After Hour Work Policy

After hour work policy at Chemistry Labs

There are special risks associated with working in a laboratory, more so when working outside of normal working hours. The following after hours work policy is to be adhered to when working in a Chemistry laboratory, and has been adopted (and reviewed) by the Chemistry Department's H&S committee.

*Normal working hours are **08:00 – 17:30 Monday to Friday**, any time before, after, over weekends and over the December holiday season is considered after hours work.*

The main risk associated with after hours work is that there are no SHE Reps, Fire Marshals, or First Aiders readily available in the event of an accident/emergency.

It is the duty of all Supervisors/Line Managers to be aware of when and what work is being undertaken by their staff, post docs and students to ensure that After Hours Work is properly regulated.

The following rules apply to after hours work in the laboratory, hazardous and special risk work:

- **Working alone in the laboratory is forbidden.**
- Ensure there is always someone within calling distance.
- Ensure someone physically checks-in every 30 min.
- A WRITTEN agreement from your Supervisor/Line Manager must be obtained.
    - If working after hours is a regular occurrence, then an after hours work schedule must be in place and reflected in the individual's performance agreement.
- Sign in/out on any one of the two white boards at entrances (P8 & P9-side) on level 4.
- Make sure you know what to do, who to call and how to evacuate the building in case of an emergency.
- Ensure adequate water flow is available in the laboratory. This is essential for emergency wash stations. *Note: water flow can be affected by loadshedding.*
- Experiments that involve any measure of **risk** (see below in **red**) MUST be done at normal working hours. Otherwise, a proper risk assessment (speak to SHE Rep) MUST be completed to ensure all the risks are evaluated and what to do to prevent an incident and signed off by your Supervisor/Line Manager.
- Undergraduate/vacation students are forbidden to be in laboratories unless a member of the academic, scientific officer staff or postgraduate student is present with them.
- The "Buddy System" must be implemented during after hours.

NO work involving REACTIVE (air & water sensitive) alkyl metal compounds, in particular alkyl lithium compounds, metal hydrides, cyanides or HF may be conducted outside normal working hours. Risk assessments and clear warning signs are required wherever these reagents are being used.

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BUDDY System:

- **The buddy must be a fellow academic or Chemistry post-grad student.**
- **The buddy MUST be informed of the following:**
  a) CPS's tollfree number
  b) OHS Officer's and/or group's (SHE reps) after hours emergency response contact numbers
  c) Where the closest break-glass unit (BGU) is, how to use it and when
  d) Nearest and alternative evacuation routes from your area
- **Buddy's roles and responsibilities:**
  1) Check in with chemist every 10 - 30 minutes.
  2) Be within calling distance.
  3) In the event of an emergency, push closest BGU, then call CPS and the OHS Officer.
  4) Evacuate if necessary.

In Case of An Emergency:

- **CALL CPS TOLLFREE 0806502222 OR AT X2010 or x2222/3**

Students and staff should take note that Campus Protection Services (CPS) provides a service where an officer will escort a staff member or student anywhere on campus at night. Please make use of this service by simply dialing CPS TOLLFREE 0806502222 OR at x2222/3 or 021 650 2222/3. This is a 24-hour service.

Unattended Experiments:

Experimental work left running unattended poses special risks in terms of fires and floods and must be carefully controlled. **The following rules apply:**

- All unattended experiments must have an overnight notice with clear mention of:
  - ✓ The owner's name and emergency contact number (cell no.)
  - ✓ Experiment number (if more than one similar kind of experiments are running then the experiment numbers should be written clearly on the individual reaction RBFs / vials)
  - ✓ Emergency quenching procedure.
  - ✓ Other necessary information, e.g., reaction temperature, flammable reagents/solvents, toxic materials etc.
- If an unattended experiment is set up in a fume hood, the **lighting for that fume hood should be turned on**.

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