Dow Lab Safety Academy

Lessons Learned & Future Opportunities

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Dow.com
Safety is Easy
Safety is a Journey – Then & Now
Culture is Harder
Working Safely is Core to Dow’s Culture

PROTECT PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

Part of everything we do and every decision we make.

VISION OF ZERO

Our goal is to eliminate all injuries, prevent adverse environmental and health impacts, reduce wastes and emissions and promote resource conservation at every stage of the life cycle of our products.

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

Each employee has a responsibility in ensuring that our products and operations meet applicable government or Dow standards, whichever is more stringent.

All employees, contractors, and visitors are expected to exhibit appropriate and responsible behavior during their presence within a Dow facility.

Bottom-line

“Dow Expects Workers to Go Home Healthy and Safe….Everyday”
Common Lab Safety Challenges & Opportunities

• Organizational design
• Researcher Experience
• Safety perceived as an “extra”
• Compliance vs. Commitment
New Employee Observations

“The striking difference [between University and Dow safety] was in the training & awareness”

“Dow makes safety a priority and a worker will not be penalized for a delay caused by being safe”

“It was very common to see people in (University) labs wearing sandals, even while working with strong organic solvents and acids”

“The culture of actively writing procedures BEFORE experiments is something I’ve never seen before Dow”

“In Graduate School, pretty much every reaction was run wearing only safety glasses, thin nitrile gloves and maybe a lab coat. Having access to the appropriate PPE has been a major change.”

“I was not aware of the importance of safety showers, eye stations until I started working in a company”
Importance of Culture

- Focus on Prevention & Mitigation
- Collaborate Across Disciplines
- Develop Safety Protocols
Key Attributes of Dow’s Laboratory Safety Culture

- Leadership engagement
- Individual accountability
- Training
- Pre-task planning
- Emergency planning
- Well defined protocols
- Lab-focused hazard awareness tools & programs
- Effective Communication Networks
Dow – University Lab Safety Workshops

Over 80 students, post-docs, faculty and safety officers attended workshops

Topics included:
• Reactive chemicals handling
• Hazard Assessment
• Glassware handling under vacuum or pressure
• Personal protective equipment
• Chemical labeling
• Nanoparticle safety
• Working with pressure reactors
• Risk Mitigation

Plus:
• Making Safety Personal – Coaching & Intervention
• Near Miss and Learning Experiences
• Leadership Engagement
Key Learnings from Workshops

• Set expectations - Have an owners mindset
• Leadership engagement is critical for success – use a dual approach
• Find change agents to lead the way
• Empowerment of EHS safety officers and students / post docs in lab is critical
• Protocols for safety procedures help establish expectations
• Positive reinforcement for safe behaviors is more effective than punitive measures
• Continual engagement and communication are key to sustaining culture
Dow Lab Safety Academy Website

Since Launch...

- 25,000+ enrolled viewers
- >250,000 views
- >60 universities
- >40 Govt Agencies/National Labs
- >100 companies
- 10 countries
- > dozen media stories

http://safety.dow.com
# Dow Laboratory Safety Academy - Modules

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Sustaining the Momentum…

✓ Dow Lab Safety Academy Website
✓ Safety expectations for Dow Principal Investigators leading sponsored university research programs
✓ Safety engagement included as part of new-hire recruiting
  • Strategic partnerships across industry, academia, professional societies, etc.