

GENERAL USE SOP FOR FLAMMABLE & COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS

1. Process or Equipment Description

This standard operating procedure (SOP) is intended to provide general guidance on how to safely work with flammable materials. This general use SOP only addresses safety issues specific to flammability hazards of chemicals. In some instances, several general use SOPs may be applicable for a specific chemical (i.e., both general use SOPs for flammable liquids and particularly hazardous substances would apply to benzene). If you have questions concerning the applicability of any item listed in this SOP contact the PI, Laboratory Director or Supervisor of your lab or Environmental Health and Safety & Emergency Management (EHSEM).

2. Hazardous Chemicals/Class of Hazardous Chemicals

For the purpose of laboratory safety, both flammable and combustible liquids are considered fire hazards.

Flammable liquids have a flash point of less than 100°F and combustible liquids have a flash point of between 100-200°F.

3. Control of Hazards - General

- Do not heat flammable chemicals with an open flame.
- For highly flammable chemicals, avoid static electricity or hot surfaces as they can serve as ignition sources.
- Do not use electrical devices with cracked or frayed electrical wiring.
- When transferring flammable liquid from a bulk container (generally greater than five gallons), the containers must be electrically bonded and grounded.
- Transfer flammable liquids from containers of five gallon-capacity or less inside a laboratory hood (or other area with similar ventilation) to prevent accumulation of flammable concentration of vapors.

3a. Engineering/Ventilation Controls

Flammable and combustible chemicals should be used in lab fume hoods (or other well ventilated areas) whenever possible, especially when used in larger quantities (> 500mL) or when using above room temperature and/or pressure. If the process does not permit the handling of large quantities of flammable liquids in your fume hood, contact EHSEM at 3-4914 to review the adequacy of all ventilation measures.

Note: Certain flammables that are also considered particularly hazardous substances (i.e., benzene) may require use of a fume hood (due to toxicity potential).

3b. Personal Protective Equipment

At minimum, safety glasses, lab coat, long pants, and closed toed shoes are to be worn when entering laboratories having hazardous chemicals.

Additionally:

- When handling hazardous chemicals or contacting potentially contaminated surfaces, protective gloves are to be worn. For proper selection of glove material, review [chemical MSDS](#) and [EHSEM's glove use webpage](#).
- Goggles (vs. safety glasses) are appropriate in the processes where splash and spray is foreseeable.
- For hazardous chemicals that are toxic via skin contact/absorption, additional protective clothing (i.e., faceshield, apron, oversleeves) is appropriate where chemical contact with body/skin is foreseeable.

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4. Special Handling Procedures and Storage Requirements

Where greater than 10 gallons of flammables are kept, such materials must be stored within a flammable storage cabinet.

Fire extinguishers appropriate for the fire hazards present must be available in all laboratories and storage areas.

5. Spill and Accidental Procedures

Prompt response to chemical spills is critical to protect worker health & safety and to mitigate adverse effects to the environment. For further guidance, refer to [EHSEM's chemical spill response webpage](#).

Laboratory personnel who work with hazardous chemicals are to be provided the opportunity to receive medical attention/consultation when:

- A spill, leak, explosion or other occurrence results in a hazardous exposure (potential overexposure).
- Symptoms or signs of exposure to a hazardous chemical develop.

6. Waste Disposal

Many corrosive liquids intended for disposal may likely be considered hazardous wastes. For general guidance regarding waste disposal, contact EHSEM at (3-4914).

7. Minimum Training Requirements

- General Lab Safety Training
- Lab Specific Training

8. Approval Required

Consult with PI regarding need for prior approval. Laboratory personnel shall seek and the PI must provide prior approval of any chemical usage involving restricted chemicals.

9. Decontamination Procedures

Personnel: If immediate medical attention is required, call Public Safety at 911 from any campus phone for (313)593-5333 from a cell phone. Remove any contaminated clothing, and IMMEDIATELY flush contaminated skin with water for at least 15 minutes following any skin contact. For eye exposures, IMMEDIATELY flush eyes with water for at least 15 minutes.

Consult [MSDS](#) for guidance on appropriate first aid. Where medical attention is required, ensure to bring along [MSDS\(s\) of chemical\(s\)](#) to aid medical staff in proper diagnosis and treatment.

Area: Decontamination procedures vary depending on the material being handled. The toxicity of some materials can be neutralized with other reagents. All surfaces should be wiped with the appropriate cleaning agent following dispensing or handling. Waste materials generated should be treated as a hazardous waste.

10. Designated Area

For flammables that are also considered particularly hazardous substances, a designated area shall be established per the other applicable SOP(s).