

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

Generated from Actual Incidents by EHSO

Issue No. 13

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- Type of Incident:** Methanol sprayed on face
- What Happened:** While disconnecting a capillary tube in a Medium Pressure Liquid Chromatography (MPLC) system, a researcher was sprayed with methanol. Apparently the column was not uniformly packed, leaving a bubble in the system that created pressure.
- Immediate Cause:** The researcher did not check the column for breaks in the packing material and did not clamp off section.
- Root Causes:** While constructing or taking down the experiment, the researcher did not review the system for potential hazards. A Process Hazard Review performed while planning an experiment is necessary to control and avoid the potential hazards present during a chemical laboratory experiment.
- Corrective Actions:** Before beginning an experiment, conduct a Process Hazard Review as described in the UIC Chemical Hygiene Plan (www.uic.edu/depts/envh , Part 2, Section 11). Also, if possible perform a dry run with non-hazardous compounds.

