Safety Training Policy
Virginia Tech Chemistry Department

Approved by the Executive Committee on 06/13/01. Revised 01/09/02 and 06/30/11.

The goal of the Chemistry Department is to maintain a safe environment for anyone working in or visiting labs within the Department's jurisdiction. In order to inform and instruct those working in laboratories of prudent and legally required laboratory safety practices, attendance at specific training sessions or programs is mandatory.

Tenure-track faculty members may choose their level of participation in the offered instructional sessions. All other individuals associated with the Chemistry Department in a laboratory capacity must follow the guidelines outlined in this document. This includes, but is not limited to: undergraduate and graduate students; post-doctoral fellows; visiting scholars or anyone who will participate in any research or teaching laboratory. Undergraduates taking lab courses other than undergraduate research are exempt, as their safety training is incorporated into their laboratory courses.

The first step toward satisfying departmental safety training requirements is to fill out a 'Chemistry Safety Training' form (see the Chemistry Department Safety Training Coordinator). A training records file will be initiated and maintained in a database as described below. Next, each individual must complete each required training courses listed below within the number of days given in parentheses. Day 1 is the first day of enrollment for a student or the first day of employment for an employee, or in special cases (e.g., volunteers, visitors), the first day of participation in laboratory work.

EXCEPTION: For individuals who will be working in laboratories under departmental jurisdiction for a period of 90 days or less, the only safety training required will be the "General Safety Seminar" which must be completed within 20 days.

Required Training

1. General Safety Seminar ~ 2 h. (20 days).
2. Fire Extinguisher Course ~ 1 h. (180 days).
3. First Aid Video ~ 1 h. (90 days).
4. Topics: Standard topic areas will be covered over the course of the year in an ongoing cycle. A specific topic area, ~ 1h., will be offered at three different times and/or dates within approximately a one month period and the entire program will be offered twice within a one year period. (All topics must be completed within the first complete cycle offered which begins 14 days after employment or enrollment).
5. Other courses or training as determined by the research director. Examples are: radiation safety and blood-borne pathogen training.
Note: Any exceptions to the above time requirements granted by joint decision of the Safety Director and the department safety committee would occur only in extreme cases, e.g. protracted illness of the participant.

Training Data Base

Records of the requirements and each individual's compliance with these requirements will be maintained in a Chemistry Department database. Any individual not fulfilling the requirements in the allotted time will be so notified in writing and by e-mail. Copies of the notification will be provided to the appropriate supervisor and the Chemistry Department Chair. An individual with a deficiency must cease working in any laboratory or on any laboratory procedures under the jurisdiction of the department. When the deficiency is corrected, the individual, supervisor and Department Chair will be so notified in writing and by e-mail and the individual may resume working.