



Environmental Health & Safety News



July, 1998

***EDITORIAL:
WHO OWNS OUTDATED CHEMICALS AND CHEMICAL
WASTE?***



I often get calls that start out something along the line of "*you* have some chemical waste over here. When are *you* going to take care of it?" As Gomer Pile used to say, "Surprise, Surprise!!" Chemical waste belongs to the individual who generated it. Just as the purchase cost of the chemical must be paid by the researcher or end user, the department that ordered the chemical and the cost for disposal of the end generated waste must also come from the researcher, or department. Often, those who order chemicals for research forget associated costs. These include waste disposal cost as part of the complete and necessary budget cycle. Federal regulations imposed by the Environmental Protection (EPA), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and others, are very stringent. Controls will only tighten in the future, and costs associated with waste disposal will only continue to increase. I strongly recommend minimum purchase of chemical to cover only a specific time frame. This helps reduce excess. Waste disposal is the issue at the end of the cycle. Last minute spending of grant funds at the end of the year is often for chemicals that are obvious excess--even at the time of purchase. Often researchers leave the campus, leaving behind excess, orphaned chemicals. Sometimes orphaned chemicals can be recycled to some other user on campus via the Chemical Exchange Program. This is not, however, always the case and the department gets stuck with disposal costs. It is a changing world; what you put down the drain legally just a few years ago is now not only against the law, but can have serious implications regarding not only the environment, but also financial liability of the university.

Paul A. Nichols



CHEMICALS NEWLY LISTED AS KNOWN OR LIKELY HUMAN CARCINOGENS:

Carcinogens are chemicals that have been proven to cause cancer. Generally, all chemical dyes and heavy metals (toxic) should be considered potential carcinogens. This is due to the lack of data on the nature of many of these chemicals. It is prudent to use extreme care when handling these substances.

The National Toxicology Program has announced the addition of fourteen to the one hundred eighty-four already included in the official list of known or "suspect" carcinogens.

Newly listed as known human carcinogens:

- cyclosporin
- chlorzotocin
- furan
- thiotepa
- danthron
- 1-nitropyrene
- azacitidine
- 1,6-dinitropyrene
- 6-nitrichrysene
- 4-nitropyrene
- 1,8-dinitropyrene
- p-chloro-o-toluidine
- disperse blue 1
- o-nitroanisole
- 1,2,3-trichloropropane

"Euck runs out but safety is good for life!"



"HANDWASHING" THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR OF INFECTION CONTROL:

To wash your hands properly...

- 1. Turn on the water and use a generous amount of soap. (Avoid bar soap)**
- 2. Lather soap and scrub for at least 15 seconds.**
- 3. Be sure to wash between your fingers, your wrists, fingertips, and under nails where dirt is trapped.**
- 4. Rinse soap off hands.**
- 5. Dry hands with a paper or cloth towel.**
- 6. Turn off faucet with towel to avoid recontaminating hands.**

"Stop accidents before they stop you!."

SUMMER SWIM SAFETY TIPS



According to the Safety and Health Council of Greater Omaha, Inc., drownings claim about 4,600 lives each year and are the fourth leading cause of accidental death in the United States.

Most drownings occur in natural water environments and swimming pools especially privately owned facilities found in homes, apartments, hotels and resorts. Swimming accidents cause hundreds of spinal injuries each year, many of which result in permanent paralysis for the victim. Most serious injuries, about 95 percent, result from dives into water less than five feet deep.

The majority of water-related accidents are preventable. By following simple safety rules you can avoid a tragedy:

- Never swim alone
- Children must be supervised constantly.
- ALWAYS check water depth before diving.
- Stay out of the water during thunderstorms and other extreme weather.
- Avoid swiftly moving water. If caught in a current, swim in the same direction as the current and angle towards the shore until you reach safety.
- Obey posted safety rules.
- NEVER dive into an above ground pool.
- Do not try to exceed your swimming limitations.
- Avoid the use of alcohol or other drugs when you are around water.

From [Safety and Health Council of Greater Omaha, Inc.](#)

If you drink and drive, you might as well smoke

COUGH SYRUP MAY CAUSE BIRTH DEFECTS



Cough syrups and tablets which may contain dextroethorphan as a key ingredient should be avoided by pregnant women. Dextromethorphan belongs to a class of drugs known as NMDA (N-methyl-D-aspartate_ receptor blockers, and had been found to cause severe defects in chicken embryos. In the chicken embryo it knocks out a receptor of the central nervous system, causing the defect. Alcohol defects are caused in a similar manner.
(Excerpted from *Chemical Health and Safety*, May/June 1998; vol.5 no.3)

Look sharp but don't get cut!

