Guidelines for Working Alone in a Laboratory

While it is understood that in higher education there will be people working alone in laboratories after regular work hours, please consider if there are certain materials that should not be used or specific procedures that should not be done while working alone. This may be due to extreme hazards involved, and/or the inability of a single affected individual to respond effectively to an accident involving that material or procedure and/or the increased likelihood of an accident occurring with that material or procedure.

Make sure all lab workers are trained in these specific guidelines to minimize the chance of injury, loss of research materials and/or property damage and place this completed page in your laboratory safety notebook.

Building & Room: _______________ Supervisor: _________________ Date: ________

The policy in this laboratory is that the following chemicals will not be used while working alone during / after (circle all that apply) regular work hours:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

The policy in this laboratory is that the following procedures will not be conducted with only one person present, during / after (circle all that apply) regular work hours:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Other safety considerations for working alone in this laboratory:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Emergencies – Dial 8-1911 / Other emergency contact numbers:
Lab Supervisor:
Chemical Safety Officer:
Other:

From Prudent Practices in the Laboratories by the National Research Council (pg. 86):
“Generally it is prudent to avoid working alone at the bench in a laboratory building. Individuals working in separate laboratories outside of working hours should make arrangement to check on each other periodically… Experiments known to be hazardous should not be undertaken by a worker who is alone in a laboratory. Under unusually hazardous conditions, special rules may be necessary.”