

GENERAL WRITTEN SOP -- Embryotoxins and Reproductive Toxins

The OSHA Laboratory Standard explicitly requires "standard operating procedures relevant to safety and health considerations to be followed when laboratory work involves the use of hazardous chemicals." If the general SOP in this section do not fulfill this requirement, you must amend and append in some manner so as to comply.

Special Precautions for Working with Embryotoxins and Reproductive Toxins:

Substances that act during pregnancy to cause adverse effects on the fetus are referred to as embryotoxins. These effects include embryolethality (death of the fertilized egg, the embryo, or the fetus), malformation (teratologic effects), retardation of growth, and postnatal functional deficits. Examples include organo-mercurials, lead compounds, and formamide.

Because the period of greatest susceptibility to embryotoxins is the first 8-12 weeks of pregnancy, which includes a period when a woman may not know she is pregnant, women of child-bearing potential should take care to avoid skin contact with all laboratory chemicals. The term "reproductive toxins" is used to describe substances which cause harmful effects on the male or female reproductive system or the developing embryo and fetus. These effects include but are not limited to menstrual irregularity, lowered fertility, testicular atrophy, and birth defects.

1. Review each use of embryotoxins with the Laboratory Safety Manager (953-1067), the supervisor, principal investigator and EHS (953-4816). Review continuing uses annually or whenever a procedural change is made.
2. Label embryotoxins as follows: EMBRYOTOXIN: READ SPECIFIC PROCEDURES FOR USE.
3. Store embryotoxins and reproductive toxins in unbreakable containers or unbreakable secondary containers in a well ventilated area.
4. Guard against spills and splashes. Appropriate safety apparel, especially gloves, should be worn. All hoods, glove boxes, or other essential engineering controls should be known to be operating properly before work is started.

Notify the Laboratory Safety Manager, your supervisor and EHS of all incidents of exposure or spills. EHS will arrange for a medical consultation.