



# Materials Safety

## Lack of Personal Protective Equipment Results in Chemical Burn

*A Message from Rick Kelly*

### Issue

Approximately half of the injuries in MSD result from improper use or lack of personal protective equipment (PPE: typically gloves, eye protection, lab coats).

Most recently, a UCB student who was working without a lab coat was splashed with oleylamine, a viscous and corrosive organic chemical. Despite his efforts to wash his skin, he suffered substantial burns. As evident in the photo below, the burns stopped at the edge of his short-sleeved shirt; thus injury would likely have been largely prevented had he used a lab coat.



Similarly, one month ago, another student suffered a severe cryoburn when removing the transfer tube from a liquid helium dewar, again while not wearing a lab coat. The cold metal came in direct contact with her skin, burning her.

**Use of protective equipment may appear nerdy to some, but you will be thankful you wore it when it prevents a serious burn or other injury.**

—*Mark Alper,*  
*Division Deputy Director*



In the last year, several other Division personnel have experienced injuries from cuts, burns and splashes that would have been prevented or greatly attenuated by the proper use of personal protective equipment, such as lab coats, glasses, and gloves.

Please review all activities in your laboratory to determine those that require personal protective equipment. In all cases, ensure that you have have:

- Identified the appropriate type of PPE required
- Been provided with appropriate PPE in appropriate sizes
- Been trained in the proper use of PPE
- Properly stored and maintained PPE
- Learned the limitations of PPE and adjusted your work accordingly.

In UCB labs, refer to your laboratory specific chemical hygiene plan.

