

Chemicals of Concern

Certain categories of chemicals that are sometimes found in academic laboratories may also pose a risk of misuse in criminal activities. Please pay specific attention to the security of the following:

Explosive Precursor Chemicals (EPCs)

- ◆ Reagent or precursors to make explosives
- ◆ Example: Hydrogen Peroxide, Ammonium Nitrate, Acetone

Toxic Industrial Chemicals (TICs)

- ◆ No assembly required for weaponization
- ◆ Examples: Chlorine, Anhydrous

Chemical Warfare Agents (CWAS)

- ◆ Requires advanced chemical knowledge or equipment
- ◆ Examples: Thiodiglycol, Methylene Chloride



How to Report Suspicious Activity

Have a conversation with your laboratory group to make them aware of what to watch out for, and inform Public Safety if any suspicious persons or activities are observed:

Morningside Campus:

◆ 212-854-5555

Manhattanville Campus:

◆ 212-853-3333

Medical Center Campus:

◆ 212-305-7979

Additional Information

For more information about Academic Chemical Security, please visit:

<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/wmd>

Thank you to our partners at the FBI's Academic Chemical Security Outreach Program

Laboratory Security Awareness



To prevent the misuse of chemicals and biological agents in criminal activity or as weapons of mass destruction, the FBI has created partnerships between law enforcement and academic institutions. The information in this brochure is intended to educate research personnel on identifying and responding to suspicious activities in and around laboratories.

 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Environmental Health and Safety

Why Outreach?

To educate faculty, students, and staff about the importance of chemical security, how to keep laboratory operations secure from nefarious activities, and how to identify and report suspicious activity.

Chemical Security

- ◆ An academic research laboratory is a collaborative environment and contains materials with hazardous properties consistent with ingredients for chemical weapons
- ◆ Keep laboratories locked and accessible only by authorized students and staff
- ◆ A chemical attack is a deliberate use of chemical materials to harm people. Threats can be thought of as two categories: people, and materials

Suspicious People

Individuals who carry out nefarious activities can present themselves in many ways, often unexpectedly.

External: An individual can make contact online or at a conference to obtain technical chemical information with criminal intent.

Internal: These individuals can be disguised as professors, students, and employees.

What should you do?

Verify a person's identity or affiliation before sharing or loaning your chemicals or sensitive information.

- ◆ Ask them what Principal Investigator they work for
- ◆ Ask about their project and what they are using the material for

If they don't have a good answer, politely decline and report the conversation to your supervisor.

How to Identify Suspicious Activity

- ◆ Missing supplies, glassware, chemicals or laboratory equipment
- ◆ Requests to borrow chemicals or equipment from individual(s) you don't recognize
- ◆ Individuals attempting to access the laboratory who generally have no reason to be there
- ◆ Unsolicited delivery of chemicals to the lab without a corresponding purchase order
- ◆ Chemical purchase(s) charged to a lab purchase card or grant but are never delivered
- ◆ Unsolicited requests in person or over the internet for technical information (i.e., chemical synthesis and purification procedures)
- ◆ E-mails from domains that make it look like they are attributed to legitimate entities (@edu.com or @edu.us)

Contact Public Safety immediately if you observe any of the above!