August 2012

Below are a few updates following the SoMS Health and Safety Consultation Committee earlier this month; you can find the meeting minutes here.

New student representative

Andrew Tosolini (PhD student) is the new SoMS student representative for health and safety matters. If you have any H&S issues, these should first be raised with your supervisor. If it cannot be resolved by this manner than issues can be raised at the SoMS H&S committee through your representative. For more information see the issue resolution process and committee members.

Lab cleaning

Labs floors are brushed and mopped every Monday, Wednesday and Friday during semester time (every Tuesday and Thursday during non-semester time). If there is any lab-related items on the floor (e.g. a tip) or a spill the cleaners will not clean that area. They do not touch or move anything in the lab except the domestic waste bin. If you are concerned with the standard of cleaning in your area contact Anastasia, on the same day (important for immediate followed up).

Electric bar heaters are banned

This is a reminder that personal electric bar heaters are not allowed at the university. If there is a problem with heating this should be reported to FM Assist (x55111) in the first instance. If you require additional heating then you must follow the FM Personal Heater Guide on the type to purchase.

Scalpel blade removers

Always use a blade remover when removing a blade from a scalpel. There are a selection of blade removers available from Stores (the one pictured is LabTek 4FSCABLRM). Where possible, single-use disposable scalpels should be used, as these do not require any attaching or removing of a blade. For more information see the SoMS Sharps Protocol.
New waste bins
The new biological and cytotoxic waste bins have now been rolled out to the school. These should be handled with gloves and are wiped down with disinfectant prior to leaving the lab. You can find the SWP for their use on the Medicine OHS database.

Guidance on eye protection
A protocol on selection of suitable eye protection can be found here. This was designed to help staff and students in research laboratories of the Faculty of Medicine and CCIA select the most appropriate safety eyewear suited to the task.

Exempt GMO work
Please note that all GMO exempt dealings must get approval from the university IBC committee. The term “exempt” means that they do not need to be reported to OGTR, however internal approval processes must still be followed. Exempt dealings pose very low risk, must not involve intentional release and do not require a specified level of containment. For further details see the UNSW Gene Technology pages.

Schedule 8 drugs & Lethabarb training
Training on the purchase, use, storage and disposal of Schedule 8 Drugs has been arranged. All S8 drugs store custodians must attend this training, as well as anyone who hasn’t yet completed S8 drugs training. Others may attend as a refresher. Anyone who works with Lethabarb must also attend the training. The training is on Thursday 11th October, 10am – 12pm, Lowy Seminar Space; register via MyUNSW.

H&S training for new starters
This is a reminder that all new staff and students who will be working in a lab must complete on-line OHS awareness and on-line Ergonomics training. New people are automatically enrolled into these training courses and they are accessible on Blackboard. Once enrolled the courses are always available on Blackboard, so you can return to them for a refresher at any time. See the H&S training pages for more information.

And finally....
Please always report any near-misses on the H2O online reporting system. A near-miss is anything where you did not get injured or nothing was damaged but very well could have e.g. a ceiling panel falls in front of you and just misses hitting you. These are really important to address to prevent a major injury occurring in the future. This photo is of a near-miss following a hurricane, bet the car owner was relieved!
Keep an eye on the SoMS Health and Safety Home Page for regular news updates