



8.5.3 Chemical Safety

Chapter 8 - Health & Safety	Original Effective Date: June 2000
Section: 8.5 Environmental Health and Safety Office	Date Last Reviewed: May 2021
Responsible Entity: Vice President for Facilities and Capital Planning	Date Last Revised: May 2021

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline UT Health San Antonio's Chemical Safety Plan in order to demonstrate compliance with the Texas Hazard Communication Act of 1986, Chapter 502 of the Texas Health and Safety Code and Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) regulations (*29 CFR1910 §1450.h*).

II. Scope

This Policy applies to all UT Health San Antonio employees (faculty and staff) and students who work with or may have exposure to Hazardous chemicals.

III. Policy

A. Chemical Safety Handbook

The UT Health San Antonio (UTHSA) [Chemical Safety Handbook](#) (Handbook) provides written documentation in compliance with regulations set forth by the Texas Hazard Communication Act of 1986, specifically, to reduce the incidence of chemically-related occupational illnesses and injuries and to provide a means for the general public to learn about the chemical hazards associated with businesses in the community. The Handbook details the Chemical Hygiene Plan intended to comply with the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), regulatory standard contained in 29 CFR1910 §1450.

The Chemical Safety Handbook serves as the Written Hazard Communication Plan and Chemical Hygiene Plan for UTHSA. It provides safety guidelines to employees and students who work with or are exposed to Hazardous Chemicals in the routine course of their job duties or education/training. The Handbook provides general information to employees and students on the use and handling of Hazardous Chemicals. Additionally, the Handbook provides definitions of Hazardous Chemicals, factors affecting chemical action on the body, emergency procedures, proper personal protective equipment, first aid, and employee rights and responsibilities under the Texas Hazard Communication Act.

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All employees and students with exposure to Hazardous Chemicals must be familiar with the requirements set forth in this Policy and the Chemical Safety Handbook and comply with the rules under the Texas Hazard Communication Act (THCA) enforced by the Texas Department of State Health Services. All occupational operations conducted in UTHSA facilities must be performed in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Chemical Safety Handbook.

B. Responsibilities

1. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department

The EH&S Department is responsible for establishing safety standards, regulations, guidelines, and programs designed to assure compliance with federal, state, and local rules and regulations. Environmental Health and Safety encompasses radiological, chemical, biological, physical safety and environmental protection.

2. EH&S Department, Chemical Safety Division

- a. Maintain the [Chemical Safety Handbook](#) for the use of chemicals at UTHSA with the advice and guidance of the Chemical Safety Committee.
- b. Provide technical assistance to laboratory supervisors and workers concerning appropriate storage, handling, and disposal of Hazardous Chemicals.
- c. Provide general and specialized laboratory safety and hazardous waste generator's training upon request
- d. Conduct exposure assessments upon request and laboratory audits on a routine basis.
- e. Perform injury/accident investigations related to potential chemical exposures.
- f. Make routine, as well as, special health and risk assessments to support the Safety Committees.
- g. Provide technical assistance concerning personal protective equipment and laboratory safety equipment.
- h. Facilitate access to manufacturer's Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and other laboratory and chemical safety literature.
- i. Remain current on rules and regulations concerning chemical and laboratory safety.

3. Faculty and Staff in charge of supervising laboratories

- a. Inform and train laboratory workers concerning chemical safety as required by the plan.
- b. Attend all required training classes to stay in compliance with relevant rules and regulations.
- c. Retain training records and all documentation

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- d. Implement and enforce rules and standards concerning health and safety for laboratories under supervisor's jurisdiction.
 - e. Ensure compliance of laboratory workers with the [Chemical Safety Handbook](#) and other guidelines, policies, and regulations.
 - f. Ensure the availability and enforce the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, SDS, and relevant reference materials.
 - g. Ensure the safe use of Hazardous Chemicals by oneself and those under one's direction.
 - h. Remain cognizant of Hazardous Chemical stored and used in laboratories and their associated hazards.
 - i. Dispose of chemicals no longer needed by contacting the Environmental Protection Division with the EH&S Department.
 - j. Conduct internal inspections of laboratories for health and safety concerns.
 - k. Request assistance from the EH&S Department when safety requirements are not fully understood.
 - l. Report all chemical spills and exposures as soon as possible to EH&S.
4. Employees (faculty and staff) and Students
- a. Follow all health and safety standards and rules.
 - b. Attend all required training classes to stay in compliance with relevant rules and regulations.
 - c. Immediately report all hazardous conditions to their supervisor.
 - d. Wear or use appropriate protective equipment.
 - e. Report any job-related injuries or illnesses to their supervisor and seek treatment immediately.
 - f. Refrain from the operation of any equipment or instrumentation without proper instruction, training, and authorization.
 - g. Ask questions if the safe use of Hazardous Chemicals or operating procedures are unclear.
 - h. Remain aware of the hazards of the chemicals in the laboratory and how to handle these agents safely.
 - i. Request information and training when unsure how to handle a Hazardous Chemical or procedure.

IV. Definitions

When used in this document with initial capital letter(s), the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

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Hazardous Chemical – an element, compound, or mixture of elements or compounds that has a physical hazard or health hazard as defined by the OSHA standard in 29 CFR §1910.1200 (c), or a hazardous substance as defined by the OSHA standard in 29 CFR §1910.1200 (d) (3), or by OSHA’s written interpretations.

V. Related References

[Environmental Health and Safety Department](#)

VI. Review and Approval History

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Date Approved
06/2000	Policy Origination		
09/2018	Policy Revision		
05/2021	Policy Revision, discretionary edits		