured to avoid trips and falls. Employees shall not run electrical cords or any other cords, ropes, cables, or other trip hazards across aisles, walkways, corridors, passageways, stairways, or any other areas where people might be expected to walk.
55. Power strips shall be plugged directly into approved electrical outlets.
56. Using three-pronged plugs is recommended to ensure continuity of ground.
57. Lights or lighting fixtures shall not be tampered with or removed. Physical Plant shall be contacted to repair or adjust the lighting as needed.
58. Electrical control panels shall not be obstructed. There shall always be a 36-inch clearance in front of this equipment.