Laboratory Safety Committee

Chemical Hygiene Officer Liaison: Role and Responsibilities

Purpose

Each department that works with chemicals in teaching and/or research at Northern Illinois University (NIU) must appoint a Chemical Hygiene Officer Liaison to work with the university Chemical Hygiene Officer (CHO). The CHO also serves as the Laboratory Safety Officer (LSO) for the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety at NIU.

The departmental CHO Liaison responsibilities are monitoring a department’s adherence to chemical and laboratory safety policies and ensuring efficient and timely communication between the CHO/LSO and the department. As described in NIU’s policy “Policy for Responding to Laboratory-Related Accidents or Incidents in the Academic Environment”, responsibility for incidents or unsafe conditions rest with Principal Investigator (PI) while responsibility for remedial or directive actions rests with the Department, the Laboratory Safety Committee, and the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships.

Policy

1. Eligibility:

   Faculty or Staff with working knowledge of chemical use and chemical safety procedures in their Unit. The individual must be nominated by the Unit’s administration and confirmed by the Laboratory Safety Committee.

2. Responsibilities:

   Act as a liaison between the CHO/LSO, their unit, and the unit’s investigators and instructors. Work with the Laboratory Safety Manager and CHO/LSO in the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety to ensure compliance with applicable laboratory safety-related standards and regulations.
   
   a. Work with CHO/LSO to assess new safety and health hazards.
   b. Report imminent safety and health hazards or other threats/infractions pertaining to laboratory safety or Laboratory Safety Plan compliance issues to the CHO/LSO.
   c. Consult with PIs, other investigators, and appropriate departmental staff to make sure they are aware of any health and safety issues that may affect their research and/or lab operations.
   d. Serve as a conduit of information about chemical safety regulations and policies and procedures for faculty, staff, and students in their department.
e. Ensure all PIs and research personnel are knowledgeable about the required contents of the Laboratory Safety Plan.

f. Ensure PIs are aware of all required and optional safety training for themselves and their research employees.

g. Coordinate safety training with the CHO/LSO to arrange general departmental training sessions for research employees/trainees.

h. Coordinate with the CHO/LSO follow-up lab inspections.