

**SAFETY NEWSLETTER**  
**Department of Chemistry, Queen's University**  
**Winter 2018**

*With everyone rushing around, super-busy, it's easy to forget about safety. But we're most at risk when we're the most busy!*

**1. Office Safety.** We often focus on lab safety, but hazards exist in office spaces too. Here are some dangerous things to watch out for.

- Tipping hazards such as wall units that aren't anchored to the wall
- Tripping hazards such as wires, garbage, or other items on the floor
- High-up hard-to-reach items that are usually accessed by standing on a chair or desk. Move the item or get a ladder or step-stool.
- Chairs having damaged or faulty wheels or mechanisms. Get them repaired!
- Space heaters near combustible items such as paper, cardboard, or curtains.
- Frayed or damaged electrical cords.
- Cluttered or narrow exit route.
- Poor ergonomics. Are you working in a position that may cause body or eye strain? Get your ergonomics checked out. <http://www.safety.queensu.ca/qecp/ergo.htm>



**2. Gas cylinders in the hallway.** The hallways in the lab wing were designed to hold gas cylinders – up to 4 cylinders per location. However, there are important rules about gas cylinders in the hallways.

- *No flammable, corrosive or toxic gases are allowed in the hallway.*
- *Each cylinder must be restrained by its own individual chain.*

Don't use one chain to restrain more than one cylinder. Don't try to place more than 4 cylinders in one location. If a pipe is blocking one spot for a cylinder, that location will be modified by Physical Plant Services to allow the storage of a cylinder in front of the pipe. If you don't have enough space for storing your cylinders, talk to Heather Drouillard about your needs.



**3. Safety news**

- Seventy new first aid kits have arrived and will be replacing the old kits throughout the building. As always, if you use an item from a first aid kit, be sure to replace it.
- The grad lounges and kitchens at the south end of the lab wing on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors are being renovated. Research groups on each floor should work together to create a system to keep the new kitchens clean and tidy. The 5<sup>th</sup> floor has already organized such a system.



**4. Close the sash!** Close that fumehood sash when you're not using it. Energy savings can be huge. A recent survey of fumehoods in Chernoff hall research labs showed that 75% of the fumehoods not in use (no user in sight) had the sashes wide open. Closed sashes also help protect nearby workers from anything that might go wrong inside the fume hood.

## 5. Electrical equipment and outlets near safety showers.

When someone activates a safety shower in an emergency, a large puddle of water soon forms around that person's feet. Therefore, any nearby electrical equipment on the floor must be plugged in to an outlet that contains a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI or GFI). If you have electrical equipment that might get in contact with such a puddle, either raise that equipment off the floor or ensure that there is a GFI. An outlet with a GFI has a reset button similar to the ones in your bathroom at home. In general, outlets within 10 ft for safety showers are recommended to have a GFI but there are no regulations stipulating this. A request to PPS for installing GFIs in all outlets near our safety showers is being handled by Heather Drouillard.



Because the puddle can get quite large and there is no floor drain, there is a risk that the water may trickle down through the floor and cause damage to equipment in lower floors. Once the emergency has been dealt with, contact the custodial staff or security (after hours) to help clean up the water.

## 6. Reporting accidents after-hours

Have you had an accident or incident after-hours? The immediate response is the same as during working hours. (see <http://queensu.ca/security/emergency-response-procedures> for emergency response procedures). But what about when the accident is over? Incident report forms must be filled out, signed by the supervisor and submitted promptly. There are two forms.

- a) The departmental Incident form is always required after an incident or accident.
- b) The WSIB Form 7 is required if an employee was hurt. Postdocs, faculty, lecturers, and administrative and support staff are employees. Students are not employees unless they were TA'ing at the time of the injury.

If an employee is injured after-hours or on a weekend, the forms need to be submitted to the Main Office on the next business day. If the supervisor is sick or away on travel, then the Safety Officer (Heather Drouillard) can sign the forms on the supervisor's behalf.

The forms can be found on the departmental website. Click "Safety" and find the forms on the left-hand side under "Quicklinks".

**Questions or Concerns about Safety?:** *If you have any safety concerns or questions, please bring them to the attention of your supervisor. For further information, contact the Safety Committee Chair (Philip Jessop, [jessop@queensu.ca](mailto:jessop@queensu.ca)) or our Safety Officer (Heather Drouillard, [Heather.Drouillard@chem.queensu.ca](mailto:Heather.Drouillard@chem.queensu.ca)). Suggestions for the newsletter are always welcome.*