

## Tips for Safety Officers

### **Enforcing safety culture:**

- Hang relevant posters from the JST in lab spaces (e.g. a poster on hazardous gases can be kept near in-use gas tanks). Posters can be printed from the JST website.
- Have emergency contacts and response procedures clearly posted in your lab. (JST/EHS websites)

### **Addressing issues with compliance:**

- Speak to a labmate addressing the safety violation or concern explaining how they can improve their safety practices. Use phrasing such as *“I noticed this safety issue or unsafe practice... so I resolved the issue for you.... in the future can you please...”*
- Address the whole lab (rather than a couple individuals) about the issue during a group meeting to avoid calling just one person out.
- If issues with labeling arise, provide an adequate source of waste labels (even simple homemade ones...), gas canister tags, large markers... to lower the barrier for proper labeling practices.

### **Encourage near miss reporting:**

- Ask labmates who are reluctant to use the system if you can submit a near miss report on their behalf. Be sure to discuss the incident with them and get all the required information to fill out the report and permission to post it anonymously.
- If comfortable, de-anonymize yourself and disclose when you've submitted a near miss report on an incident. Others will learn what types of things they can report and might feel empowered to submit their own if they know they are not the only one using the system.

### **Communication with your group:**

- Group meeting can be an ideal time to communicate common recurring safety or waste issues to your lab and PI.
- Adding a “group business” section at the end of group meeting can allow for safety issues to be raised by group members, the safety officer and the PI alike.

### **Help from your PI:**

- Communicate to your PI that you value personal safety and the safety of the whole group. Ask for their support to address issues in lab and/or backup your authority to address them yourself.
- Ensure safety and waste related group jobs are properly designated so responsibilities are shared.
  - Supplying the lab with new needle boxes from the stockroom, packing up and calling for pickup of used needle boxes.
  - Packaging and disposal of glass waste plus retrieval of new boxes and liners.
  - Calling for special waste pickup - solid silica waste, hazardous reagents, empty pyrophoric bottles...
  - Cleaning balances and returning excess reagent bottles to their proper locations
- Assign one “point person” per bay to help address common issues such as labeling, waste disposal, recycling...

- Organize annual group cleanups to prevent buildup of empty reagent bottles, spilled chemicals, waste and dirty glassware. This is easy to schedule after or in place of a group meeting.
- Do not hide dangerous lab practices from the PI if they jeopardize your own or other's personal safety. A serious lab accident is bad for *everyone* and their research.

**Who else can help?**

- Anna Kim, EHS, JST and our safety liaisons are designated to support safety officers in addition to safety culture.
  - If you have issues addressing problems in lab and do not feel you are getting the support you need from your group, utilize these resources for help.
  - Utilize annual lab safety inspections done by Anna Kim and EHS as well as regular waste pick-ups to point out issues in lab noticed by higher authorities.
  - Request help from EHS in addressing specific issues with students through an "audit." Ask for help addressing recurring issues with these students in person.