

SAFETY ALERT

No. 02-03 CHEMICAL HANDLING SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS March 2002

District instructional staff should review appropriate preventive measures to minimize accidents while handling chemicals in the classroom. The safety of students and staff is an integral part of the instructional planning process. To ensure the safety of students and staff while handling chemicals during experiments, teachers are to follow the safety precautions outlined below:

1. Approved goggles or other eye-protective devices should be used by all persons handling chemicals that may cause hazards to the eyes. In addition, persons in close proximity to areas where chemicals are being handled must be similarly equipped. Laboratory aprons and rubber or plastic gloves should be worn whenever hazards exist that could damage clothing, or irritate skin.
2. Erlenmeyer flasks or other containers with chemicals are to be capped when not in use, and should be carried using a container designed to prevent spillage.
3. Teachers are to familiarize students of the potential hazards associated with the use of chemical substances. Please refer to the *California Science Safety Handbook for Public Schools*, or individual Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for more guidance.
4. Remind students that chemicals should never be tasted, smelled, or touched unless such action is approved by the instructor and conducted in the proper manner.
5. Water should never be added directly to concentrated acids. If acids require dilution, the concentrated acid should be added in small quantities to the water, stirring constantly. Use heat-resistant glassware for this procedure.
6. Table tops should be protected from extreme heat by using insulation under burners or heated objects.
7. Each teacher should be prepared to implement response actions in the event of a fire, chemical spill or other emergency. Please refer to emergency/disaster procedures for further details.

If you have questions regarding these precautions, please contact your Chemical Safety Coordinator or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at (213) 743-5086.