

Pressurized liquid nitrogen dewar outburst

While entering the cold room, a student was hit by a pressure safety valve projected from a pressurized liquid nitrogen dewar. The injury was mild, mainly since the valve hit the student's inner leg.

What went right?

The Student reported the accident immediately to her peers, PI and to the EHS officer.

What went wrong?

Pressurized liquid nitrogen dewars are best kept out of the cold room and stored at room temperature, preventing freezing of the safety valves, which could eventually cause the safety apparatus to fail when the pressure in the dewar builds up.

What can be learned from it?

- Always make sure the pressurized liquid nitrogen dewar safety valve is being routinely checked according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Make sure all relevant lab members have done the safety unit's cryogenics training once a year.