

Minutes for Department of Chemistry Safety Committee Meeting – Fall Term: Oct. 6, 2006

Present: Leah Bandstra
Paul Blakemore
Kevin Gable
John Loeser
Alexey Shvarev

Absent: Kristi Edwards
Mas Subramanian

Agenda items and overview of discussion

1. Overview of past safety issues by exiting Gilbert Hall safety chair (Chris Pastorek)

- **CP** could not make the meeting time; however, **KG** was able to adequately up-date new safety committee members on past safety related issues

2. Operational running mode for safety committee

- it was agreed that the safety committee shall meet in its normal course of business once per term (i.e. four times per year), with *ad hoc* meetings as needed to address any pressing safety related matters
- two weeks prior to any meeting, an internal safety audit of Gilbert Hall will be conducted (along similar lines to city fire department inspection) by one of the committee members (**PB** for Winter term) to assess current state of department; matters arising from these informal inspections will be discussed during regular meetings
- laboratory safety audits conducted by 1st year graduate students as part of their assessment for CH607 (Section 10) - Chemical Safety course will be reviewed by the committee during the Spring term meeting
- it was agreed that 1st year graduate student Sheena Strohmayer should be invited to join the safety committee to act as graduate student representative

3. Matters arising from Corvallis Fire Department inspection of 9/12/06

The following issues double-flagged in the Corvallis Fire Department (CFD) safety audit report of September 12 (2006) were discussed (re-inspection of department is due on October 26, 2006):

- *use of kick-down door stops*: historically, all internal office and laboratory doors with Gilbert Hall have been fitted with kick-down stops to allow the doors to be easily propped open. According to the city fire code, use of such door stops is prohibited because in the event of fire, doors will not close automatically. In the past, this item has not been acted on; however, Facilities & Services (F&S) have now acted on the CFD recommendation and have removed virtually all of the door stops

PB will contact Lance Jones (EH&S) to seek clarification as to when it may be permissible for individuals within the department to prop doors open, and also to glean what options there may be for the installation of automatic door closers connected to a smoke/fire alarm system

- *hazardous & poorly secured gas cylinders stored in Gilbert 324A*: it has been noted many times in CFD inspections that gas cylinders stored in Gilbert 324A are not well secured; furthermore, the CFD strongly recommend that any cylinders no longer needed are removed. It was decided that Gilbert 324A, being located within a busy seminar room (324), would be better employed in future as a storage room for non-hazardous materials

LB will prepare an inventory of the cylinders in Gilbert 324A and circulate this list among PI's within the department to identify possible users of the cylinders. Any cylinders no longer required will be duly disposed of and any other units relocated to more appropriate locations within the department

4. Recruitment and training of first-aid volunteers / other first-aid matters

- **PB** reported that seven volunteers have been identified to be trained as departmental first-aiders. The following individuals, ensuring near-by first-aid coverage for all floors of Gilbert Hall, will receive basic first-aid and adult CPR training at the Dixon Rec Center on either 10/28 or 11/18 later this term
Michael Naffziger (3rd floor), Heather Platt (basement), Alexey Shvarev (2nd floor), Andrew Smith (2nd floor), Sheena Strohmayer (2nd/3rd floor), Michael Waxter (3rd floor), Kristal Young (1st/3rd floor)
- **AS** volunteered to undertake a survey of the current state and locations of first-aid kits available throughout the department

5. Residual organic solvents entering drainage water

- the long running problem of volatile organic solvents entering drainage water was briefly discussed. It was identified that the primary source of organic contamination of aqueous effluent is aspirator pumps used throughout the

department for the operation of rotary evaporators. No easy solution exists for this problem; **PB** will investigate cost implication of use of chiller units for more effective vapor condensation and/or replacement of aspirator pumps with electronic pumps (e.g. teflon membrane type)

6. Fire extinguisher placement

- the logic of EH&S's instigated recent relocation of many fire extinguishers from within laboratories to corridors was questioned. **PB** will contact Lance Jones to discuss option of having additional fire extinguishers on hand *within* laboratories in addition to those now located in the corridors

7. Any other business

- **KE** highlighted that the glass recycle bin has been removed by Campus Recycling because trash was being deposited in it. Used glass (mostly old solvent bottles) is now routinely being dumped into regular trash dumpsters, leading to waste of glass and possible fire hazard due to mixing of flammable residual solvent vapors with combustible rubbish

to solve this problem, **LB** will contact Campus Recycling and find out whether a glass recycle bin equipped with a lock matching that of Gilbert Hall can be installed at an adjacent location to the Department of Chemistry