

Introduction

Having a strong set of overall laboratory safety rules is essential to avoiding disasters in the lab. Lab Manager recently scoured the safety policies of several laboratories to determine some of the most common lab safety rules out there, to help you whether you're developing or updating a set of policies for your own lab. Of course, safety rules are only effective when they are enforced, which is why strong lab management is so important to a safe laboratory as well.

Source: <http://www.labmanager.com/lab-health-and-safety/2017/1-2/science-laboratory-safety-rules-guidelines>

General lab safety rules

1. Be sure to read all fire alarm and safety signs and follow the instructions in the event of an accident or emergency.
2. Ensure you are fully aware of your facility's/building's evacuation procedures.
3. Make sure you know where your lab's safety equipment—including first aid kit(s), fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, and safety showers—is located and how to properly use it.
4. Know emergency phone numbers to use to call for help in case of an emergency.
5. Lab areas containing carcinogens, radioisotopes, biohazards, and lasers should be properly marked with the appropriate warning signs.
6. Open flames should never be used in the laboratory unless you have permission from a qualified supervisor.
7. Make sure you are aware of where your lab's exits and fire alarms are located.
8. An area of 36" diameter must be kept clear at all times around all fire sprinkler heads.
9. If there is a fire drill, be sure to turn off all electrical equipment and close all containers.
10. Always work in properly-ventilated areas.
11. Do not chew gum, drink, or eat while working in the lab.
12. Laboratory glassware should never be utilized as food or beverage containers.
13. Each time you use glassware, be sure to check it for chips and cracks. Notify your lab supervisor of any damaged glassware so it can be properly disposed of.
14. Never use lab equipment that you are not approved or trained by your supervisor to operate.
15. If an instrument or piece of equipment fails during use, or isn't operating properly, report the issue to a technician right away. Never try to repair an equipment problem on your own.

Laboratory Safety Rules



Continued

16. If you are the last person to leave the lab, make sure to lock all the doors and turn off all ignition sources.
17. Do not work alone in the lab.
18. Never leave an ongoing experiment unattended.
19. Never lift any glassware, solutions, or other types of apparatus above eye level.
20. Never smell or taste chemicals.
21. Do not pipette by mouth.
22. Make sure you always follow the proper procedures for disposing lab waste.
23. Report all injuries, accidents, and broken equipment or glass right away, even if the incident seems small or unimportant.
24. If you have been injured, yell out immediately and as loud as you can to ensure you get help.
25. In the event of a chemical splashing into your eye(s) or on your skin, immediately flush the affected area(s) with running water for at least 20 minutes.
26. If you notice any unsafe conditions in the lab, let your supervisor know as soon as possible.