


Laboratory Safety Issues that Need Your Attention

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Feb. 2013



Several new, updated, or
re-emphasized safety rules
(following deadly accident in UCLA lab)

- ◉ **Working Alone**
- ◉ **Eye Protection**
- ◉ **Lab Coats**

MIT Working Alone Policy:

As a practice, **working alone with hazardous materials**, equipment or otherwise working under conditions **that may create the risk of serious injury should be avoided**.

Anyone at MIT who works with (or intends to work with) potentially hazardous conditions that may result in immediate injury or serious harm **must discuss this activity with their Principal Investigator (PI) or supervisor prior to conducting the work** alone and determine that the risk of working alone is controllable under the specific conditions... If the risk cannot be minimized to a controllable level, then the individual should perform the work only when others are present.

Furthermore, **no undergraduate shall work alone with hazardous materials, equipment, or operations that can result in immediate injury or death without prior written approval from the immediate PI** or supervisor. Written approval should only be granted after the risk assessment is performed and reviewed by the PI or supervisor with the individual.

Please be sure UROPs working with you know the rule!

Chem. Eng. Dept. Eye Protection Policy:

Eye protection is **mandatory** in labs with hazardous chemicals. “Appropriate” while actively using chemicals often means side shields or full face shields.

The Chem. Eng. Department pays for prescription safety glasses for our grad students and postdocs, talk to Alina Haverty. There are many styles of glasses/goggles, find one which is comfortable for you. Research accounts pay for other needed eye protection, it is not expensive. Losing your sight is very costly!

There are a few odd spaces in the department where it may be unclear whether hazardous chemicals are “in use”. The faculty member in charge can clarify. If you aren’t sure, just wear your glasses! Note that in US chemical industry, eye protection is mandatory everywhere.

Please help visitors to your lab get appropriate eye protection! Put goggles by the door.

Lab Coats

Newly Revised MIT Policy:

A laboratory coat or equivalent protective clothing is required for work with hazardous chemicals, unsealed radioactive materials, and biological agents at BL2 or greater

Note: the UCLA researcher probably would not have been killed if she had been wearing a lab coat.

Typically everyone in a wet-chemistry lab is required to wear lab coats whether or not they are actively handling chemicals at that moment. There may be some different rules in odd spaces and at desks in labs, talk with your professor to clarify.

Practicalities: Lab Coats

- Purchase lab coats at VWR Stockroom (56-068)
 - Prices range from \$27 to \$35
 - Sizes XS-3XL
- Laundering / Lab Coat “leasing”
 - North Star Uniforms & Linens, Somerville
 - Used by MIT Biology Dept. and several MIT cheme & chemistry research groups
 - Contact: Peter Villari peter.villari@gmail.com
 - Crown Uniform, Nashua, NH
 - Used by Harvard
 - Contact: Chad Nicoli cnicoli@crownuniform.com

Other Practicalities

- Coat hooks for lab coats
 - Order through Ecat on SAPweb from VWR or Staples
 - Staples has a better selection
 - Steve Wetzel can help with installation
- Side-shields for prescription glasses
 - Variety of styles, Bill Dalzell has samples
 - Order through Ecat on SAPweb from VWR \$3
- Safety Glasses Holders to be placed near lab entrances
 - Available in magnetic and screw mount \$23-\$50
 - Order through Ecat on SAPweb from VWR