



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Promoting a safer place to work and study

HEALTH AND SAFETY ALERT UNSTABLE / TIME SENSITIVE CHEMICALS

Who needs to read this?

All Curtin University Staff and Students who work with chemicals, or manage others who handle chemicals.

Incident Details

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services attended the University in early July as a potentially unstable chemical was discovered in a laboratory. The situation was resolved without injury or damage and is currently being investigated as a significant Near-Miss Incident.

The chemical involved was tetrahydrofuran (THF). Two bottles collectively containing 4L of THF had been stored for a prolonged period and without regular inspection. THF is classified as a Time Sensitive chemical due to its ability to decompose into explosively unstable organic peroxides. This Time Sensitive chemical is documented in Curtin's *Chemical Management Plan*, along with 46 other chemicals which carry a risk of instability that increases with age.

Recommendations

If your research group or team uses chemicals, or if you manage a facility that stores chemicals, then you have a responsibility for the safe storage of Time Sensitive chemicals.

Take steps now and become familiar with this risk and review the [Chemical Management Plan](#) section 10.5 - *Storage of Time Sensitive Chemicals* Check your stocks to see if you have Time Sensitive chemicals in your area.

If you do have stocks of Time Sensitive chemicals, review the new guidance document on the [Management of Time Sensitive Chemicals](#) for further detail.

Who do you call with questions?

If you have any queries, please contact Health and Safety on 9266 4900 and ask to speak to the Hazardous Materials team, or email hazardousmaterials@curtin.edu.au.

References

Curtin's [Chemical Management Plan](#)
Guidance Document [Management of Time Sensitive Chemicals](#)

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