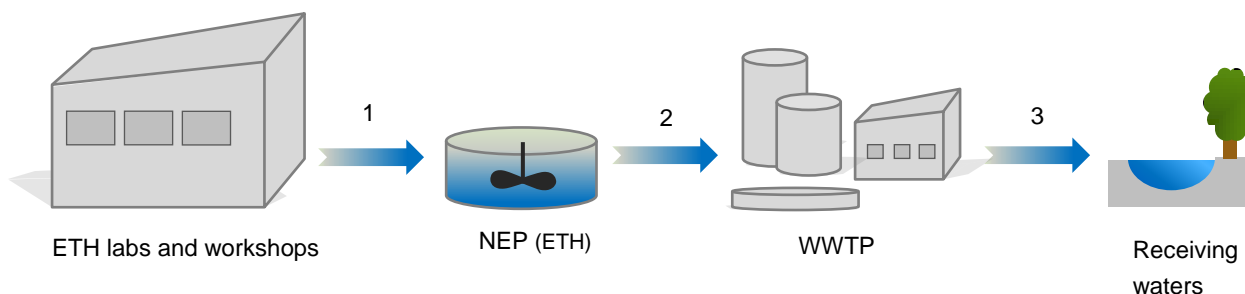


SSHE Newsletter 1/2017

June 2017

1) What Happens to Chemical Wastewater?

At ETH Zurich, the laboratory and workshop rooms are connected to the internal chemical wastewater network. At the end of this network, the wastewater is neutralised in ETH Zurich's own neutralisation plant (NEP) by admixing acids and alkaline solutions. It is then conducted to the local wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) via the public sewer system, where it undergoes various treatment stages before entering the receiving waters (the waterbodies downstream from the WWTP).



- 1) Chemical wastewater
- 2) pH-neutral chemical wastewater
- 3) Treated chemical wastewater

ETH Zurich's own NEP serves solely to regulate the pH level. **The substances contained in the chemical wastewater are not broken down or filtered out!** The wastewater is channelled into the public sewer system with all its chemical contents, which can cause malfunctions at the WWTP and/or pollute the receiving waters.

The right way to act

- Chemicals (even in small quantities!) must not be disposed of down sinks. Nor does diluting or mixing them beforehand mean they can be disposed of in this way.
- Chemical waste must be delivered to one of ETH Zurich's hazardous waste disposal stations.

Prohibition-signs for labelling sinks are available in the [Order Catalogue Safety Labelling](#) →. A [poster](#) → with the corresponding instructions can be downloaded from our homepage. Further information on the topic is provided in our [Chemical wastewater information sheet](#) →.



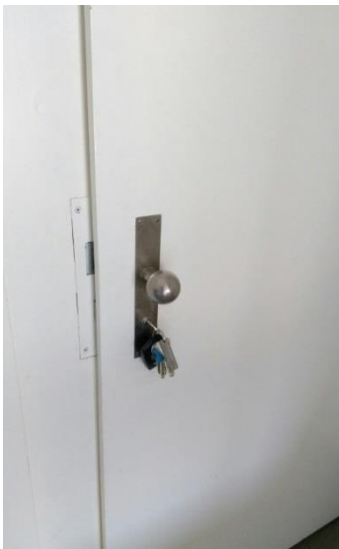
2) Safety and Security on Excursions in the Context of Courses

Lately, SSHE has frequently been confronted with queries from members of ETH Zurich looking to conduct excursions to risky destinations abroad. However, members of ETH Zurich also contacted us with queries on conducting risky excursions safely in this country – e.g. on glaciers – in 2016. Thus, on behalf of the Rector SSHE compiled the directive *Study Trips, Field Trips and Excursions Conducted by Members of ETH Zurich within the Framework of Courses: Handling Risks* in conjunction with the Financial Services and Academic Services as well as the Legal Office. The directive contains guidelines on safety and security precautions and responsibilities, as well as the decision-making process

for conducting potentially critical excursions. A checklist was created, which can be used to carry out an initial assessment of the risk situation for excursions in this country and abroad. Finally, a user-friendly tool is to be developed this year based on the checklist (currently an Excel sheet). The [directive](#) → will come into force as of the autumn semester 2017 and is available online (in the Academic Services' [Directives Collection](#) →). The checklist and further documents on planning excursions and field trips are available on the [SSHE website](#) →.

