

Fire Safety for Healthcare Facilities



Photo: FR tower on fire

Fire safety is the most important component of healthcare facility management. Strategies to Achieve Fire Safety in Healthcare Facilities are-

Monitor Your Kitchens, Especially During Meal Prep Times

- Avoid grease fires by emptying appliances' grease traps on a regular basis.
- Store any flammable liquids, oils, or other items far away from cooking equipment.
- Clean grills and grill ducts regularly to ensure that nothing that flammable can fall into cracks and gaps.
- Check all electrical cords for frays or tears.
- Keep portable fire extinguishers (including dry chemical extinguishers) close by and ensure that your staff knows how to operate them.

Routinely Check Electrical Outlets and Wires

- Are any cords split or cracked?
- Are any plugs in bad condition?
- Are any cords or plugs overloaded?
- Are cords in an area where they could be stepped on?

Never Let Smoking and Oxygen Mix

- Smoking in healthcare facilities is never a good idea.
- Urge your staff to smoke cigarettes far away from oxygen machines.

Install Wet-Pipe Sprinkler Systems

It is recommended to use wet-pipe sprinkler systems because they discharge water immediately as soon as the sprinkler detects the heat of a fire.

Train Your Staff to Operate and Inspect Portable Extinguishers

- Are all extinguishers in the correct location?
- Are they easy to get to? Is anything blocking or obstructing them from view?
- Are any safety seals missing or broken?
- Are any of the extinguishers damaged on the outside?
- Are any of the nozzles leaking, corroded, or clogged?
- Are pressure gauge readings in proper position?
- Are the instructions easily seen and legible?
- Are the extinguishers full? (Test by lifting and/or manually weighing).

Develop an Action Plan

- Rescue any patients who are in danger
- Activate a fire alarm if you see a fire, or respond immediately when you hear an alarm
- Confine fires by closing off doors and hallways
- Extinguish small fires only; leave major fires for the fire department.

<http://blog.encyclopediafireprotection.com/blog/6-core-strategies-to-achieve-fire-safety-in-healthcare-facilitiesent&view=article&id=531:hospitals-dont-burn-hospital-fire-prevention-and-evacuation-guide&catid=251&itemid=323&lang=en>

A-PBA Annual Conference 2019 in Bangladesh



Photo: A-PBA organized the EXCO meeting at icddr,b

Executive Committee (EXCO) meeting of the Asia Pacific Biosafety Association (A-PBA) was held on 15 through 17 February 2019 at Dhaka in Bangladesh. A-PBA president Professor Dr Saraswathy Subramaniam (Malaysia), Vice-President Professor Dr Viji Vijayan (Singapore), Treasurer Dr Chua Teck Mean (Singapore), Joint Secretary Professor Dr Lim Yang Mooi (Malaysia) and EXCO members Dr Sau Sokunna (Cambodia) and Dr Asadulghani (Bangladesh) joined the meeting. Members discussed about various issues of the Society operations. During that meeting it was also decided that the Annual Conference 2019 will be organized in Bangladesh. Following the decision committee members visited the prospective venues (Hotel Intercontinental and Pan-Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka). The venue will be finalized shortly.

The committee decided that the conference will be on "Biosafety and Biosecurity – For Sustainable Development in Health and Agriculture". The suitable dates identified for the preconference workshop and the annual conference are 17 – 18 and 19 – 20 September, respectively.

Full day workshop sessions: 17 – 18 September, 2019

1. Working in bio-containment lab – challenges & solutions for a safe & sustainable laboratory.
2. Shipping and transport of biological agents: a certificate course.

Half day workshop sessions:

1. Biorisk management: IFBA international certification for biosafety professional part 1.
2. Biosafety cabinet – what you need to know to keep you and your lab safe.
3. Biosafety inspections and audit.
4. Biosecurity – Assessing Biothreats
5. Institutional biosafety committee: roles & responsibilities.
6. Biological waste management
7. Animal biosafety and containment.
8. Disease outbreak investigation and biosafety and biosecurity practices

Upcoming Conference/Seminar/Workshop

- Annual Conference of Bangladesh Society of Microbiology on 6 April 2019 at Jessore University of Science and Technology, Jessore [bsm.org.bd/](http://www.bsm.org.bd/)
- Annual Conference of Bangladesh Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Chittagong University on 27-28 April 2019 <http://www.bdsbmb.org/>
- 4th IPFS-ICBHA 2019 organized by Global Network of Bangladeshi Biotechnologists at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, University of Dhaka on 11 – 13 November 2019 <http://www.gnob.org/>

This Quarterly Newsletter is Dedicated to Strengthening Biosafety and Biosecurity Status in Bangladesh Leading to Sustainable Development in Health and Agriculture.



