

Are You Up to Date on Working Alone?

Read the [Berkeley Lab Work Alone Policy](#)

Message from Xiang Zhang, 7 August 2015



Working alone offers many benefits. Quiet, undistracted work time allows you to get a lot done, but sometimes working alone can be life-threatening. Plenty of [examples](#) suggest that fatalities at research institutions could have been prevented had the victims been working in the company of other people.

Certain work hazards can incapacitate workers such that they might not be able to "self-rescue" or activate emergency services. Examples of these hazards include:

- A splash with a corrosive chemical that could blind (volume and concentration, etc., should be considered);
- Exposure to a chemical or trauma that impairs consciousness;
- Being set on fire;
- Receiving a severe electrical shock or arc-flash injury;
- Falling from an elevation above 6 feet;
- Being struck or trapped by a heavy object or suspended load;
- Getting trapped in or by moving machinery;
- Injury by a powered cutting tool.

The [Berkeley Lab Work Alone Policy](#) is implemented through the Work Planning & Control (WPC) process. When an activity lead authorizes a worker to work alone, a pop-up message asks them to verify that the work does not involve hazards that could incapacitate workers. Contact [Mike Wisherop](#) if you have any questions regarding the Work Alone Policy.

Thank you,

Xiang Zhang