

Policy on Hazardous Materials and Laboratory Move-Ins and Cleanouts

Policy Title	Hazardous Materials and Laboratory Move-Ins and Cleanouts
Policy #	02.111.3
Policy Owner	Coordinator, Environmental Health & Safety
Contact Information	Questions about this policy should be directed to the Coordinator, Environmental Health & Safety (401) 874-7993
Approved By	Administrative Policy Committee
Effective Date	May 7, 2024
Next Review Date	No Later than June 30, 2029
Who Needs to Know About this Policy	All University faculty and staff who use laboratory facilities at the University
Definitions	Hazardous Materials. A hazardous material is any item or agent (biological, chemical, radiological, and/or physical), which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment, either by itself or through interaction with other factors. Hazardous Materials are inclusive of all hazardous waste.
Statutes, Regulations, and Policies Governing or Necessitating This Policy	29 CFR § 1910.120 Sub Part H (Occupational Safety and Health Standards) 40 CFR §§ 260–262 University of Rhode Island Chemical Hygiene Plan
Reason for Policy/Purpose	To establish safe procedures for vacating or setting up laboratory spaces containing chemical, biological, or radiological materials.
Forms Related to this Policy	<i>Laboratory Clearance Form</i> <i>Laboratory Move-In Form</i> <i>Procedures for Laboratory Move-Ins and Cleanouts</i>

Policy Statement

The Division of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) is responsible for strict compliance with and enforcement of all environmental health and safety laws, regulations, and standards applicable to the University of Rhode Island. Additionally, the University is responsible for the disposal of all Hazardous Waste generated on University property. When laboratories change hands, EH&S often finds unidentified and/or unwanted chemical, biological, and/or radiological materials left behind by previous laboratory occupants and the resulting unplanned cleanup and disposal is often time-consuming and costly.

1. Hazardous Materials Defined

This policy concerns Hazardous Materials defined and regulated by laws and regulations administered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The OSHA definition for Hazardous Materials include 1) any "Physical Hazard, which means a chemical for which there is scientifically valid evidence that it is a combustible liquid, a compressed gas, explosive, flammable, an organic peroxide, an oxidizer, pyrophoric, unstable (reactive) or water-reactive, and 2) any "Health Hazard," which means any chemical for which there is statistically significant evidence based on at least one study conducted in accordance with established scientific principles that acute or chronic health effects may occur in exposed employees. The term "health hazard" includes chemicals which are carcinogens, toxic or highly toxic agents, reproductive toxins, irritants, corrosives, sensitizers, hepatotoxins, nephrotoxins, neurotoxins, agents which act on the hematopoietic system, and agents which damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes. (See OSHA, Guidance for Hazard Determination at <https://www.osha.gov/hazcom/ghd053107>). The EPA definition of Hazardous Materials incorporates the OSHA definition above and adds to that chemicals or other items that can cause harm to animals, plants, or humans when released, whether that release occurs through a spill, emission, leaching, dumping, or any other method of escape or disposal.

Unreturnable Hazardous Materials include lecture bottles and dewars as well as gas cylinders from vendors with which the University no longer holds a contract or cylinders past their expiry date.

Unidentified potential hazardous materials include any laboratory materials that are unlabeled or stored in insufficiently or inaccurately labeled containers. Any material that personnel from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety cannot safely identify in order to manage the movement or disposal of that material will be considered Hazardous Materials until a third party analysis can identify the material (and, as appropriate, dispose of the material properly).

2. Applicability

This policy applies to all University employees (faculty and staff) who use laboratory facilities at the University, particularly for employees working in laboratories that contain chemical, biological, or radiological materials. This policy is applicable in the following situations:

- The employee is setting up a lab
- The employee is leaving (including retirement) the University and closing their laboratory
- The employee is relocating their laboratory within the same building or to a different building on campus
- The employee is leaving the University but transferring responsibility of their laboratory to another researcher

3. Laboratory Move-Ins

When a current faculty member or research investigator occupies a new space, including instances where responsibility for an existing laboratory is transferred from one individual to another, the responsible faculty member or research investigator shall contact EH&S to ensure all hazardous materials tracking is up to date and to review compliance with hazard communication procedures as described in Procedures for Laboratory Move-Ins and Cleanouts.