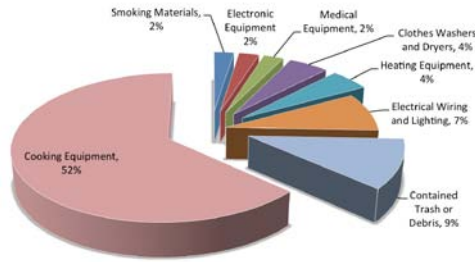


Photo: Main Causes of Hospital Fires

Examples of Hospital Fires

- February 2019: Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital (SSMCH), Dhaka, Bangladesh
- October 2013: Orthopedic Hospital, Fukuoka, Japan—10 Fatalities
- April 2013: Psychiatric Hospital No. 14, Ramensky, Russia—38 Fatalities
- December 2011: AMRI Hospital, Kolkata, India—91 Fatalities
- May 2010: St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Georgetown, Guyana—0 Fatalities
- September 2009: St. Jude Hospital, Vieux Fort, St. Lucia—3 Fatalities
- July 2005: Calderón Guardia Hospital, San José, Costa Rica—19 Fatalities

Several questions arise out of these incidents:

1. How combustible were the structure and the interior furnishings?
2. What provisions were in place for limiting the spread of the fire?
3. What provisions were in place for early discovery of the fire?
4. What provisions were in place for notification of the fire service and hospital personnel? Are regular fire drills conducted for staff members and the fire service?
5. What provisions were in place for prompt extinguishing of the fire and prompt evacuation of patients?



https://www.paho.org/disasters/newsletter/index.php?option=com_content

FR tower fire has shaken the city! Although, there are recognized defects in designing of the building, accidents/incidents are unavoidable. All emergency preparedness has to be in place. That will in turn be resulted in low or no damage during a disaster. Like the commercial and residential buildings all the other facilities in Bangladesh are not up to the mark, considering the fire safety measures. This has been observed that health care facilities are devoid of firefighting equipment or the equipment available is outdated and may not function properly. Thus, the management should take immediate necessary action to make available all the necessary equipment and materials for fighting fire at health care facilities.

The fire caused immense suffering to the patients and their relatives at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, one of the major hospitals of the country. Around 1,200 patients, including those at the intensive care unit and the surgery ward, had to be evacuated following a fire on Thursday, February 14, 2019. Hospital authorities and Fire Service officials said all patients were evacuated safely.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/dhaka/2019/02/14/fire-at-suhrawardy-medical-college-and-hospital>

A-PBA Annual Conference: 19 – 20 September, 2019

Inaugural Session of the conference:

Inaugural session of the conference will be initiated by introducing six seasons in Bangladesh.

Technical sessions of the conference:

1. Global Updates on Biosafety and Biosecurity.
2. Current Status of Biosafety and Biosecurity in Asia Pacific.
3. Emerging Science and Technology – New Challenges.
4. Facility and Biocontainment.
5. Public Health – Emerging and Re-emerging Threats.
6. Public Health – Food and Agricultural Safety and Security.
7. Evolving Threats in Biosecurity & Bioterrorism

For further detail, visit the website of the society below-

<http://bdbiosafetysecurity.org/A-PBA-Annual-Conference>



Photo: Members of Bangladesh Biosafety and Biosecurity Society met with EXCO members of A-PBA at icddr,b

This conference and workshop registration fees are normally high, USD 725 and USD 385, respectively, considering our socioeconomic status in our country, when it is organized in foreign countries. Thus, it is impossible for a large number of participants to register for this kind of programs and participate at a time from Bangladesh, due to this high registration fees. The important point is that, as the program is being organized in Bangladesh and the fees for the local participants are comparatively low (Conference USD 200 and Workshop USD 150), this is an opportunity for the local participants to participate in such a high level training workshop and conference, at a time, with a subsidized rate. However, the registration fees are still beyond the normal limit of our general population. Thus, the society is asking support from the supporter and well-wishers to support the participation of local participant from their esteemed end ensuring maximum participation to contribute to sustainable development in health and agriculture developing knowledgeable and trained workforce.

Strengthening Medical Waste Management System in Bangladesh:

icddr,b in association with Bangladesh Biosafety and Biosecurity Society have initiated the production of the low-cost and high quality sharps containers and biohazard bags in Bangladesh. The products were designed by Biosafety Office of icddr,b in association with the technical support from RFL Plastics Ltd. Finally, 30,000 sharps containers and 30,000 biohazard bags, produced by RFL Plastics, were distributed to 19 Govt. facilities in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to introduce safe and secured disposal of biohazardous waste materials generated in health care facilities. icddr,b has been using these materials since June 2018. Among the others, Apollo Hospital, Dhaka, came forward first to use local products to manage their biohazardous waste. Introduction of this low cost and high quality biohazardous waste packaging in Bangladesh is indeed a milestone for the nation in advancing the status of medical waste management.

(Continue reading in next issue.)



Photo: Sharps container (left). 6L containers are now available from RFL plastics. Two sizes (12"x 24" or 24"x 36") of biohazard Bags (right) are also available from RFL plastics.

Diseases Outbreak in the Neighborhood:

One more dengue patient dies, toll rises to five: 43-year-old woman, who had tested positive for dengue, died on Thursday

Manipur may become the first Malaria Free State in India: The targeted year for the complete elimination of Malaria for the state of Manipur is 2021 while that of the nation is 2030, he added.

Two students test positive for chikungunya in Khunti; Ranchi: Two students Murhu in Khunti district, tested positive for chikungunya, state health department

<https://healthmap.org/en/>

Bangladesh Biosafety and Biosecurity Society is pleased to share with the members and well-wishers the first issue of the quarterly newsletter keeping members up-to-date with the latest news of the society, the country and the neighborhood. The Society is working with the Universities, Medical Universities/Colleges and other research organizations supported by CDC, Atlanta, USA since 2013 and substantially contributed in strengthening biosafety and biosecurity status in the country. All relevant issues, updates and highlights will be regularly circulated through this newsletter.