



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**

WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:
Director, Office of Health and Safety
Responsible Office: Office of Safety
and Security
Last Revised Date: May 31, 2014

CHEMICAL HYGIENE POLICY

Policy Statement

Departments operating laboratories containing potentially hazardous chemicals are required to appoint a Chemical Hygiene Officer (CHO) to implement the guidance provided in the university's Chemical Hygiene Plan. Activities for the CHO include adoption of general departmental precautions and guidelines for safe use of chemicals and the oversight and instruction for personnel on proper laboratory procedures. People using laboratories are responsible for knowing the Chemical Hygiene Plan and attending annual laboratory safety training.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

People who work in scientific laboratories are exposed to a greater variety of possible hazards than in most workplaces. Some of those hazards call for precautions not ordinarily encountered elsewhere. The purpose of this policy is to prevent chemical-related injuries by promoting safe and healthy laboratory environments, and to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Laboratory Standard (29 CFR 1910.1450: Occupational Exposures to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories).

Who Needs to Know This Policy

Faculty, staff and students

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Policy/Procedures

The university has developed a [Chemical Hygiene Plan](#) to promote the safety of people working in laboratories. Copies of the university's [Chemical Hygiene Plan](#) are available in each laboratory or through the Office of Health and Safety. The Plan was written in response to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Occupational Exposures to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories (the OSHA Lab Standard). The Plan is intended to provide guidelines for the following:

- Prudent laboratory practices,
- Procedures for the use of laboratory chemicals
- Work practices regarding laboratory equipment
- Personal protective equipment capable of protecting employees from their workplace chemical hazards.

Responsibilities

Faculty, staff, and students all have a responsibility to comply with the university's Chemical Hygiene Plan including:

- University
 - All employees working with hazardous chemicals have access to medical attention if
 - they exhibit symptoms of exposure to a hazardous chemical in the laboratory or
 - experience a spill, leak, or other occurrence resulting in the likelihood of a hazardous exposure
- Departments
 - Each department shall appoint a Chemical Hygiene Officer to serve a leadership role in laboratory safety.
 - The name(s) of each department's CHO should be submitted to the Office of Health and Safety no later than September 1st of each year.
- Chemical Hygiene Officer
 - The primary responsibility of the CHO is to implement the Chemical Hygiene Plan in compliance with OSHA regulations in their respective laboratories.
 - The CHO instructs personnel on
 - proper laboratory procedures,

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- properly labeling all chemicals,
 - maintaining Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all laboratory chemicals,
 - specifying personal protective equipment,
 - conducting regular safety inspections,
 - performing hazardous waste disposal in accordance with the university's Hazardous Waste Management Plan.
- The CHO is responsible for preventing chemical exposure by laboratory employees beyond the permissible exposure limits (PEL) provided for each potentially hazardous substance by OSHA.

Medical Attention for Chemical Exposure

The university will provide all employees working with hazardous chemicals an opportunity to receive medical attention if they exhibit symptoms of exposure to a hazardous chemical in the laboratory or experience a spill, leak, or other occurrence resulting in the likelihood of a hazardous exposure.

This policy is supported by the procedures set forth in the university's [Chemical Hygiene Plan](#).

Website Address for This Policy

[GW University Policies](#)

Contacts

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email Address
Chemical Hygiene	Health and Safety	202-994-4347	safety@gwu.edu

Definitions

Chemical Hygiene Officer A designated employee who is qualified by training and experience to provide technical guidance in the development and implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Hygiene Plan.

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Related Information

[Chemical Hygiene Plan](#)

[Hazardous Waste Management Plan](#)

[Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#)

[Policy for Compliance Regarding Select Agents and Pathogens](#)

[OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1450: Laboratory Standard](#)

Who Approved This Policy

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

History/Revision Dates

Last Reviewed Date: May 31, 2014

Last Revised Date: March 31, 2014

Origination Date: May 1, 1990