12. GENERAL TIPS FOR SAFELY WORKING WITH HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS

Following are general procedures for safely working with hazardous chemicals:

- Review the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals that you are working with to determine specific physical properties and health hazards.

- Wear appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE). At a minimum, this will include eye protection, lab coat or other protective outer garment, and gloves that are suitable for the chemical used. More protection may be required depending on specific chemicals (refer to the MSDS) and conditions of use.

- Conduct all processes that may release hazardous vapors or mists inside a functional fume hood or other adequate containment device.

- Wear appropriate respiratory protection (refer to the SDS) when airborne chemical concentrations cannot be sufficiently reduced by engineering controls. The respirator user must comply with the VOLUNTARY RESPIRATOR USE SOP.

- Review emergency procedures, ensure that necessary spill supplies are available in the workplace and verify emergency numbers are posted next to the telephone. Know the location of safety equipment such as the emergency shower, eye wash, spill kit, fire extinguisher, fire alarm, and evacuation routes.

- Do not work alone with hazardous chemicals, for your own protection. Do not leave dangerous chemicals or processes unattended.

- Keep work areas clean and uncluttered – good housekeeping is critical to good safety. Make sure that chemicals and equipment are properly labeled and stored.

- Do not eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics, chew gum, or store food, beverages, tobacco, cosmetics, or medications in areas where laboratory chemicals are used or stored.

- Confine long hair and loose clothing when using chemicals. Do not wear sandals or open-toed shoes.

Last reviewed by Cynthia Norton on December 15, 2015