

# Laboratory Safety

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# You will be able to:

- Recognize some potential consequences of unsafe practices in academic labs
- Identify obstacles to lab safety practices or a laboratory safety culture from your personal observations or experiences
- Identify what steps you, your colleagues, or Principal Investigator /Supervisor could take to improve safety and the culture of safety where you work
- Discuss with your peers and report on some best practices for improving the safety culture in labs
- State how you would reach the Environmental Health and Safety Department for the lab(s) where you work to obtain site-specific training, assistance, or resources



# ***“Experimenting With Danger”***

- The death of a lab research assistant in a fire at UCLA
- The death by accidental poisoning of a professor at Dartmouth College
- A severe injury of a graduate student at Texas Tech University

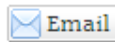




## UCLA professor to stand trial in death of assistant in lab fire

*Professor Patrick Harran is ordered to stand trial on felony charges stemming from a fire that killed staff research assistant Sheharbano Sangji more than four years ago.*

April 26, 2013 | By Kim Christensen, Los Angeles Times



UCLA chemistry professor Patrick Harran was ordered Friday to stand trial on felony charges stemming from a laboratory fire that killed staff research assistant Sheharbano "Sheri" Sangji more than four years ago.

Concluding a preliminary hearing that began late last year, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Lisa Lench denied a defense motion to dismiss the case, believed to be the first such prosecution involving a U.S. academic lab accident.



UCLA chemistry professor Patrick Harran, left, shown with defense attorney... (Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)



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# Legal Update

- 2011- UC Center for Laboratory Safety
- 2012- Judge dismissed charges against UCLA
- 2014- District Attorney & PI entered a 5 year *Deferred Prosecution Agreement*



# Discussion Questions



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1. What are the barriers to wearing the appropriate skin or eye protection in the labs?
2. What steps could be taken to ensure that all workers wear the appropriate PPE in labs?
3. How would you find information about the appropriate type of gloves to wear for working with a particular agent?



4. How should researchers protect themselves from novel compounds?
5. How would you establish a threshold for determining what activities/procedures in your lab or workplace require a written safety protocol or pre-approval?
6. What is the best way to ensure that all members of the lab are held accountable for laboratory safety?





7. What steps could your PI (or a recent PI/Supervisor) take to enhance the culture of safety in your workplace or lab?
  
8. What steps could your colleagues take to improve the safety or culture of safety in your workplace or lab?
  
9. What three steps can you take **THIS WEEK** to improve your personal safety at work, or the overall safety of your work area or lab?



# Harvard Provost for Research Culture of Laboratory Safety Survey

Opens **today** through October 27

Please participate & contribute to  
improving laboratory safety!



# EH&S Department– Here to help

The Environmental Health and Safety Department provide services to assist the University in proactively managing biological, chemical, physical, and radiological hazards in academic and research laboratories. The Department's goal is to work cooperatively with faculty, scientists, and students to reduce hazards and risks.

EH&S Lab Safety Advisors are designated to serve as the primary point of contact for the administration of the University's health and safety program within their assigned schools or departments.

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