

## Safety of Chemical Processes 11

I was reminded of the importance of placing safety messages in the correct place when I recently went in to a rest room and fell over a sign (saying the floor was wet) which had been hidden round a corner. This reminded me of the importance of making sure that safety messages are simple, in the correct place, and easy to see.

This was reinforced when I recently reviewed a batch record for a simple process (add reagents, heat, monitor until complete, cool, quench, filter, and dry) and was surprised at the length of the document—over 300 pages. There was no doubt that the document was extremely comprehensive, but the question I ask is, Was it likely to be read by the process operator in the amount of detail that was provided? It was extremely complex, and I felt that any safety messages would have been lost in all the detail. In fact, with a document of such complexity I suspected that the operator would be more likely to make mistakes through having misunderstood what he was supposed to do. Surely these batch records can be simplified so that the operator's instructions are clear. I must admit that I found it difficult to read the entire document and to find the information that I wanted.

For the Safety of Chemical Processes 11 special section which follows, I trust you will have no such difficulty in abstracting the information that you need. In fact, for the Safety Notables, Paul, Rich, and Mike have already scanned the literature (including past issues of *Organic Process Research Development*) for key papers with important safety messages. Please pass these on to your colleagues in academia and industry to ensure that any incidents described in these pages will not be repeated. Enjoy reading the notes and full papers which describe potential safety problems in more detail and the ways these have been handled. I would like to thank the authors of all these papers for finding the time to write up their work for publication.

Finally, as Paul Vogt retires from service on the Safety Highlights, I wholeheartedly thank him for all his hard work over the past 9 years and wish him success in his new job.

**Trevor Laird**  
*Editor*

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