

OSU Dept. of Chemistry and Biochemistry Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

Summary. The Ohio State University Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment for all of its members. This Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) policy is designed to prevent workplace injuries and to establish a consistent laboratory protective clothing policy. The policy applies to all members of the department, including all divisional faculty, staff, students and visitors.

Personal Protective Equipment Policy. This policy sets minimum departmental requirements. Each laboratory/classroom/shop, however, may develop policies and procedures which meet or exceed this policy standard. Laboratory coats and protective eyewear are required to be worn by all employees working with hazardous materials. In addition, laboratory personnel occupying the adjacent area, who have the potential to be exposed to chemical splashes or other hazards are required to wear laboratory coats and protective eyewear. A student not wearing the required PPE in a laboratory/technical area may not participate in lab activities until such PPE is worn. Failure/refusal to wear required PPE is a basis for discipline (see “Enforcement” below).

The Laboratory Supervisor will be responsible (with technical assistance from the Chemical Hygiene Officer) for selecting personal protective equipment, acquiring approved equipment, maintaining availability, and establishing equipment cleaning and disposal procedures as defined in appropriate standard operating procedures (SOPs). Exemptions to this policy (for example, those performing laser alignments) will be considered by the Safety Committee following submission of a formal petition for exemption. The petition must explain the need for an exemption in writing and be approved by the Safety Committee and Chair to be approved.

Laboratory workers should be advised on the proper selection, use and limitations of personal protective equipment before they are required to use the equipment. Personal protective equipment, excluding safety glasses and lab coats, should be removed before leaving work areas. All PPE must be removed before leaving the Department/building.

Laboratory PPE and Eyewear Requirements

1. Laboratory personnel must, at a minimum, wear lab coats and safety glasses while in a lab where chemicals are handled. Lab coats and safety glasses are not required when sitting at a desk in the lab, provided that the desk is isolated from the source of potential hazards. Additional protective equipment may be required depending on hazards in the lab.
2. Shorts and sandals may not be worn into the lab even under a lab coat.
3. Chemical resistant gloves shall be worn whenever the potential for hazardous skin contact exists. The safety data sheet for the substance or glove selection charts should be referenced (see <http://jr.chemwatch.net/chemwatch.web/dashboard> or <http://chemistry.osu.edu/files/ehs/select.pdf>). Standard operating procedures should specify glove requirements, if any. Contaminated gloves shall be removed before touching surfaces outside the work area (i.e., doorknobs, faucet handles). Before each use, gloves are to be inspected for damage and contamination, i.e., tears, punctures, discoloration. If deficiencies are noted, the gloves should be cleaned, repaired, or replaced before use.

4. The department will provide lab coats and lab coat laundering services at no cost to all employees who work in the lab. Laboratory coats shall not be laundered at private residences or at public laundry facilities. Protective coats worn in the laboratory must adhere to the following requirements:
 - a. Lab coats must be in good condition and reasonably clean.
 - b. Lab coats shall cover the wearer to near the knees.
 - c. Lab coats made of polyester-cotton blends (no less than 35% cotton) are acceptable in labs where no open flames are present.
 - d. Lab coats must be made of flame resistant (FR) material in labs where open flames are used or when pyrophoric materials are handled. Persons working with pyrophoric liquids also should wear 100% cotton clothing underneath the FR lab coat on days that they handle these materials in the lab. The FR will be provided by the Department Safety Office, as needed.
5. All protective eyewear (refer to Section 23.2 APPENDIX II of the old Department Chemical Hygiene Plan) must meet American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards and be appropriate for the work being done. Typical prescription spectacles are not suitable eye protection.
 - a. The Safety Office will provide eye protection in most cases. There are several options available: 1) Chemical splash goggles of various styles along with standard face shields. 2) Plano (non-prescription) safety glasses and plano safety glasses that fit over regular glasses. These glasses are designed for impact only (and not for chemical splashes). 3) Prescription safety glasses with permanently attached top and side shields (again, not designed for chemical splashes).
 - b. If you haven't had an eye exam within the last two years, or if you need an eye exam, you should make an appointment. Otherwise, bring a hard copy of your prescription with you. The Chemistry Department does **NOT** pay for eye exams; they are your responsibility. The Chemistry Department **DOES** pay for safety lenses and frames (up to "Group G").
 - c. If you want to "upgrade" your frames or lenses, you may write a check (or supply a credit card number) to Select Optical at the time your appointment.
 - d. **Pick up an authorization form** from the Safety Office and take it to any of the vendors listed below. OSU is now on the vendor list, so it will likely be the most convenient. "Walk-ins" are fine as long as you don't need an eye exam.

Enforcement. The Department, through the Safety Office and the Joint Safety Team (JST), will periodically inspect laboratories. Each inspection report will be made available to laboratory supervisors and also kept on file by the safety office.