

# SAFETY MATTERS

## Creating a Culture of Safety

July 2024



### Safety of Visitors

When anyone who isn't part of your routine lab staff visits your lab, what safety issues come up?

From inside your organization, you may have cleaning and support staff, engineering and facilities, security, or administration walk-throughs. Check if your institution requires all hired staff to have basic Blood Borne Pathogen and Chemical and Fire Safety training regardless of the specific work areas. Institutional staff should already be aware of how to conduct themselves in your space and where or how to get help if they need it.



External visitors are going to require some direct information from you. These visitors could be auditors, service representatives and technicians, construction crews, and even staff from the HPTN Laboratory Center.

For this group, do you point out your fire safety and evacuation maps as they sign in? Do you explain that they should have lab coats, and maybe other PPE (depending on who they are and what they do), as they enter the lab? Do you keep some supplies to offer for those who come unprepared? And, importantly, do you know what to do for safety incidents that involve external visitors?

## What About Auditors?

Auditors are visitors too and should be treated in the same way as any other visitor to your lab.

The GCLP Guidelines state that “The laboratory must have a comprehensive, documented, and workable evacuation plan that is available to all laboratory personnel and **visitors**”.

The GCLP Guidelines also state that “PPE must be made available to laboratory **visitors**, as applicable”

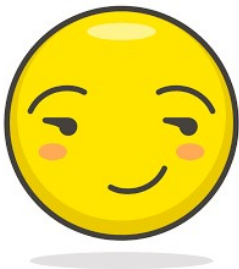


The Auditor will expect to follow the institutional rules and will even ask two important questions from the checklist:

1. Does the laboratory have a documented and workable evacuation plan that is available to all laboratory employees and **visitors**?
2. Have all laboratory employees (and **visitors**, if appropriate) been properly trained in the evacuation plan/policy?

## Practicing What We Preach

Here at the LC, we remind any visitors of the PPE requirements and point out the posted fire evacuation routes for all our visitors.



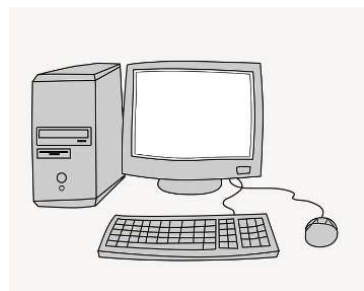
Impress the audit team and offer this information at the start of the audit visit!

## Common Audit Finding

**This month's reader request focuses on this common audit finding relating to Safety Data Sheets (SDS), formerly referred to as Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).**

*"The SDS for [reagent/supply item] could not be retrieved at the time of assessment".*

The GCLP Guidelines state: "To ensure proper handling and storage, the laboratory must have SDS or equivalent in the workplace for each hazardous chemical that they use..."



While some labs keep the SDS electronically, paper formats are still acceptable.



The documents should be on-hand and accessible at all times, no matter the format. SDS lay out all the information needed for lab safety and safety responders:

- What the reagent or solution is
- Who made it
- Where it comes from
- What is in it
- What is harmful about it
- How to safely neutralize it, if needed
- How to treat exposures
- and more.

If you have a situation in your workplace that prevents you from meeting the GCLP Guidelines, feel free to reach out to the HPTN LC staff for guidance at [hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu](mailto:hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu)

## This Month's Reader Poll

This month our poll is about Spill kits, First Aid Kits, and some general questions about this newsletter.

Respond here: [Monthly Reader Poll](#)

## Volunteers Wanted



We are still seeking volunteers for safety-focused lab interviews.

The LC would like to speak with lab staff and have a short 10 minute/ 5 question interview to learn more about our audience. Interviews or selected quotes may be published in this newsletter.

Please email [hptnrc-lab@jhmi.edu](mailto:hptnrc-lab@jhmi.edu) with the subject line "Safety Interview" if interested.

## Feedback and Contact

Thanks to those who continue to send back messages about our content! We are always happy to incorporate your suggestions and topics into future safety bulletins.

Need more on a specific topic?

Ideas for upcoming subject matter?

Let us know your thoughts and give feedback at:

[hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu](mailto:hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu)