



Applied Microbiology
&
Biotechnology Laboratory

"sustainable is attainable"

Standard Operating Procedure

AMBL-002-G

Prepared:	7/15/2018
Prepared by:	Terry E Baxter
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Revised by:	Terry E Baxter

Reporting Incidents in the Environmental Engineering Laboratory

SOP SUMMARY

This SOP describes the policies, responsibilities and process for reporting incidents that occur in the environmental engineering laboratory, in which a biological, chemical or physical hazard is created or in which a policy or procedure intended to prevent or otherwise minimize such hazards has not been followed.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Hazards Assessment: This procedure does not contain hazards.

Safety Equipment and Engineering Controls: This procedure does not require the use of safety equipment or engineering controls.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): This procedure does not require the use of PPE.

Analysis-derived Wastes and Disposal:

Waste Generated	Hazardous (Y / N)	Disposal
This procedure does not generate wastes.	N	None

PROCEDURE DESCRIPTION

1.0 Introduction and Applicability

The overall purpose of the environmental engineering laboratory safety program is to create a working and teaching environment to prevent incidents that either result in injury or property damage or that result in the potential for injury or property damage. A safety program can only be as successful as the individuals who are in laboratory. Individuals who have unsafe practices and behaviors, as well as not following good laboratory practices, can eventually lead to situations that present at least the potential for injury or property damage and at worse result in the actual injury or damage of property. As such, managing safety in the laboratory requires the active involvement and cooperation of everyone.

A safety program cannot demonstrate success simply because there have been no past incidents resulting in serious injuries or property damage. The success and necessary improvements of a safety program depend on having knowledge of the types of incidents that occur and the circumstances under which they came about. Without this information, it is impossible to know whether safety training and the implementation of safety policies and practices are effective, and thus what improvements are needed to further ensure that the laboratory provides a safe environment.

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a mechanism for gathering basic information that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the safety program and its implementation. This procedure and the policies included are applicable to all authorized users upon entering the environmental engineering laboratory, regardless of the reason.

2.0 Definitions for Terms and Abbreviations Used

Previously defined terms and abbreviations used may be found in SOPs that precede this SOP and are not repeated here.

- a. Incident. Any activity or action, or the result of any activity or action, regardless of intention, that creates a real or potential risk of a biological, chemical or physical hazard to any one or more individuals within or outside the environmental engineering laboratory. An incident is also defined here to include any such result that has or could have led to damage of property. Additionally included, are incidents that occur in the field when associated with activities considered an extension of work conducted in the environmental engineering laboratory.
- b. Injury. An injury includes physical or physiological damage to an individual. Physical damage to the body can result because of direct contact with kinetic energy (blunt impacts or physical contact that otherwise causes damage to the body) or electromagnetic energy

(wave-based energy such as light, thermal radiation, radio, infrared, ultraviolet, x-rays, gamma rays, etc.). Physiological damage can result from physical damage as well as from exposure to biological or chemical agents.

- c. **Property Damage.** Property damage, regardless of ownership, is any alteration to an object, or alteration to the material or component of an object that results in a change in the objects appearance or function. Changing an object for the purpose of repairing damage or a malfunction, or the modification of an object (such as an instrument or specialized glassware) for the purpose of intentionally creating a particular new functionality with that object, is not considered property damage unless the modification has not been approved to take place or the modification to the object's original functionality prevents others from using that object.

3.0 Reporting Incidents, Policies and Responsibilities

- a. Maintaining a record of incidents occurring in the environmental engineering laboratory and field is required for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of safety training and implementation of safety practices.
- b. All incidents are to be documented and reported.
- c. The responsibility of reporting an incident is that of all authorized users.
- d. Documenting an incident is done by completing and submitting either one of the following reporting mechanisms, preferably within 8 hours of the incident but no more than 48 hours.
 - 1) The Environmental Engineering Laboratory Incident Reporting Form
 - 2) The online Incident Reporting form
- e. Reporting the incident is done submitting the completed form to the Laboratory Manager.
 - 1) Incidents resulting in a biological or chemical exposure, or a physical injury must be reported as soon as practical after the incident has occurred. This means that measures taken to administer first aid, contact emergency personnel or clean up spills are considered a priority and must be conducted first.
 - 2) Incidents that do not result in a biological or chemical exposure, or a physical injury must be reported within 2 days from the time when the incident occurred.
 - 3) Incidents that result in physical damage to property must be reported within 2 business days from the time when the incident occurred.

- f. All incidents require that the post-incident corrective action taken be documented and reported.

4.0 Procedure for Documenting and Reporting an Incident

Documenting and reporting an incident are done after an incident has either been created, witnessed first-hand or otherwise discovered as evidence resulting from an activity or action. Each person involved in the incident, as just defined, documents and reports the incident. The procedure for documenting and reporting an incident is as follows.

- a. Either download the most recent revision of the Incident Reporting Form.

<http://www.cefnas.nau.edu/~teb/amb/sop/IncidentReportForm.pdf>

or obtain a copy of this form from the Hazardous Communications Station in Room 245.

Alternatively, an online Incident reporting form is available from the Environmental Engineering Laboratory home page from the Report an Incident button or directing from the following URL.

<https://www.ceias.nau.edu/cecmee/enelab/cas/IncidentRprt.html>

Enter the information requested into the online form.

- b. As the person reporting the incident, write your name and the date for which the incident description was written.

Reported by: _____ **Date:** _____

- c. Enter date and time the incident occurred or was discovered.
- d. Select the location in which the incident occurred or was discovered.
- e. Select the type (or types) of incident that occurred or was discovered.
- f. Provide a written description of the incident, using the back of the form if necessary. Include names of all known individuals involved.
- g. The person having conducted the post-incident corrective actions, provides the written description of those actions (using the back of the form if necessary) and writes their name and date on which the action was conducted.

Conducted by: _____ **Date:** _____

The person who initiated the form and described the incident may also be the same person having conducted the post-incident actions. When uncertain about what corrective actions should be taken after an incident, take the form to the Laboratory Manager to seek guidance and a decision on the most appropriate corrective actions to be taken.

- h. At this point, documentation of the incident is complete, and the form is then submitted to the Laboratory Manager.

- i. The Laboratory Manager reviews the incident report for completeness and adequate documentation and seeks additional information if necessary. Once it can be concluded that the documentation of the incident is adequate, the Laboratory manager writes their name and date on which the review was completed.

Laboratory Manager: _____ **Date:** _____

- j. The Laboratory Manager submits the Incident Reporting Form to the department chair, who then reviews the report and signs and dates the form once this review is completed, and then returns the form to the Laboratory Manager.
- k. The Laboratory Manager scans the completed form, saves the electronic copy (pdf format) to the server containing the folder for the laboratory, and places the hard copy in the laboratory file. These files should be shared and discussed with an EHS representative at the time when the annual audit is being scheduled.
- l. It is highly recommended that the Laboratory Manager inform EHs of any near misses that may have occurred on a quarterly basis.
- m. All documented incidents information is to be entered into the laboratory's database.

5.0 Institutional Reporting of Incidents

- a. Incidents that involve physical injury must also be reported by the supervisor of the individual injured.
- b. A separate incident reporting procedure is completed using the online Report of Injury form.

<https://in.nau.edu/human-resources/report-of-injury/>

Instructions for completing this form are found at that location.