

PREFACE

This manual is intended to serve primarily as a guidance document for compliance with various State and Federal environmental and occupational health and safety regulations. It is neither feasible nor technically valid to attempt to provide specific procedures or protocols that should be established by individual researchers or laboratories. Recent regulations promulgated by OSHA require laboratories to have a written plan identifying chemical hazards, exposure controls, and exposure monitoring programs.

Individual laboratories must develop their own Chemical Hygiene Plan in compliance with this regulation and may use this document as guidance for its preparation. Laboratories should develop written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which include safety procedures and policies that are as specific as feasible, and that encompass all elements of laboratory activities in which the laboratory engages. These SOPs, as well as other information described in this safety manual should be incorporated into a laboratory specific Chemical Hygiene Plan, distributed to appropriate employees, and be a requirement of employee training programs.

Although this process is a lengthy and complicated one, the development of detailed written procedures is necessary to establish continuity, train personnel, and help to ensure that all employees recognize and comply with workplace safety. In addition, it is extremely difficult to effectively communicate and enforce requirements without written procedures and requirements. Written procedures and protocols are critical to a defensible and demonstrable safety program under the review of OSHA or other agencies. An effective safety program necessitates that mechanisms be in place and functioning to ensure adherence with safety policies and procedures, that personnel are meeting their safety responsibilities, and that an effective form of monitoring and documentation is in place for confirmation purposes.

The development of a detailed written Chemical Hygiene Plan and the incorporation of the contents of this plan into employee training programs is a fruitful contribution to a safer working environment and the reduction in workplace accidents and injuries.