



# SAFETY ALERT

## Campus Incident—Chemical Vapor Release

RISK MANAGEMENT & SAFETY

**Date:** October, 2015  
**Category:** Chemical Vapor Release  
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### Description

An employee was exposed to chemical vapors while operating an autoclave machine resulting exposure symptoms including irritated eyes, difficulty breathing and nausea. The NDFD responded and evaluated the employee and conducted air testing throughout the building. Air measurements for total organics was negative. The employee was referred to the Wellness Center for further evaluation and later released without medical treatment required.

### Findings

- Containers were not labeled inside the autoclave. These contained chemicals.
- Employee had not received appropriate training for handling biohazardous materials.
- Autoclave room had not been inspected as part of ISP or Biosafety inspection processes.

### Root Causes

- Lab procedures requiring proper container labeling and segregation of wastes were not followed.
- Inspection of autoclave room was not conducted due to gaps in inspection program.
- Employee was not properly trained on hazards associated with autoclave wastes or required PPE.

### Recommended Actions

- Conduct training with lab personnel on container labeling requirements.
- Ensure all employees who handle and transport biohazardous materials receive appropriate training.
- Conduct training with personnel disposing infectious wastes, including proper procedures for disposal of autoclaved waste.
- Ensure all appropriate areas in buildings are properly identified and captured in the safety inspection program.