For laboratory move-ins associated with a new employee, the chair of the home department for that employee shall contact EH&S to ensure compliance with regards to any new hazardous materials associated with that new laboratory.

4. Laboratory Cleanouts

Prior to a faculty member or research investigator leaving the University or voluntarily relocating to another laboratory facility, that individual is responsible for proper removal of all unwanted/waste materials from their laboratory. The individual is required to notify EH&S at least four (4) weeks prior to ceasing laboratory operations so that the transition can be appropriately planned. The individual faculty member or researcher must ensure that all waste is identified, labeled, and stored properly prior to the pre-arranged pickup date. Should the individual faculty member or research investigator be unable or unwilling to follow these procedures, responsibility shall fall to the Department Chair and then to the College Dean.

Equipment identified or suspected as containing hazardous materials (e.g., computer batteries, radioactive materials, refrigerants, pump oils, etc.) must be managed as part of a laboratory cleanout (or possibly in the course of a move). EH&S shall be the primary point of contact for managing the hazardous materials in equipment, though the final recycling and move of any identified equipment may be undertaken by a separate University office once the hazardous materials are removed and/or the equipment has been decontaminated.

5. Disposal Costs

So long as individuals and their departments adhere to this policy in planning routine laboratory move-ins and cleanouts, EH&S will cover the associated costs for routine disposal of chemical, biological, or radiological waste, including those associated with laboratory equipment. Should an individual or department fail to follow the Procedures for Laboratory Move-ins and Cleanouts with respect to transferring unwanted chemicals, identifying and properly storing waste, and/or coordinating the cleanout in advance with EH&S, EH&S may at its sole discretion hold the department responsible for any disposal costs in excess of what would normally be incurred.

The faculty member or researcher in charge of the laboratory shall be responsible for the costs of disposing unreturnable Hazardous Materials and for the disposal of any unidentified potentially Hazardous Materials, including laboratory analysis to determine the contents of unlabeled or inaccurate or insufficiently labeled materials. The faculty member or researcher in charge shall also be responsible for the cost of any fees, permits, and disposal of any high hazardous chemicals and waste (such as shock sensitive and reactive chemicals) or those that require high hazard remote opening services, specialized transportation, or the use of specially trained individuals in their management and disposal. Chemicals/waste requiring remote open and stabilization include, but are not limited to, the following: organic peroxides with non-crystallized/stable explosive compounds with low levels of peroxides present, organic peroxides with high peroxides and solidified explosive compounds, solid organic peroxides, temperature sensitive, pressurized, and crystallized/sensitized explosive compounds.

Should the faculty member or researcher refuse or otherwise be unable to pay these costs, the home department of that individual shall bear the fiscal responsibility.

6. Improper Disposal

Under no circumstances shall unwanted or unidentified chemicals, whether hazardous or not, be left in the laboratory, discarded in the regular trash, or poured down the drain. Should the University be sanctioned for inappropriate disposal of waste materials, the responsible department shall bear the full cost of such sanctions and responsible individuals may be subject to disciplinary action.

Exceptions

None

Policy Review and Revisions

(Versions earlier than the first policy number may be paper only)

Policy #	Effective Date	Reason for Change	Changes to Policy
02.111.1	September 16, 2019	n/a	n/a
01.111.2	April 12, 2022	Scheduled Review	Changes to language for readability; additional definitions; language regarding new employee move-ins, hazmats in laboratory equipment, and responsibilities for unreturnable hazmats, high hazard hazmats, and unidentified materials.
01.111.3	May 7, 2024	EH&S Request	Notification required for transition changed from two (2) weeks to four (4) weeks.