



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 Principal Investigator (PI) is:

1. Leaving the University and closing their laboratory.
2. Retiring and closing their laboratory.
3. Relocating their laboratory to a different location on campus.
4. Leaving the University but transferring responsibility of their laboratory to another researcher.

In all of these situations, the PI must follow the procedures outlined below to either arrange for the safe disposal of hazardous materials in their laboratory, or transfer responsibility for those materials to another investigator. When the PI is unable to perform these duties, it becomes the responsibility of the Department Chair to ensure that these procedures are followed.

Responsibilities

When vacating a laboratory, proper disposition of all hazardous materials is the responsibility of the PI 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 & Safety (EHS) must be notified prior to the cleanout. EHS 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 EHS for guidance. Notification should be at least three months in advance; however, special circumstances can be accommodated. EHS helps 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, contact EHS for guidelines 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. Safety and Laboratory Training (SALT) 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).
 - c. Ensure 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), toxics, oxidizers, and water reactives.
 - 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 EHS, upon request.
5. Confirm that a vacated lab is properly emptied of hazardous materials, by completing the **Vacated Space Checklist** (attached) available from the Department or on the EHS website under the 'Forms' tab. The Checklist must be signed by the respective department head and sent to EHS at least seven days before the lab is permanently vacated. Upon receipt, EHS will visit the lab and notify the Department Chair if anything further needs to be done.
6. Ensure 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 EHS 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 EHS 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 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 laboratory (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 EHS for removal of the sharps container.
2. Place all other unwanted solid biohazardous materials and wastes in autoclavable biohazard bags. Contact EHS for disposal options.
3. Decontaminate all work surface area using freshly prepared 10% bleach solution, 70% alcohol, or commercially available disinfecting solution.
4. 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. Do not use bleach on any stainless steel surface.

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Moving/Vacating Laboratory Space

Complete and return to the Dean's Office.

 Name Department Ext.

Vacated Space(s) _____

Please review the following areas and note the condition and actions (where necessary). If any items are left in the room, contact the person responsible, and have them remove the object(s).

Area	Cleared*	Items left in room (if applicable)	Person Responsible	Final Destination
Floors	Yes / No			
Drawers (check inside)	Yes / No			
Cabinets (check inside)	Yes / No			
Fume Hoods and Cabinets	Yes / No			
Sinks	Yes / No			
Other	Yes / No			

* Including regular trash and items listed below (regardless of who they belong to):

- Equipment
- Bottles, tubes or any containers
- Waste containers, especially for biological, chemical, or radioactive waste
- Any "unknowns"
- Old experiments
- Books, journals (recycle at the library if possible)

Signature _____ Date _____
 Person Vacating the Space(s)

Signature _____ Date _____
 Department Chair

Signature _____ Date _____
 Environmental Health and Safety

Comments: _____

