LONE WORKER GUIDELINES FOR LABORATORY PERSONNEL

University of Northern Iowa

During this time of social distancing individuals may find themselves working alone in laboratories in pursuit of research. To advance personal safety while also recognizing research needs, Risk Management in collaboration with the Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation created this guidance document to assist individuals in developing appropriate procedures.

The primary danger in working alone is that if an incident should occur, there will be delays in rendering aid.

Buddy System

For use when completing hazardous work while alone.

If the benefit outweighs the risk of working alone and the work cannot be done at a time when others are around a buddy system should be used. This simple process involves the use of a call-in or text-in system with department heads, peers, or others, notifying them of:

1) Where the work is taking place (building and room number)
2) What the work involves
   a. What equipment will be used
   b. What hazardous materials will be used
3) How long you expect the work to take (this allows the buddy to follow-up if you don’t check in)

Once the work is completed follow-up with the buddy to confirm you are safe and that the work is completed.

UNI’s Environmental Safety Coordinator, Gordon Krueger, is available to serve as a call-in buddy during regular business hours. He can be reached by phone at (319) 273-3445.

Lab Specific Analysis

The following questionnaire can help identify hazards that should be avoided while working alone.

Building & Room: _____________  Professor: ______________________

In this laboratory, these hazardous materials will not be used while working alone:

In this laboratory, these procedures will not be conducted while working alone:

Other safety considerations for working alone in this laboratory: