

Environmental Health and Safety Update

Bunsen Burner Safety

Overview

Bunsen burners present fire hazards. They produce an open flame and burn at a high temperature and as a result, there is potential for an accident to occur. For the safety and convenience of everyone working in the laboratory, it is important that the following guidelines be observed. In case of a fire, activate the nearest fire alarm pull station, notify all lab personnel, and evacuate the premise.

Applicability

This Update applies to all College laboratory students, faculty, staff, and visitors working with Bunsen burners in the laboratory and buildings.

Responsibilities

Laboratory Personnel working with Bunsen burners should follow these guidelines and contact Environmental Health and Safety for assistance and training.

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) will provide assistance and training for Bunsen burner safety as requested and update this Update as necessary.

Procedure

Bunsen burner safety guidelines:

- **PLACE** the Bunsen burner away from any overhead shelving, equipment or light fixtures.
- **REMOVE** all papers, notebooks, combustible materials and excess chemicals from the area.
- **TIE-BACK** any long hair, dangling jewelry, or loose clothing.
- **INSPECT** hose for cracks, holes, pinched points, or any other defect and ensure that the hose fits securely on the gas valve and the Bunsen burner.
- **REPLACE** all hoses found to have a defect before using.
- **NOTIFY** others in the laboratory that the burner will be in use.
- **UTILIZE** a sparker / lighter with extended nozzle to ignite the Bunsen burner. Never use a match to ignite burner.
- **HAVE** the sparker / lighter available before turning on gas.
- **ADJUST** the flame by turning the collar to regulate air flow and produce an appropriate flame for the experiment (typically a medium blue flame).
- **DO NOT** leave open flames unattended and never leave laboratory while burner is on.
- **SHUT-OFF** gas when its use is complete.
- **ALLOW** the burner to cool before handling.
- **ENSURE** that the main gas valve is off before leaving the laboratory.

April 2004