MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Chairs, Directors, Faculty and Laboratory Managers

FROM: Jeffrey Wiginton, Director of Facilities

DATE: November 4, 2011

SUBJECT: Laboratory Safety Policies and Procedures

With many new faculty members joining our school, I thought it would be helpful to review the federal, state, and university regulations, requirements and policies related to activities occurring in our research and instructional laboratories. The University and the VSoE rely upon our faculty and lab managers to foster a safe environment in our labs and ensure safe practices therein. It is recommended each PI and/or lab supervisor annually communicate and review the obligations outlined in this memorandum with all co-workers and individuals working in our labs.

Providing a Safe Working Environment
The University’s expectations for providing a safe working environment in instructional and research labs are:

- Provide necessary special safety equipment (personal protection equipment) for the conduct of activity in laboratories;
- Promote compliance with the standards for safe behavior in the laboratory;
- Ensure all University employees, including graduate assistants, visiting scholars, volunteers, etc. working in VSoE laboratories take the required 2-day Laboratory Safety Course (more details follow in this memo).
- Make certain undergraduate students in directed research, student workers, work study students, and high school students that work in VSoE laboratories attend a special, 3-hour student session on Laboratory Safety.

Additionally, following the safety standards outlined on the USC Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) website for laboratories will help minimize accidents and injuries. The EH&S laboratory safety standards are available electronically at http://capsnet.usc.edu/EHS/. This website provides a wealth of safety information for many areas including chemical, biological, radiation and laser safety.

Training Requirements
For guidance regarding required laboratory safety training for all PIs and others working in or associated with laboratories, see http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/Training/TrainingReq.cfm. Note: Additional training may be required depending on the nature of the research. For example, the Institutional Bio-safety Committee (IBC) may identify additional training that should be completed before associated research is allowed to begin or continue.

PIs and lab managers should direct individuals to the lab training needed to work in their labs and document initial and annual lab specific training on lab safety procedures.

The Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Laboratory Safety Training Schedule is online at http://www.localendar.com/public/USCEHS.

Class 10 through 100,000 Clean Room Gowning Procedures
EH&S recently published a Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) regarding gowning procedures for Class 10 through 100,000 clean rooms. The SOP is in the department’s Chemical Hygiene Plan and can be viewed at http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/chemicalsafety/documents/CHPSOPcleanroomgowning.pdf.

Chemical Use and Waste Management
PIs and lab managers of labs using chemicals and other hazardous materials should refer to the EH&S website regarding possible required training associated with chemical safety, security, and disposal and for compliance with related federal, state and university policies and procedures. See http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/ChemicalSafety/documents/HMMP5_HWM.pdf for details.

In addition an on-line chemical inventory must be maintained for all areas storing hazardous materials including compressed gases. Information on how to set-up this inventory can be found at: http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/ChemicalSafety/ChemicalInventry.cfm.

Working with Biological Materials and Recombinant DNA
Researchers conducting research with infectious agents, toxins, human cells/blood/tissue or recombinant DNA or other bio-hazardous agents should have their research approved in advance by the IBC. See http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/BioSafety/IBCSection/index.cfm. Approvals are valid for three years. The PI is responsible for obtaining timely renewals from the IBC. An electronic submission form is available at the following website: http://capsnet.usc.edu/LabSafety/BioSafety/IBCSection/index.cfm#IBCforms. Without current approval, no research activity involving these materials may be conducted.

PIs working within a laboratory rated BSL-2 or higher should develop laboratory safety plans. These plans should include procedures for containment failure, spills, and emergency response.

Fire/Life Safety Provisions
In accordance with state law we are required to comply with the Los Angeles Fire Code. Additional information or questions on fire code requirements for compliance may be found at the USC Fire and Safety website: http://capsnet.usc.edu/FireSafety/index.cfm.

Reporting Incidents
All incidents that involve failed containment, spills, injuries, illnesses, human exposure to or misuse of biological materials, chemical or radiation should be reported as soon as possible to EH&S. Contact EH&S at (213) 281-0963 for guidance on reporting requirements.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions, please refer to the EH&S website, VBA Facilities website at: http://viterbi.usc.edu/intranet/vba/facilities or call me at (213) 740-0486.

Cc: Yannis Yortsos

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, UNIVERSITY PARK, LOS ANGELES, CA 90089-1450