

2018 Annual Laboratory Safety Partnership Forum

- Michelle Grawe discussed a recent fire in the MSE department. A post-doc was cleaning out a glovebox and had filled a bottle with lithium metal scraps. The bottle had been oxidizing in a fume hood and she when she went to put the cap on, had to knock off some of the lithium since the bottle was too full. The lithium landed in a wet sink inside the fume hood and ignited. She panicked and threw the whole bottle into the sink, which also ignited. A squeeze bottle of isopropanol also fell into the sink. A coworker nearby extinguished the fire using a class D extinguisher.
 - Findings:
 - The correct SOP wasn't followed. A nearly identical fire the year before had prompted re-writing of waste disposal SOPs, but the post-doc did not know the SOP existed.
 - An appropriate fire extinguisher was installed after the last fire, so it was quickly put out without any injuries or the sprinkler system engaging. The only damage was to the trap in the sink.
 - MSE has implemented a requirement that all groups create a grid, in which they track the group SOPs and trainings required for each, as well as individual grids, based on each person's projects.
 - It is important to share when things happen – the post-doc didn't even really know there had been a fire previously. Others in the department hadn't heard about the recent fire until they met with Michelle to go over SOPs.
- Phyllis Fisher talked about issues they are having in Veterinary Pathology with getting students to correctly dispose of sharps, garbage, and glass. The students continually put large amounts of trash and sharps into the glass disposal bins. EH&S will be working with her to find an appropriate solution.
- Joe Morris talked about the field safety website he put together for NREM - <https://www.nrem.iastate.edu/safety-training-nrem-majors> He welcomes any feedback.
- Paul Lueth talked about the recent EH&S initiative, Safety Every Month. If any labs do not have a poster, please contact EH&S for one. If lab personnel post a photo of them doing something safely in the lab to social media with the hashtag #adventuresafely, they will win a t-shirt.
- John Howell spoke about the recent accreditation process the college of engineering underwent.
- Cody Volkmann talked about the plan for EH&S to create a flowchart to follow in the event of an injury. It will detail what to do if a student or employee is injured.