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Procedures for Moving/Vacating a Laboratory

Purpose: The purpose of these procedures is to provide guidance to faculty researchers for the safe and proper transfer and/or disposal of hazardous materials when vacating a laboratory.

Scope: These procedures apply when a Principle Investigator is:

1. leaving the University and closing his/her laboratory
 2. retiring and closing his/her laboratory
 3. relocating his/her laboratory to a different location on campus
 4. Leaving the University but transferring responsibility of his/her laboratory to another researcher
- In all of these situations, the Principal Investigator (PI)*¹ must follow the procedures outlined below to either arrange for the safe disposal of hazardous materials in his/her laboratory, or transfer responsibility for those materials to another investigator.

Responsibilities: When vacating a laboratory, proper disposition of all hazardous materials is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator who is vacating the lab. The PI must ensure all hazardous materials are moved, discarded, or transferred to another PI. If the management of hazardous materials at closeout requires removal, Environmental Health and Instructional Safety (EH&IS) must be notified prior to the cleanout. EH&IS is responsible for the removal and disposal of unwanted chemicals.

Procedures: Unwanted hazardous materials may not be left in the laboratory, discarded in the regular trash, nor poured down the drain. Please use the following procedures:

1. Contact EH&IS for guidance. Notification should be at least 3 months in advance; however, special circumstances can be accommodated. EH&IS help perform a laboratory survey to identify tasks that must be completed before moving any hazardous materials or vacating the space.
2. Identify and isolate the chemicals that will be discarded or transferred to the next PI.
3. For potentially explosive materials, use the guideline for [Peroxide Forming Chemicals](#) or the [UC Berkeley Guideline for Explosive or Potentially Explosive Chemicals](#) for handling these materials.
4. Follow the minimum safety procedures when moving chemical substances to other labs on campus:
 - a. Only University employees who have received all required personal protective equipment and training (including hazard communication, labeling and any specialized training based on the type of hazardous material being moved) may move hazardous materials from one lab to another. Academic Lab Safety training fulfills this training requirement.
 - b. Wear personal protective equipment appropriate for the materials being handled (safety glasses or goggles, lab coat, gloves, closed-toed shoes);

¹ *When the Principal Investigator is unable to perform these duties, it becomes the responsibility of the Department Chair to ensure that these procedures are followed.

- c. Insure containers are in good condition, properly labeled, without external surface contamination and unlikely to leak during transport. **Do not move unknown or leaking containers;**
 - d. Separate chemicals into compatibility groups and provide separate, labeled boxes for each group. At a minimum, segregate by caustics, acids, flammables (including organic acids), poisons, oxidizers and water reactive;
 - e. Use sturdy, partitioned boxes or pack chemical containers with adequate, compatible padding materials; to facilitate lifting, do not overload the box.
 - f. Use a sturdy cart to transport materials. Carts are available to borrow from EH&IS, upon request.
5. Confirm that a vacated lab is properly emptied of hazardous materials, by completing the [Vacated Space Checklist](#) available from the Department or on the Department's or EH&IS website. The Checklist must be signed by the respective department head and sent to EH&IS at least 7 days before the lab is permanently vacated. Upon receipt, EH&IS will visit the lab and notify the department chair if anything further needs to be done.
 6. Assure all empty glassware has been cleaned and rinsed at least three times prior to transfer to the stockroom or re-shelving.
 7. Label empty containers "empty" and triple rinsed containers "rinsed" to assist EH&IS in segregating for disposal.
 8. Remove all contaminated bench top covers/liners from work surfaces and place in appropriately identified bags as contaminated debris
 9. Clean laboratory bench tops and fume hood surfaces with soapy water
 10. Remove all chemical bottles and debris from fume hoods and place in an area for removal to the chemical stockroom or disposal
 11. Leave all cabinet and drawer keys with the Department Chair.
 12. Notify EH&IS if the room used perchloric acid in the fume hood

Special Procedures

Radioactive Materials (RAM). If the laboratory has used radioactive materials, the PI must notify the Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) for assistance at X2507 or X7233. The RSO will:

1. Inspect the laboratory before allowing occupancy.
2. Remove all RAM from the laboratory
3. Conduct a Radiation Decommission Survey on any surfaces and equipment within the lab i.e. refrigerators, centrifuges, etc.
4. Remove all radiation stickers and notices.
5. Post clearance notice.

Biohazardous Materials

1. Place all used and/or potentially contaminated sharps (syringes, Pasteur pipettes, serological pipettes, razor blades, etc.) in an approved 'sharps container'. Notify EH&IS for removal of the sharps container
2. Place all other unwanted solid biohazardous materials in autoclavable biohazard bags
3. Dispose of all other solid potentially biohazardous waste from the laboratory in autoclavable biohazards bags.
4. Autoclave all solid waste for at least 45 minutes on the Liquid cycle. Contact EH&IS for disposal options
5. Decontaminate all work surface area using freshly prepared 10% bleach solution, 70% alcohol, or commercially available disinfecting solution.
6. Decontaminate all biological safety cabinets before vacating the lab. Wash surfaces with germicidal soap and rinse with deionized water. Do a final wipe of the surfaces with 70% alcohol. Does not use bleach on any stainless steel surface.

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