

**Minutes for Department of Chemistry
Safety Committee Meeting
Jan. 26, 2007**

Present:	Paul Blakemore (PB)	Apologies:	Alexey Shvarev
	Kristi Edwards (KE)		Sheena Strohmayer
	Kevin Gable (KG)		
	John Loeser (JL)	On leave:	Leah Bandstra
	Mas Subramanian (MS)		

Agenda items and overview of discussion

1. Report on general safety status of Department

PB apprised the Committee of recent safety related news within the department, as follows:

- Corvallis Fire Department's report on their follow-up fire safety audit of Gilbert Hall on 10/26/06 was delivered and noted that all hazards identified during their initial inspection of 9/14/06 had been corrected
- first-aid and CPR training for a number of Departmental personnel was completed at Dixon Rec during Fall term; Gilbert Hall now has at least one certified first-aider working on each floor (names & contact info listed on main page of Safety Web), Kristi Edwards and Greg Jones will continue to provide first-aid coverage for Gilbert Addition
- no major accidents or incidents were reported during the last quarter; however, the discovery of an unsecured HF cylinder dumped in the basement on 10/16/06 was cause for concern. Regrettably, no one claimed ownership of the cylinder and it has now been sent to EH&S for disposal

2. Safety Web

- the committee reviewed current content posted on the Department's new Safety Web internet resource and agreed on its general appropriateness; it was noted that the links section could do with significant expansion
- **MS** suggested the addition of a guideline concerning lone working practices in research laboratories and agreed to compose it

3. Review of outreach event approval policy

As of 10/01/06, a new safety policy was put in place requiring pre-approval of

outreach events. The approval process requires completion of a proforma detailing the particulars of the event and collation of MSDS for all substances to be used during any demonstrations (the procedure is described in detail on Safety Web). It was reported (**PB**) that five events have been approved to date according to this procedure; feedback from the applicants suggests that the administrative burden of seeking approval is not unreasonable. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to leave the current policy in place without revision at this time.

The following outreach events were recently approved:

- Haak (12/14/06-12/15/06): hands-on activities and demonstrations for 5th grade students at Wilson Elementary School (ref. #06-1)
- Titus (01-23-07): thermite reaction demonstration for SAACS club in Gilbert 124 with staff supervision from Dr. Drapela (ref. #07-1)
- Haak (01/31/07): hands-on activities for 5th & 6th grade students from Ash Creek Intermediate School (Monmouth) during a day-long field trip to OSU (ref. #07-2) [n.b. repeat event for Gold Beach Middle School scheduled for 02/09/07]
- Haak (02/03/07): training activities for SMILE teachers in GBAD 209 (ref. #07-3)
- Remcho (02/09/07): chemical vs. physical change demonstration to 5th grade students at Ashbrook School (ref. #07-4)

4. Final assessment exercise for CH407/507/607 Safety Seminar Class

The committee reached a consensus on a meaningful final assignment for students enrolled in CH407/507/607 - Chemistry Safety Seminar course. All students will be required to research and suggest three additional safety related web-links to add to Safety Web; students will be required to write a handling/operational procedure for use of a given hazardous substance based on MSDS data; graduate students (CH607) will additionally be required to complete a safety audit for their assigned research laboratory.

5. Review of GBAD elevator use policy

The GBAD elevator is heavily used by undergraduate students during term time and **KE** had raised concerns last term that use of this conveyance for the purpose of transporting waste materials from research laboratories in Gilbert Hall out to dumpsters should be restricted to off-peak times (i.e. outside of 8-5 MF, 8-

6 TWR). This policy was deemed a reasonable safety measure during an ad hoc meeting of the Committee and was put in place on 11/03/06. **PB** received a complaint from a faculty member concerning the need for this restriction,; accordingly, the Committee reviewed the policy. Acting as an advocate, **PB** set forth the following points raised by the complainant:

- the GBAD elevator provides the most convenient ground level access to the dumpsters allowing easy access for laden carts
- during winter months, it is dark outside by 5 pm, thus evening dumping of waste materials via the GBAD elevator constitutes an unsafe practice
- why the distinction between the elevator in Gilbert Hall (no restriction on use) and the GBAD elevator? Both may be used by undergraduates

The following responses were made:

- **KG** noted that while the route to dumpsters via the GBAD elevator is certainly the most convenient, cart access to the same area is possible via the Gilbert Hall elevator (via ramp from east wing basement exit onto Monroe); this (admittedly less convenient) route is available at any time of day, thus darkness needn't present a problem in taking material out to the dumpsters during the week (in any event, the area by the dumpsters is supposed to be lit at night)
- **KE** noted that the major lecture rooms in Gilbert Hall are either on ground level (Gilbert 124) or just one floor up (Gilbert 224); by comparison, GBAD has large teaching labs on all of its many levels. The GBAD elevator therefore gets considerably more undergraduate traffic than the one in Gilbert Hall, and a different use policy is valid
- **MS** and **JL** were also in general agreement with the GBAD elevator policy

Given this discourse, the Committee reached a consensus to leave the restriction on GBAD elevator use in place. However, the situation will be monitored and further input from members of the Department on this issue is welcomed.

6. Any other business

- **KE** expressed a concern that lecture rooms in Gilbert Hall are becoming increasingly over-crowded during classes, sometimes all seats are full and students sit on the stairs (in particular, Gilbert 124); **KG** noted that this is a difficult issue to address and likely stems from students not turning up to their properly assigned class sections: the issue will be flagged to instructors in the Departmental safety memorandum alongside other timely reminders