**Safety in the Garner Labs**

While working in any chemistry laboratory does have its risks, the health risks can be minimized by incorporating some simple rules into your daily routine.

1. **Dress for success (and safety).** Wear practical professional attire. Don’t wear dressy clothes that you would be upset about if they were to be ruined by a spill. Always wear safety goggles or glasses in the lab. Remember, an accident could occur at a neighboring lab station that you had nothing to do with but might affect you. Wear a lab coat and gloves when appropriate. If your hair is long, tie it back.
2. I don’t often quote the Bible but here is a relevant one: **“He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith.”** (Ecclesiasticus, Ch. XIII, V. 1) It is a good practice to treat all substances in our lab as potentially toxic. Minimize your exposure to them. Wash your hands before eating. Develop a habit of cleaning up your bench and hood at the end of the day. What is “clean?” Clean means that if you accidently spill a precious compound, you could “extract” it from the surface in pure form!
3. **There is safety in knowledge!** If you understand the chemistry involved in an experiment, you will be able to understand potential problems and know how to deal with them. When planning an experiment, ask yourself “What is the worst accident that can happen?” and then “What would be the best response?” Consult the “Handling Hazardous Chemicals” link on the Organic Syntheses website (<http://www.orgsyn.org/>) for a nice introduction. Know the emergency number to call in case of an accident (911).
4. **We are all in this together.** Undergraduates and beginning graduate students should never work alone. Advanced graduate students and postdocs should also try to schedule their workdays so that they are not alone. Be considerate of your lab mates. If you have to leave experiments unattended, label them so that a fellow chemist can understand what you are doing. Take collective responsibility for the lab. Be aware of your laboratory environment. If you see something amiss or suspect a potential safety issue, talk to the individual involved or me.

