

What Happened?

Having finished his experiment on his first day in the lab, a researcher removed his eye protection. During the cleanup of the experiment, a small amount of a caustic solution splashed into one of his eyes. The mixture contained sodium, potassium and calcium hydroxides. The researcher rinsed his eye immediately with water from the sink, then from the drinking fountain, and finally from the eyewash station. He was taken to the emergency room where his eyes were flushed again and evaluated.

What Was The Cause?

The researcher was inexperienced and was not wearing eye protection during the cleanup of his experiment.

What Corrective Actions Were Taken?

- Review emergency procedures including the location of emergency eyewash stations
- Review PPE

How Can Incidents Like This Be Prevented?

- Wear full PPE including eye protection until your task is completed
- Properly train new researchers in executing experiments and supervise until researchers gain sufficient experience
- When generating SOPs include cleanup procedures
- Review emergency procedures including the use of the eyewash station

In the event of a splash of caustic solution to your face:

1. Loudly yell for help and immediately flush eyes at the nearest eyewash station for at least 15 minutes
3. Get medical attention – take the Safety Data Sheet with you!
4. Report the incident to your supervisor



College of Engineering
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON