

LABORATORY - POLICY

For Renovations, Remodels, Moves, and Closures

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to define how a laboratory is to be “decommissioned” in order to reassign chemicals or dispose of those that specific uses can not be found for them within the year. Ultimately the University of South Alabama’s intent will be the reduction in the accumulation of unknown chemicals.

Scope:

This policy applies to all University facilities and departments on **any of the University of South Alabama campuses** operating laboratories with Hazardous materials.

1.1 Policy for Closures of Laboratory(s) that Use Hazardous Materials

The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for the proper disposition of all hazardous materials used in their laboratory. Proper disposition of hazardous materials is required whenever an investigator leaves the University or transfers to a different laboratory. The Principal Investigator is to contact the Safety and Environmental Compliance department for guidance when planning or anticipating a possible laboratory closure. An exit inspection of departing investigator’s laboratories, equipment rooms, and storage areas to include refrigerators & freezers will be conducted by the Department Chair or their designee with the departing Investigator before their departure. Inspections should also include departing graduate students, post doctoral fellows, and investigators that are discontinuing research.

1.2 Closure Procedures for Laboratories with Hazardous Chemicals

The following procedures are to be followed and completed when an investigator leaves the University or transfers to a different laboratory. The proper disposal of waste & unused chemicals is a major responsibility and every effort should be made to do it safely and efficiently. The responsibility for the identification and handling of waste chemicals in the laboratory is with the individuals who create the waste.

Routine removal of waste chemicals is provided by Safety and Environmental Compliance at no direct charge to the department. Waste chemicals must be properly identified and stored as generated. A waste chemical storage area should be clearly identifiable in each laboratory. Each laboratory is considered a satellite accumulation area based on federal standards and is required to maintain weekly inspection logs for the chemical waste. In cases where an entire laboratory must be cleaned out or an accident has occurred, the Department Chair or designee and Safety and Environmental Compliance will coordinate the chemical waste inventory & removal process. The costs associated with such a project maybe charged directly to the department and will be decided on a case by case basis.

1.2.1 Before disposing of unwanted, unopened, uncontaminated chemicals check with others in your department who may be able to use them.

1.2.1 Make sure all materials to be disposed of are properly identified, labeled with its chemical name and are properly stored. Make sure all samples and products to be disposed of are also properly identified and stored. Materials of this nature not properly labeled or packaged will not be removed for disposal.

1.3 IDENTIFICATION

All waste chemicals must be identified by chemical name, including the approximate percentages of a mixture, and must have appropriate hazard warnings. Do not use abbreviations or symbols. All containers must be labeled prominently. Refer to Material Safety Data Sheet when determining the hazard warnings. All containers of waste chemicals must be clearly defined as waste by attaching an orange hazardous waste tag to the container. Safety and Environmental Compliance will provide the orange tags to departments at no expense. Waste chemicals must be collected and stored in containers appropriate for the material such as glass, polypropylene, etc. Soda containers and milk jugs are not acceptable containers.

1.4 UNKNOWN WASTE CHEMICALS

Unknown waste materials will not be accepted for disposal. It is the responsibility of the department involved to identify all chemicals and this may require the services of an

analytical laboratory to analyze the waste. Analytical services will be contracted under the auspices of Safety and Environmental Compliance with related charges directly expensed from the generating department. It clearly is in the best interest of departments to emphasize identification and labeling requirements to personnel and students with regards to chemical wastes and products.

1.5 INVENTORY CONTROL AND RECORD KEEPING

Contact the office of Safety and Environmental Control for details on specific waste disposal questions. All laboratories should maintain a current inventory of the chemicals and hazardous materials utilized and stored. Annual reviews to be conducted by both the department to verify accurate records. Safety and Environmental Compliance representatives will conduct unscheduled or scheduled inspections to verify materials are handled and stored appropriately. The Safety and Environmental Compliance department shall be provided a current inventory list within (30) days of annual inspections or upon request.

1.6 COMMON STORAGE AREAS

The department is responsible for common (shared) storage spaces. Common storage areas such as refrigerators, cold rooms, freezers, stock rooms, waste collection areas, common laboratory spaces and equipment rooms must have a responsible individual assigned to oversee the area. Prior to departure from the University all Principal Investigators must survey shared facilities in order to locate and appropriately dispose of their materials.

Questions regarding proper disposal methods should be directed to Safety and Environmental Compliance anytime requirements are unclear.

1.7 SPECIFIC PROCEDURES FOR DECONTAMINATION OF EQUIPMENT

The Principal Investigator is responsible for properly and thoroughly decontaminating all equipment, storage cabinets, shelves and working surfaces in the laboratory. Careful cleaning is recommended to insure subsequent occupants will not receive avoidable exposures. If laboratory equipment is to be left for the next occupant, clean and decontaminate it before departing the space. If hoods or filtration equipment has been used with hazardous substances or biological materials this must be communicated in writing to the Safety and Environmental Compliance department. If laboratory equipment is to be discarded, equipment with inherent environmental hazards must be identified and disposed through specific waste streams. Contact Safety and Environmental Compliance should you have any questions regarding the disposal of scientific equipment.

If the equipment contains freon, such as refrigerators or freezers the appropriate maintenance or utilities department should be contacted to coordinate the removal of freon prior to disposal. Equipment containing oils, antifreeze or other types of chemicals should be properly drained prior to disposal. Equipment used for storage of chemical, biological or radioactive materials are not to be sold as surplus unless approved by the facility's Safety Officer. All approvals will be closely scrutinized and must be well documented.

If the equipment contains asbestos, such as an oven, the Safety and Environmental Compliance department should be contacted to assist with disposal arrangements.

After completing the above steps, make sure that all hazardous, biological or radioactive warning stickers and labels are removed from the equipment prior to disposal. Equipment with property tags, purchased through the University or donated to the University can be disposed of only after all the necessary property transaction forms have been signed and completed.

1.8 FINAL CLOSURE PROCEDURE

Notify the Department Chair when the laboratory and related areas have been cleared.

The departing Principal Investigator must complete a final **Laboratory Clearance Form** and present the form to the Department Chair stating final closure and clearance of the laboratory and related areas. The departing Principal Investigator will be responsible for rectifying any problems to the satisfaction of the Department Chair. The Department Chair or designee will inspect the laboratory and related areas and, when satisfied will sign and date the **Laboratory Clearance Form**. The Department Chair or designee will then send the form to Safety and Environmental Compliance for final disposition and record keeping. Deficiencies not addressed by the Department's representative prior to the Principal Investigator's departure will be reported in writing to the Department Chair with all expenses related to correction to be charged directly to the responsible department.

**LABORATORY CLOSURE AND
CLEARANCE FORM**

Department of _____

Principal Investigator: _____

Building/Areas: _____

Signature: _____ has cleaned all equipment, work surfaces and properly inventoried, labeled and disposed of chemicals, samples, gases and other laboratory hazardous materials. I therefore certify that the areas and equipment identified are safe for reassignment by the department. Should any deficiencies be identified by the department representative or the Safety and Environmental Compliance department these will be rectified prior to my receiving final compensations due.

Date: _____

Department Chair or designee's release: _____ Date: _____

Safety and Environmental Compliance release: _____ Date: _____