

## CHEMICAL SAFETY

### Eyewash Stations & Safety Showers

If your area uses chemicals that pose a high risk of injury, law may require that an eyewash station or safety shower be immediately available.

Oregon OSHA requires that an eyewash be available within a 10 second, unobstructed walk of where these chemicals are used. Types of chemicals that pose a high risk of eye injury include strong acids, bases, and others, for example: hydrochloric acid, sodium hydroxide and formaldehyde.

A safety shower is required at fixed work areas or stations where substantial areas of the body may be exposed to large quantities of materials that are either highly corrosive or highly toxic by skin absorption.



A hazard assessment is the best way to determine if a given area must have an eyewash station or safety shower. EHRS is available to perform hazard assessments and will consider the following when determining potential risk of eye or bodily injury:

- **Chemical properties**, including pH, concentration, temperature.
- **Chemical use patterns**, including how employees work with chemicals, quantities, and frequency of use.
- **Training, safety barriers (fume hoods), and personal protective equipment use.**

The eyewash station maintenance policy can be found at:

<http://ozone.ohsu.edu/healthsystem/nursing/policy/display.cfm?id=1053>

To request a hazard assessment, or if you have any questions, please contact Environmental Health & Radiation Safety at 503-494-7795.

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Environmental Health & Radiation Safety 503-494-7795	



Topic of the Month:

## CHEMICAL SAFETY

The Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OR-OSHA) maintains a **Hazard Communication Standard** that applies to the use of hazardous and toxic substances in the workplace.



### MSDS = Material Safety Data Sheet

The MSDS is the best source of physical and chemical information about any hazardous substance in your work area. MSDSs are required for workplace chemicals, and all potentially-exposed employees must have access to these during their work shift.

MSDSs may be made available in a number of ways, including electronic databases or in paper form, as long as employees are competent in locating the resource.

OHSU requires that Healthcare operations maintain a binder of paper copies of MSDSs in areas where chemicals are used. Binders must include an alphabetical list indexing the included MSDSs. This ensures simplicity and consistency when employees need to access an MSDS.



Requirements for research laboratories are slightly different. MSDSs must be available if provided by the manufacturer. This is in acknowledgement that MSDSs may not be available for some older or exotic chemicals.

Where electronic databases are used, an inventory of chemicals should be maintained in the Written Hazard Communication Program, as required by law. If the University's program is used, the inventory is to be maintained by the department choosing to use the database. The University's written program can be viewed on the Integrity Website at [www.ohsu.edu/integrity](http://www.ohsu.edu/integrity).

### MSDS Exceptions?

The exception applies when consumer-use products are being used for their intended purpose (e.g.: hairspray for holding hairdos, or glass cleaner for cleaning glass), in normal, consumer-use quantities and concentrations. If you are using a product outside of its intended use, quantity or concentration (e.g.: the same hairspray is used to fix cytology samples, or glass cleaner is used to clean floors), you must maintain an MSDS.

### Chemical Containers

There are two basic kinds of containers: primary and secondary. The primary container comes from the manufacturer. Labels on primary containers include all kinds of information that OSHA requires the manufacturer to supply. A **secondary container** is one that we establish when transferring contents of a primary container to any other container.

### Secondary Containers at OHSU

Containers that are created by an employee must be labeled UNLESS the container is under the creator's control the entire time that a hazard exists. A label is NOT required if there is no remaining hazard when the employee leaves, that is, the container is left empty and clean or discarded appropriately. Container examples may include squirt bottles, specimen cups, soaking tubs, and mop buckets.

Medications for patient use must **always** be labeled, without exception. Pharmacy can offer clear guidelines.

Healthcare's "Secondary Container Labels" Procedure states, "Good practice suggests that all containers be labeled to define any hazards." Labels must communicate (1) the product identity and (2) general information regarding the hazards, including target organs, as appropriate. Presentation of hazard information may include the use of symbols or pictures.



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Container labeling expectations in research labs varies slightly, as noted in the OHSU Laboratory Safety Manual. "All secondary containers should be labeled in such a way that all workers in the laboratory can easily identify their contents." This allows for color coding, symbols, etc. The exception for containers under complete control of the user applies.

The Hazard Communication Policy can be found at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/policies/upload/hazcom.pdf>

Relevant Healthcare policies can be found at:

<http://ozone.ohsu.edu/healthsystem/adminindex.shtml#EnvSafety>

Guidance for assembling and maintaining an MSDS binder at OHSU is here:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/chem/msds.cfm>



### Personal Protective Equipment

If you work with hazardous materials, don't forget your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)! This includes gloves, eye protection, face shield, gown, lab coat, and other items used to prevent exposures to chemicals. EHRs experts can make sure you are using the right PPE. Ask for help if you are unsure by calling:

**EHRs 503-494-7795**

### SAFETYTEAM MEMBERSHIP

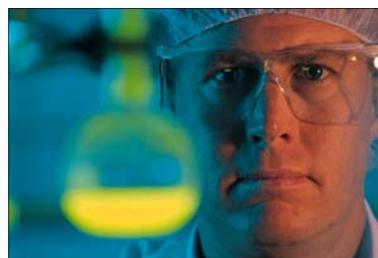
Do you know someone who'd like to get involved?  
If so, contact us at [safeteam@ohsu.com](mailto:safeteam@ohsu.com) or 4-7795.

# Big Brain: Lab Safety



For all OHSU personnel working in a research laboratory, or supervising those who do, the Laboratory Safety course is a requirement.

Laboratory Safety is required on an tri-annual basis (every three years), and people required to take this course will be sent an email reminder when it's time to revisit the course. If you have questions about whether you are required to take this training, or if you have received a course notification in error, please contact Debra Brickey, Laboratory Safety Advisor, at [brickeyd@ohsu.edu](mailto:brickeyd@ohsu.edu) or call 4-7795.



For a current issue of SafetyNews online, and for archives, visit:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetynews.cfm>

The SafetyTeam page is available at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safeteam.cfm>

These pages are updated regularly. If there are OHSU resources you'd like to see linked, please send suggestions to the SafetyTeam Coordinator at:

[safeteam@ohsu.edu](mailto:safeteam@ohsu.edu)

Questions? Ask Environmental Health & Radiation Safety:

**503-494-7795**

