



Working alone policy for Teaching and Research Labs in the Irving K. Barber Faculty of Science

WorkSafe BC has a regulation that all employers must have a Work Alone policy. There must be a posted procedure describing how anyone who is working alone will arrange to be checked on regularly. The frequency of checking depends on the hazard level of the work. Evaluating the hazard level should be part of the general safety training that goes on in each lab. Anyone working alone with chemicals must have had WHMIS training.

The following procedure applies to anyone from the Irving K Barber Faculty of Science when working alone in any teaching or research laboratory. Please ensure that any TAs, graduate students, technicians, and undergraduate students working under your supervision are aware of this policy. It should be posted in each lab.

Procedure

When you are working alone in any laboratory before 8 am or after 8 pm Mon-Fri, or anytime on a weekend or holiday, you must establish a regular check-in routine with someone. Contact persons could include:

- someone else working in a lab on the same floor of your building
 - a faculty member or graduate student working in his/her office on the same floor of your building
 - a family member, friend or roommate you can reach by phone
 - your supervisor, via cell phone or at home
 - as a last resort (i.e., if none of the above are available or it is very late at night) Campus Security.
- 1) Before starting work in the lab, contact one of the above and agree on a specific check-in interval. This interval will be in accordance with your training on evaluating hazards in the lab.* Note: in some instances, the work may be deemed sufficiently hazardous that it should only be done when someone else is present in the lab.
 - 2) Tell the person which room(s) you are working in, when you expect to finish, and how to contact you. If you do not check in as scheduled and the contact person cannot reach you, s/he should contact Campus Security at 807 8105 and tell them the room number you were working in.
 - 3) Be sure to check out with the person when you leave.

*Please take into account not only the materials and equipment you are working with directly, but also anything stored in the lab that you could accidentally hit or spill. If you are not likely to encounter any hazardous materials or equipment, then checking in with someone upon arrival or departure should be sufficient. If you are working with hazardous chemicals or equipment, then the check-in interval should be determined by the likelihood of serious health consequences should you be injured on your own.