

Quarterly Safety Meeting

Meeting Title: Fire Hazards and Response -Core lab, UH and CH fast track labs

Instructional Objectives:

1. The employee will demonstrate, by answering the review questions, complete knowledge of:
 - * The written instructions for fire response in the Safety Manual.
 - * The written fire safety regulations.
 - * The defend in place and evacuation strategies in response to a fire in your zone, adjacent zones and in non-adjacent zones.
 - * Methods to fight fires:
 - Types of fire extinguishers in the laboratories.
 - Use of the fire extinguishers.
 - * Fire drill procedure and documentation.
2. The employee will demonstrate skills necessary to utilize the fire extinguisher.
3. The employee will participate and demonstrate competency in an internal fire drill.

Discussion Topics :

Begin the discussion with the presentation of the written Fire Safety Section in the Safety Manual (Section 4). Remind folks that the code for fire is "Code Red" . Review the **R.A.C.E.** procedure for fires in your area or zone.

The **R**escue phase is obviously used if your personnel are at the fire scene and action is necessary to save the lives of co-workers or patients.

The **A**lert phase is critical to getting help and to sounding the alarm system. Use the pull station in the halls to activate the alarm. See the pull station map for the UH FT. The backup is to use the phone and call 2-5000 at Charity and UH. Give your name and the location of the Code Red.

The **C**ontain phase is for all areas. All doors and windows in the work areas are closed to prevent air from feeding the fire and to prevent the spread of smoke. Remind people that the smoke is more likely to kill than the fire itself.

To **E**vacuate means to move horizontally past smoke barrier doors to adjacent smoke-free areas.

In the two Fast Track Labs evacuation to exterior of the building is easy:

- at UH— via the hallway, via the PER and via the door in the microscope room.
- at CH— via the hall to west rear / MER / LSU or west front.

Point out the instructions for assisting handicapped individuals in the Safety Manual.

Evacuation

Traditionally , evacuation meant leaving the building-- just like in grade school. But unnecessary evacuation in a hospital setting would do more harm than good. Just imagine how many patients would needlessly suffer and how many deaths there would be if we evacuated the hospital for every "Code Red" that was reported-- however small. With smoke barrier zones and other engineering concepts which limit the spread of smoke and fire , it is appropriate to **defend- in- place**. This means that we evacuate all personnel and patients from zones with smoke or fire into adjacent zones which are clear of smoke and fire. In this way, we have an orderly systematic movement which is much safer to the patients and employees.

If there is smoke or fire in your sector, you need to evacuate through smoke barrier doors on your floor to an adjacent, smoke-free zone. People in the adjacent zones need to close all doors and windows, prepare to receive additional people and/or patients and to monitor the P.A. system for instructions. People in all other areas need to close all doors and windows and monitor the P.A. for instructions. Evacuation down the stairs should be the last resort.

Fire Drills:

Fire drills are held several times a year on each shift. We have to respond to the drills as if they were the real thing. But you must also report on drill performance. Make a copy of your the report to give to Argie Leach. Reporting is essential to improving performance and documenting activity.

Extinguishing fires (the other E word):

Consider extinguishing only after the rescue, alert, contain and evacuate phases.

You can fight the fire if

- * everyone has left the area,
- * the fire department has been notified,
- * the fire is confined to a small area and is not spreading beyond the immediate area,
- * you have an unobstructed escape route and are not in danger should you need to escape and
- * you know how to use the extinguisher.

PASS to extinguish a fire!

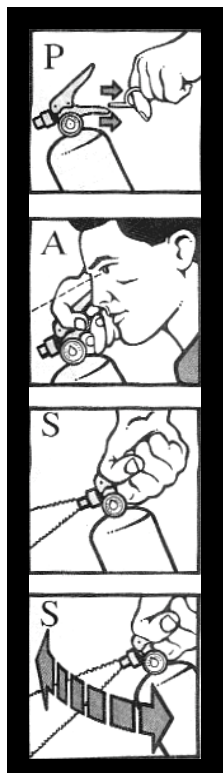
Pull the pin: This unlocks the operating lever.

Aim low: Point the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire.

Squeeze the lever below the handle to discharge the extinguisher. Release the lever to stop the discharge.

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Sweep the extinguisher from side to side aiming at the base until the flames go out. But watch carefully for reignition. You may need to repeat the process.





Types of fires and fire extinguishers



Wood, paper, cloth, rubber and many plastics.
Can use the silver water fire extinguishers.

Flammable liquids such as alcohol, xylene, acetone, etc.



Electrical equipment , wiring, instruments , etc.

All of the fire extinguishers in the laboratories are either ABC type -- for all fires-- or BC type which means that they can be used on flammable liquids or electrical fires. Make sure that you know what type extinguisher you are using.

Activities:

1. Let each person take the fire extinguisher off the wall and describe the steps and methods for extinguishing a small fire (PASS) procedure.
2. Conduct an internal drill as if a fire were in your lab. Do not actually pull the alarm but walk your staff through the process. "Play-act" and assign an escort for a "handicapped individual". Ask questions to determine that all staff know the procedure and the locations of all equipment (fire extinguishers, fire blankets, shower, pull stations and smoke doors).
3. Review the written departmental fire regulations (summary follows).
4. Review the emergency / disaster codes which are posted in your area.

Regulations (to minimize fire risk):

From our safety manual.

1. Electrical equipment must not be used if power cords are frayed or if control switches are not in good working order. If in doubt, contact the maintenance or Biomedical Equipment Maintenance Dept. (Biomed) for service.
2. Smoking is strictly prohibited anywhere in the hospital. The Medical Center of Louisiana is a smoke-free environment.
3. Access to all fire safety equipment, extinguishers, blankets, hoses, alarm boxes, etc. must be kept clear and free. All such equipment must be mounted and in plain sight. Extinguishers are maintained by the Fire and Safety Department. Access, mounting and condition of these items are verified on the Departmental Safety Survey.
4. Evacuation routes must be posted in each laboratory. This is verified on the Departmental Safety Survey.
5. Bunsen burners and other open flame devices must never be left unattended. When lighting such devices, the match or igniter must be struck first - before the gas is turned on.
6. Festive decorations and electrical devices must not pose a fire danger, either by nature of combustibility (e.g. wax candles, decorations of excessive size, etc.) or by blocking or impeding the operation of doors and passageways.
7. Flammable liquids must be stored in the designated flammable cabinet (either a specially-designed or well-ventilated cabinet. Small quantities of flammables (one gallon or less) may be kept on the bench for use. Flammables must never be stored in household type refrigerators; they must be stored in explosion-proof refrigerators which are properly marked.
8. Flammable liquids must never be heated with an open flame, hot plate or non-insulated resistance heaters. They must be heated using a heating mantle, steam bath, or hot water bath.
9. If electric motors are used for stirring flammables, they must be explosion-proof.
10. All personnel must be trained in use of fire protective equipment and in the reporting and reaction procedures.
11. Supervisors should periodically review fire safety procedure with employees.
12. In case of electrical fire, use only the fire extinguishers marked BC. Water must not be used!
13. If electrical equipment performance is suspect (burning smell, electrical spark, unusual heat etc.), disconnect the power by unplugging (if possible) or use the switch at the breaker panel (preferable) and contact Biomed for service.
14. Fire drills for each area of the department are administered by the Fire and Safety Department and reports are maintained by Fire and Safety Department