

# **GUIDELINES FOR RESTARTING LABORATORIES**

## **PLANNING**

### **PRIOR TO ENTERING THE LABORATORY**

- ✓ Review University COVID-19 Guidelines for Employees and EHRS Social Distancing Guidelines for Laboratories.
- ✓ Prepare for supply chain disruptions and limited availability of materials:
  - Recognize that order placement may be slower as the volume of requests increases.
  - Plan for limited sales of high demand items
  - Plan for limited personal protective equipment (PPE) availability (including N95s, face shields, and glove)
  - Plan for limited availability of some reagents
  - Plan for limited availability of some consumable products
- ✓ Review equipment manuals including general operation safety and safe startup procedures.
- ✓ Review equipment state and safely release or discharge any unneeded stored energy.
- ✓ Review start-up procedures for any compressed gas cylinders, gas generation station, and/or gas distribution systems.
- ✓ Review laboratory safety procedures including biological, chemical, radiation and radiation producing equipment.
- ✓ Review laboratory protocols including RSC, IBC, IACUC, and IRB.
- ✓ Ensure all laboratory personnel training is up to date.
- ✓ Return to laboratory buildings only when it is safe to do so and entry has been authorized.

## **PREPARATION**

### **ENTERING THE LABORATORY FOR THE FIRST TIME**

- ✓ Before you walk in, do a mental hazard assessment of the hidden or invisible hazards of your lab, such as compressed gases, vapor-producing chemicals, etc. that could have escaped containment. Think through how you would detect any problems and how to react before you enter the room.
- ✓ **Do not** enter a laboratory if an alarm is sounding. Contact EHRS at 2-2520 or Facilities Management to report the alarm.
- ✓ If you discover a hazardous condition that poses a threat to you or to others, such as a hazardous material release, isolate the hazard (e.g., close the door to the lab), notify occupants in the area, activate the appropriate incident response action, exit the building if required, and call Campus Police at 1-12334 to report the situation.
- ✓ Walk through all of your areas and complete a visual inspection looking for any evidence of problems: broken chemical containers, old waste, leaks, failed equipment, spills, etc.
- ✓ Mitigate any leaks, spills, or releases if you are capable of handling them. If not, contact EHRS at 2-2520.
- ✓ Check equipment that may have been affected by a power disruption as soon as possible. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed until temperature levels return to normal. Check for leaks that may have occurred when the temperature was compromised.
- ✓ If any damage has occurred as a result of the closure, contact Risk Management within 24 hours of discovering the loss.

## PREPARING FOR LABORATORY OPERATIONS TO RESUME

- ✓ Create a work environment that incorporates social distancing concepts into the laboratory. Refer to [Social Distancing Guidelines for Laboratories](#) for guidance.
- ✓ Flush eyewash stations for 3-5 minutes to remove sediment and stagnant water and document on weekly inspection sheet. Report problems to Facilities Management.
- ✓ Pour water down dry traps/floor drains to mitigate sewer gas smells that are often confused with natural gas leaks.
- ✓ Conduct a hazardous material inventory to ensure no loss of material (biological agents, chemicals, radioactive material stocks, toxins, controlled substances, etc.).
- ✓ Report hazardous material incidents to EHRS. Report any missing materials, to EHRS, Campus Police and other institutional officials, as necessary.
- ✓ Assess chemicals that may have become unstable during the shutdown and manage any expired, outdated, peroxide-forming, self-reactive, or other reagents with a limited lifespan appropriately. Also look for chemical containers that are bulging or have imploded. Submit a waste pick up for materials in these categories.
- ✓ Cleanup/put away chemicals, supplies, equipment, glassware, and other items left out during the shutdown
- ✓ Inspect waste areas, ensure waste is properly labeled, and place a waste pickup request for any full, degrading or bulging containers.
- ✓ Confirm chemical fume hoods and biosafety cabinets and other safety equipment (e.g. radiation detection instrumentation) are operating as normal.
- ✓ **Do not** use laboratory equipment, such as a chemical fume hoods or biological safety cabinets if the alarm is sounding or the equipment is not working properly. Contact Facilities Management and/or EHRS for support.
- ✓ Assess stock of PPE and reorder supplies that may have been donated during the shutdown.
- ✓ **Do not** plan to start work until you have an adequate stock of PPE.
- ✓ Determine an appropriate lab cleaning protocol to disinfect high touch surfaces.