CAR FIRE TIPS



- **If you see smoke or flames coming from your car, get out. "There's nothing in your car that's worth more than your life," says Mike Connors, assistant fire chief for the Naperville, Illinois, Fire Department.**
- **Only try to extinguish the fire if it's small and you know how to work your fire extinguisher. Check your extinguisher regularly.**
- **Stand up-wind from the burning vehicle. "Today's vehicles burn very quickly, and some of the fabrics and plastics give off toxic fumes," says Tim Sendelbach, training officer for the Missouri City Fire Department.**
- **"Lack of maintenance, such as old wires or worn hoses, can easily cause a fire," says John Connolly, safety officer for the Itasca, Illinois, Fire Department. Have your car serviced regularly.**
- **According to the National Fire Protection Association, 3 of every 5 vehicle fire deaths occurred in fires caused by collisions or rollovers. "By wearing a safety belt, you're more likely to survive the crash and then be able to get out of a burning car," Connors says.**

"Invest in tomorrow by practicing safety today."

COMPUTER BREAK...



While it's always possible to use your computer's dictionary or thesaurus, consider getting up from your chair, walking over to your bookshelf, and talking down your hefty book.

Moving around promotes blood circulation, and relieves the back, shoulder, and neck tension which cause tension headaches.

Exercising your arms and hands can prevent carpal tunnel syndrome and other repetitive motion related problems.

Source: The Hope Heart Institute, Seattle.

Take ladder safety one step at a time

BALLOONS



Between 1972 and 1992 there were 373 choking deaths among American children. One third of these deaths involved latex balloons. Children had either inhaled a whole latex balloon while trying to blow it up, or had choked on fragments of a burst balloon.

Source: Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 274, No.22

Team Safety. It's just good business

FIREWORKS FACTS FOR THE 4TH OF JULY



From 1986 to 1995, on average, about 5 people were killed by fireworks each year, 11,500 were treated in hospital emergency departments because of injuries associated with fireworks per data from the National Center for Health Statistics and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Most of these deaths and injuries occur near the 4th of July and those holidays and festivals such as Christmas, New Year, the Chinese New Year and Mardi Gras. Over the past 10 years, fireworks-related deaths have ranged from 2 in 1992 and 1995 to 10 in 1993.

For 1996, the CPSC estimated that there were 7,558 fireworks related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments. Of these injuries, 6.8% were children under 5 years old, 30% were 5-14 years old, 27% were 15-24 years old, 35% were 25-64 years old, and 0.8% were 65 or older. The injury rate was 2.8 per 100,000 populations with the 5-14 year age group having the highest rate.

Source: National Safety Council *Accident Facts - Up to Date* June 1998.

Hearing protection is a sound investment

GIVE A SPEECH ON YOUR WAY HOME...



"Every once in a while, while driving home from work, you should give a speech. Out loud, you should address why you like your life and what's appealing about your job. You should ask yourself why you are content with your friends and what you like about where you live. If the answers don't sound right, it may be time to make a change."

**-Garrison
Keillor - of Lake
Wobegone Fame**

Chance takers are accident makers!

The EH&S Newsletter is published by the Creighton University Environmental Health and Safety Department. It is provided to disseminate safety information to Creighton University Employees and Students inclusive of regulatory updates and policy changes. Questions regarding newsletter content and suggestions for ways to improve the newsletter should be addressed to Paul Nichols, Director, Environmental Health and Safety at pnichols@creighton.edu. We welcome any and all constructive criticism via E-mail (pnichols@creighton.edu), Fax at (402)546-6403, or Telephone at (402)546-6400.



**Environmental Health
and Safety Staff:**

Director-Paul A. Nichols
Chemical Coordinator-Lenore Koliha
Admin. Secretary-Mindy Foster

Campus Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Public Safety (emergency)-- 280-2911
Public Safety (general)----- 280-2104
Environ.Health & Safety---- 546-6400
Radiation Safety-----280-5570
Chemical Safety----- 546-6404
Chemical Waste----- 546-6404
Physical Plant-----280-2780