

Personal Protective Equipment

Lab Safety Incident UTHSC – August 2018

Incident: In August 2018 an researcher using Trizol within a fume hood splashed himself in the eye. The fume hood sash was not sufficient to contain this hazardous chemical splash. The individual was not wearing safety glasses at the time of the incident and a follow-up visit with an Ophthalmologist was required.

Hazard: Trizol is a common lab reagent consisting of a mixture of volatile hazardous chemicals. The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) identifies this product as corrosive to human tissue – particularly the eyes.

Safety: The presence of hazardous vapors necessitates that Trizol be handled in a fume hood. Proper practice suggests that work be performed at least 6 inches inside of the hood with the sash positioned as low as possible. The UTHSC Chemical Hygiene Plan requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) state that eye protection must be worn whenever handling hazardous chemicals. This includes handled chemicals within a fume hood or biosafety cabinet. Lab supervisors are responsible for providing each researcher with their own pair of safety glasses, articulating when they must be used and must enforce the use of PPE in the lab.

Contact the Office of Research Safety at ext. 8-6114 or labsafety@uthsc.edu for additional information about chemical safety, the use of PPE or for an assessment of exposure to hazardous chemicals.

