

I. POLICY

Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) endeavors to provide the EVMS community with a safe laboratory environment in which students, faculty and staff may pursue their scholarly and research activities. An “EVMS Laboratory” is defined as an area owned or operated by EVMS where biological materials, chemicals or other hazardous materials are used in teaching or research activities. Laboratories include, but are not limited to, science laboratories, pathological laboratories, art studios, and other areas that pose risk to human health and the environment. EVMS administers all EVMS Laboratory safety programs through its Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) department and all EVMS Laboratory activities are governed by this Policy.

II. LABORATORY SAFETY PLANS

A. Chemical Safety. The EVMS Chemical Hygiene Plan governs the procedures and safe work practices for the inventory, use, storage and disposal of chemicals, as well as the appropriate emergency procedures. This manual is a required, written plan that establishes safety standards for people working with chemicals and is used to implement control measures, training and other protective measures.

B. Biological Safety. The EVMS Biological Safety Manual governs the procedures and safe work practices for the inventory, use, storage and disposal of biological hazards, as well as the appropriate emergency procedures. This manual also includes basic biosafety concepts and microbiological procedures.

C. Radiation Safety. The EVMS Radiation Safety Manual governs the procedures and safe work practices for the inventory, use, storage and disposal of use of radioactive materials, as well as the appropriate emergency procedures. This manual also pertains to the purchasing of radioactive materials, exposure monitoring procedures and radiation producing machines. This manual is used to implement control measures, training and other protective measures.

D. General Laboratory Safety. In addition to those specific applicable laboratory safety plans set forth above, the following guideline applies to all individuals working in an EVMS laboratory:

1. Appropriate clothing and personal protective gear shall be worn while working in an EVMS laboratory. Clothing such as shorts and open toe shoes (such as sandals) are prohibited;

2. No food and/or beverages may be brought or consumed inside any EVMS

laboratory and storage of food and beverages in EVMS laboratory equipment is prohibited.

3. All EVMS laboratory accidents, no matter how minor, must be reported to EH&S at 446-5798 or 911 if emergency conditions exist.

III. POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

EVMS laboratory safety is the responsibility of all members of the EVMS Community. Each Principal Investigator, faculty member, program, administrative department, or other unit that utilizes an EVMS Laboratory is responsible for conducting its operations in a safe manner and in accordance with this Policy and applicable rules and regulations. Further, each functional area is responsible for training its employees on laboratory safety procedures and hazard communications. EH&S is available, upon request, to assist with developing training programs or helping areas meet their compliance requirements.

IV. POLICY ENFORCEMENT

A. Observation. EH&S is authorized to survey, monitor and conduct routine inspection of all EVMS Laboratories to assess environmental risks, life safety exposures, and training requirements and to recommend improvements. EH&S will submit written reports identifying hazards and necessary corrective action.

B. Investigation. EH&S is committed to investigating and appropriately reporting all environmental health and safety incidents. It is the responsibility of all EVMS employees to disclose fully any activity that may be, or may result in, a violation of any environmental health and safety regulation, and to participate cooperatively in the investigation and remediation of any incidents.

C. Reports. Following an investigation, EH&S will issue a formal report citing areas of noncompliance and setting forth a corrective action plan. Reports will be provided to the individual, his or her immediate supervisor, and to other administrators with responsibility for the activity involved. Copies of reports given to individual students or student organizations will also be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

D. Immediate Cessation of Activities. The Director of EH&S (or designee) has the authority to immediately suspend or restrict any operation that EH&S has observed or has determined to be:

1. a serious hazard (real or potential) associated with the health, life, safety or welfare of campus personnel or the public;
2. a violation of any regulatory standards or laws;
3. a detriment to the environment; or
4. a violation previously cited by EH&S and not corrected under any corrective action plan.

In the event that EH&S orders cessation of an activity, EH&S will immediately communicate the problem(s) and violation(s) to the individual, to his or her direct supervisor, to other administrators with responsibility for the department or center involved and the appropriate regulatory agency when required by law. The activity may be resumed only with the approval of the Director of EH&S.

V. SANCTIONS FOR NONCOMPLIANCE

Regulatory agencies have established strict environmental health and safety regulations, which may include harsh civil penalties and individual criminal prosecution leading to substantial fines and possible imprisonment. Accordingly, EVMS expects all faculty, staff, students, and those who use EVMS Laboratories to be vigilant in complying with all applicable environmental health and safety laws. Repeated failure to abide by this Policy or any Laboratory Safety Program, or repeated failure to take corrective action as directed by EH&S shall be reported to the Associate Dean of Research and the Office of Compliance and may result in sanctions including, but not be limited to, lockout from EVMS Laboratories, employment disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and student suspension or expulsion.