3) Security and ETH Zurich's Open-Door Policy

There is an open-door policy at ETH Zurich: Almost every building has opening hours during which they are publicly accessible. The organisational units decide themselves which of their members are authorised to enter which rooms. From experience, we can say that a great many doors inside the building – sometimes even to sensitive areas such as labs – are frequently left open or unlocked, even if nobody is present. This carries risks and can allow access for unauthorised people. One possible consequence is the theft of ETH-Zurich or private property. There are various causes for access of unauthorised people to buildings or rooms:



- Keys are left in the cylinder.
- ETH-Zurich cards are left lying around unattended.
- Keys are passed on to unauthorised people.
- Access rights are issued too broadly.
- Doors are wedged open (e.g. with wooden doorstops).
- Lost keys or badges are not reported.
- Tailgating – unauthorised people enter a building unnoticed by following an authorised individual.
- Offices are left unlocked.

Follow our recommendations; help us curb risks:

- Lock rooms with restricted access (sensitive areas).
- Don't leave keys, ETH-Zurich cards, laptops, valuables etc. lying around.
- Report any key or card losses immediately to the responsible ISC.
- Make sure the access granted in your organisational unit makes sense.
- Observe the guidelines issued by your key manager and the key management processes of the Facility Management department.
- Don't let any unauthorised people into ETH-Zurich buildings and report anyone suspicious to the building area (ISC).
- Exercise caution in communications regarding delicate research topics.
- Report any irregularities to the Emergency Desk (internal lines 888, external lines 044 342 11 88).

4) Gas Cylinder Storage Areas

Maintaining a suitable infrastructure properly is central to ETH Zurich's research activities. One key component of this is the right resources for research. In the past, researchers often organised, stored and managed supplies for experiments themselves in a wide variety of ways and quantities as there were no clear guidelines for this at ETH Zurich. Incorrect storage, missing labels or uncontrolled access, however, are not just problematic in terms of operational use; they also carry safety risks.

The Fire and Explosion Protection section is currently evaluating the cylinder storage areas and their locations in particular to pinpoint and rectify any safety defects. Clear improvements have been achieved thanks to consistent store management and the clear regulation of access authorisation. Moreover, a labelling concept for cylinder storage areas was devised, which includes a clear declaration of the stock and storage according to substances as opposed to user groups as the most important elements. Today, the responsibilities are often unclear, which means that safety issues cannot be tackled specifically due to a lack of contact people.

In future, the duties and the construction of the storage areas will be clearly regulated – by way of labels: duties, access, stock, hazards – to comply with fire authority and health and safety requirements. The implementation of the concept got underway in May 2017.

5) Miscellaneous

New events on the SSHE course calendar

For the first time, SSHE is offering a first aid course for members of ETH Zurich who do not wish to become members of the First Aid Team and are merely looking to acquire or brush up on first aid skills. The courses are conducted by an external provider. For 2017, we have five one-day course dates on offer. The courses and registration form have been uploaded onto the [SSHE Course Calendar](#) →; more detailed information is available in the [Overview of Courses](#) →. The dates in May and June are already full. If the demand grows, we will organise additional course dates. For departments or groups with at least ten participants, the providers we work with would gladly arrange extra dates.

Sustainable catering guidelines

For all members of ETH Zurich who arrange drinks receptions and set great store by environmentally friendly refreshments, SSHE has compiled a [guideline](#) → for “sustainable catering” in conjunction with the University of Zurich. The guideline contains information on how a drinks reception might be organised with as little environmental pollution as possible. Moreover, the checklist in the appendix can be used to prompt caterers at ETH Zurich to disclose how they implement the topic of sustainability in their range. The English version will be available by the end of June.

Information Sheet *How to use the bibliographical database Perinorm on the SSHE-website*

Perinorm is a bibliographical database for searching for standards and technical rules that contains over 1.1 million datasets from 23 countries. ETH Library's Perinorm licence enables ETH Zurich's users free full-text access to the current standards of the Swiss Association for Standardisation (SNV, SN Norms), the Association of German Engineers (VDI), the German Institute for Standardisation (DIN), the Association for Electrical, Electronic and Information Technologies (VDE), and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). The entries are updated on a monthly basis. The [information sheet](#) → explains how to use the database and contains instructions on searching for standards.

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