

**AFRD ES&H Operations Committee**  
**71 Conference Room**  
**March 9, 2007**  
**2:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Minutes**

Attendees: Ken Barat, Sharon Hernandez, Steve Lidia, Tom McVeigh, Tom Scarvie, Peter Seidl, Pat Thomas, Csaba Toth

**1. ES&H News and Lessons Learned**

- Ergonomics advocates program – We are looking for volunteers who want to learn how to do help people improve their ergonomics. Ergo Advocates will receive 3 half-day training sessions. They will learn how to perform basic screening evaluations, assist with selecting and adjusting equipment, and communicate ergonomics awareness information. People who are interested should contact Edith Perry to sign up.
- Spring hazards – An employee recently reported an encounter with ticks in the grass around Bldg. 71. The lovely deer that inhabit the LBNL site tend to carry ticks around with them, and the ticks can carry diseases. With the warmer weather, snakes, yellowjackets, skunks, etc. are making their appearance. It is best to avoid walking through tall grass when possible. If you do walk through grass or brush, use caution and check yourself for ticks.
- Lessons Learned: Committee members reported that they have not been receiving announcements of recent Lessons Learned through e-mails. (Update: This problem was been reported to EH&S and the database glitch has been fixed.) Further information about the following may be found in the Lessons Learned database at:  
<https://isswprod.lbl.gov/lessonslearned/login.aspx>
  - **Bldg. 50E slip and fall** – In January, an employee slipped and fell while descending the Bldg. 50E stairs, breaking her arm. An inspection of the stairs found loose screws and deteriorating non-skid material. Please check the stairs in your areas as you pass by and report any similar hazards to the Work Request Center. The non-skid material was recently replaced on the stairs by the Bldg. 71 parking lot.
  - **Bldg. 2 chemical handling** – In February, a student was etching a germanium wafer in a mixture of nitric and hydrofluoric acid in a fume hood in Bldg. 2. A researcher had verbally explained the procedure to the student and then left the area. The resulting reaction was stronger than the student expected, so he closed the hood sash and waited. When he opened the sash to retrieve his sample, he smelled acid and felt a warm sensation on his cheek. The student had been trained in Chemical Hygiene and emergency procedures, and he responded

properly, seeking help and applying first aid, so he was not injured. This is a reminder that our summer students will be coming soon, and we need to ensure they are properly trained and supervised, especially when performing a task for the first time.

- **shelf collapse** -- In February, an employee returned to his/her new office and found that a bookshelf had collapsed. Some of the screws used to secure the metal slotted columns to the wall protruded too far and kept the shelf brackets from fully engaging into the slots. Additional screws above the shelves can keep them from falling out. Some of our QUEST teams checked bookshelves in their areas for this hazard.
- **digital clamp meter recall** – Amprobe is recalling digital clamp meters used for testing voltage. If anyone in your areas uses this type of meter, please see the Lessons Learned or contact Keith Gershon for further information.
- **optical fiber handling** – an Idaho facility posted a reminder that the process of terminating and splicing fiberoptic cable produces small scraps of sharp fiber that are very dangerous if they get into your eyes or skin, or are ingested or inhaled. This type of fiber is used in the CBP laser lab. The Lessons Learned describes safe handling rules, including use of safety glasses with side shield, gloves, and proper disposal or scraps.
- **particle in eye** – An employee at the ALS was drilling holes into aluminum cable trays located above equipment racks that were cooled by fans. The employee was wearing wrap-around safety glasses, but the fans still blew the fine particles into the employee's eyes. Goggles would be a better choice for eye protection when working near fans or in windy locations.
- Materials Sciences Division Safety Coordinator Rick Kelly provided two other items of interest:
  - **gas cylinder cart tip-over** – There are some old two-cylinder gas carts that do not provide a way to restrain the cylinders one at a time, and have small wheels in the rear. This makes the carts very unstable when replacing a cylinder. One of these carts on campus tipped over and caused a foot injury. If you have two-cylinder carts (most commonly used for oxygen/acetylene welding in our areas), please check their stability.
  - **peroxide explosion** – A student on campus was distilling a mixture containing tetrahydrofuran (THF) and diethyl ether. There was an explosion. Some organic chemicals can react with oxygen to form peroxide crystals when they sit too long in storage. These crystals can explode when they are disturbed by heating or sudden motion. AFRD does use some peroxide-forming chemicals. Chemical owners can tell whether they have chemicals like this by checking the MSDS or checking

the hazards in the Chemical Management System database. These chemicals need special labels and regular testing to determine whether peroxides have formed.

- **ES&H News:**
  - **Proposed safety committee changes** – AFRD is considering making some changes to our safety coordinator system and AHD review system. The purpose is to increase safety awareness, reduce the burden of people serving as safety coordinator, and make better use of the expertise of our research and technical staff to identify safety issues. We are thinking about rotating a member of the ES&H Operations Committee into a deputy safety coordinator position for a year, during which they would complete additional safety training and assist the safety coordinator. The next year, the deputy safety coordinator would be elevated to division safety coordinator and a new deputy would be selected. Other safety service (such as serving as SRC representative or on other LBNL safety committee participation) and prior service would be taken into consideration in selecting participants so that no one person is asked to do too much. The ES&H administrator (Pat Thomas) would continue to provide assistance to the safety coordinator and deputy. We are also thinking about allowing the division safety coordinator to call upon AFRD senior and staff scientists and senior matrixed technical staff to assist in AHD reviews for experiments that have hazards in their areas of expertise. There was a concern that this could result in some irrelevant or insignificant issues being raised. The division safety coordinator, with the assistance of EH&S experts, would need to evaluate the input of the reviewers and exercise some quality control. If you have additional thoughts about these ideas, please discuss with Steve Lidia.
  - **PY 07 performance criteria** – Copies of the division self-assessment performance criteria for this year were distributed. These will be discussed in more detail in a future meeting. Your QUEST activities are an important part of our self-assessment.

## **2. Program Safety Coordinator Status QUEST Reports & Forum**

LOASIS divided into 4 groups and completed their QUEST assessments. They are still writing the reports. They are working on reviewing and updating their procedures.

IBT has turned in their QUEST reports. Tom McVeigh reminded everyone that students are coming soon and we need to watch out for their safety.

Fusion held QUEST meetings and sent 4 groups out to do the assessments. One issue that came up in their discussions is that they would like to have a cardiac defibrillator available in their work area.

Sharon Hernandez has been working with the administrative staff to improve their ergonomics. There is some new ergonomic furniture available with adjustable corner workstations.

In addition to doing QUEST, CBP has been working on getting the Fajans' group equipment moved from Bldg. 58A to campus.

Supercon has completed QUEST and some entries are being made in CATS.

ALS Accelerator Physics will be doing QUEST in May with the ALS division.

**Next Meeting:**

**April 6, 2:00 PM, Bldg. 71 Conference Room**