The purpose of this fact sheet is to inform the campus community about basic laboratory safety information that will help prevent incidents and ensure compliance in laboratories.

The laboratory environmental has wide array of unique hazards and risk that must be controlled. Faculty and researchers know the most about their unique laboratory hazards and therefore, are in the best position to administer safety controls. For a list of responsibilities and compliance requirements, please review the Chemical Hygiene, Radiation Program and other compliance programs located on EHS website.

If you have any questions regarding lab safety, please contact your supervisor and/or the Environmental Health and Safety Office at 704-687-1111.

Laboratory Safety Compliance – Each Principal Investigator (PI) must contact Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Office prior to lab start up, decommission, or relocation to schedule a consultative safety assessment. A representative from the EHS office will schedule a laboratory safety assessment meeting to assist you with implementing safety compliance solutions.

Safety Violations – Radiation or radiation producing devices SHALL NOT be ordered without first obtaining EHS approval. Any safety infraction identified as immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) will require immediate corrective action. Disciplinary action or administrative sanction will be implement for severe situations of noncompliance.

Warning Signage and Labels – All high hazard areas, equipment and containers inside laboratories will have warning signage installed and access restricted. Personnel must adhere to warning signage and labels.

Laboratory Access – Laboratory room doors will be closed during experiments and appropriate warning signage posted on the exterior of the door. Do not allow other personnel to use your access card or key to gain entry into unauthorized spaces. Do not access areas that you have been given access to.

Laboratory Equipment – Take a tour of your lab and locate chemical fume hood, radiation Geiger counter, biosafety cabinet, chemical storage cabinet, safety shower, eye wash station, fire extinguishers and emergency shut offs. Discuss with your supervisor safety equipment work instructions, access, responsibilities, and training opportunities prior to using any equipment.

Occupational Health Surveillance – All laboratory employees who work task creates an exposure to human blood/cell lines, radiation or respirator usage will be required to participate in EHS health surveillance. In addition, the Office of Research Compliance will require medical surveillance for animal use and other compliance requirements.

Hazardous Waste Disposal – Do not pour any hazardous substance down the drain, outside or other unapproved method. EHS will provide onsite evaluation of hazardous substances and will offer free disposal services during the months of January, April July and October.

Training – Safety training is required before working in laboratory. The laboratory safety training requirements are listed on the EHS website. Training is available online and classroom formats.

Emergency – Call Campus Police at 704-687-2200 for emergency situations or cell phone 911.

Hazard Reporting – Report all unsafe conditions and/or unsafe actions to your supervisor immediately. These issues can also be reported to EHS anonymously.

Reporting of Injuries and Illnesses – All work-related injuries and illnesses must be reported to your supervisor by completing the Employee Incident Report form. The form once signed by your supervisor will provide authorization to be treated at the Student Health Center. Supervisor are then required to document investigation findings on the Supervisor Incident Investigation Report and forward all forms to EHS Office within 3 days.

GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Who has access to the lab?
- What is the most likely type of emergency in this lab?
- Where do I get chemical safety information?