

**PROCEDURES FOR VACATING A LABORATORY**

**Principal Investigator:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Building & Room#s:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Department:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Telephone Contact #** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Project Manager** \_\_\_\_\_ **Moving to:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Vacate Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Whether planning a renovation, relocation or departure, vacating &/or relocating Columbia University (CU) laboratory facilities require significant coordination & advanced planning. Laboratory personnel serve a primary role in helping to ensure laboratory facilities are left in a safe condition suitable for re-occupancy or renovation. EH&S will work closely with your laboratory's designee(s), as well as with Facilities Management & Space Planning, to help prepare for the safe & efficient turnover of space, including shared spaces, such as common equipment and tissue culture rooms. It is essential that coordination of this process begin as soon as it is known you will vacate your space. Please contact the EH&S Research Safety once this information is known. Early communication & coordination will afford all parties adequate time to address the items required to properly vacate. Once the lab has completed the action items below, EH&S can issue "Clearance" to your Department &/or Facilities Management, to proceed with renovation or re-occupancy. To avoid delays for both departing & arriving occupants, please follow this guidance carefully.

Reach out to EH&S at:  
 CUMC: 212-305-6780 Morningside, Lamont, Nevis: 212-854-8749 or [labsafety@columbia.edu](mailto:labsafety@columbia.edu)

***Under no circumstances shall your laboratory facilities be vacated or "Clearance" be issued by EH&S without your laboratory verifying that these procedures have been completed***

Always exercise proper precautions, including the use of task appropriate [personal protective equipment](#) (PPE), when cleaning/decontaminating equipment & surfaces, handling hazardous materials, & handling waste for disposal.

<b>Radioactive Materials (RAM)</b>	<b>DONE</b>
<b>RAM must not be transported via trains, cars or CU shuttles.</b>	Y/N/NA
Label all containers to clearly identify isotope, activity & type of waste.	
Evaluate & sort radioactive materials to either 1) be moved or 2) disposed as waste.	
Survey & wipe-test lead bricks, lead pigs, shielding, & source containers to verify decontamination (you must check all drawers, cabinets, etc.). Assemble the materials for EH&S to survey.	
To move RAM, you must contact the RSO by email at <a href="mailto:rsocumc@columbia.edu">rsocumc@columbia.edu</a>	
Update radioactive material inventory records for disposal & new locations.	
Return all badges, if leaving CU, by notifying the Dosimetry Coordinator.	
<b>Last step:</b> Exit survey of rooms & equipment will be conducted by an RSO Representative.	

**Controlled Substances**

*It is a violation of State/&Federal law for a Controlled Substances Registrant to abandon/transfer Controlled Substances to an unlicensed individual. A Registrant must not vacate a lab without having arranged for the proper disposition of their Controlled Substances.*

All DEA/NYSDOH Controlled Substances must be properly managed by the NYSDOH licensed & DEA registered owner (a.k.a. Registrant) of the substances & can either be ( <i>choose one</i> )... <input type="checkbox"/> Returned via a DEA approved reverse distributor. Refer to the University's <a href="http://ehs.columbia.edu/ControlledSubstances.html">Policy for the Acquisition, Use &amp; Disposal of Controlled Substances</a> ( <a href="http://ehs.columbia.edu/ControlledSubstances.html">http://ehs.columbia.edu/ControlledSubstances.html</a> ) & review the procedures with your Safety Officer <i>or</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Relocated to the Registrant's new location. An amendment identifying the new location must be sent to both DOH & DEA prior to relocation. Refer to CU's <a href="#">Policy for the Acquisition, Use &amp; Disposal of Controlled Substances</a> & review procedures with EH&S Safety Officer. <b>EH&amp;S is unable to accept Controlled Substances for disposal or relocation.</b>	
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**Chemicals**

Includes chemical waste, reagents, prepared solutions, used or new oil, & household cleaning products or anything that cannot be poured down the drain. Please refer to the Policy on Drain Disposal of Chemicals <https://research.columbia.edu/content/policy-drain-disposal-chemicals>

Label all containers to clearly identify contents. Disposal of unknown materials or chemicals is extremely difficult & costly. If not identifiable, contact a Safety Officer to assist.	
Evaluate & sort chemicals into categories: 1) to move, 2) to redistribute to others, & 3) waste for disposal.	
<b>General/Furniture movers are not permitted to move chemicals!</b> Contact your Safety Officer for guidance on proper packaging & transporting/shipping of chemicals. Federal, state & local laws require specific procedures when moving chemicals.	
Complete the <a href="#">Chemical Waste Pickup</a> ** for disposal of hazardous waste & unwanted chemicals. For large quantities, note 'Lab Cleanout' in the comment box.	
<b>Last step:</b> Inspect all lab spaces & ensure all chemicals are gathered for easy removal by EH&S. You must check all drawers, cabinets, refrigerators, etc.	

\*\*[Chemical Waste Pickup Form](http://vesta.cumc.columbia.edu/ehs/wastepickup/) <http://vesta.cumc.columbia.edu/ehs/wastepickup/>



<b>Microorganisms, Cultures, &amp; rDNA</b>	
Clinical or research materials, including but not limited to cultures & stocks of microorganisms & human or animal specimens that may contain pathogenic or nonpathogenic microorganisms.	
Label all containers to clearly identify contents.	
Evaluate & sort biologicals into categories: 1) move, 2) research materials to preserve, & 3) waste.	
If moving materials in liquid nitrogen Dewar flasks, contact Safety Officer for information on using dry nitrogen shipper(s).	
Dispose of all (non-sharp) potentially bio hazardous waste from the laboratory in red bags: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bench coat &amp; disposable liners/covers from work surfaces &amp; solid media &amp; supplies</li> </ul> Decontaminate all liquid cultures by autoclaving or by treating for 30 minutes with a 10 % bleach solution before drain disposal.	
<b>Sharps</b>	
Needles, syringes w/ or w/t needles, razor blades, Pasteur pipettes, pipette tips, & anything that can puncture a plastic bag.	
Fill out the appropriate online pick-up request form for radioactive & chemically contaminated sharps. For non-segregated sharps containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affix a radioactive waste label to the sharps container and check the Radioactive Sharps box on the label. Submit the <a href="#">RAM pickup form</a> * for disposal.</li> <li>• Chemical &amp; biologically contaminated sharps may be placed directly in sharps containers providing there are no free liquids.</li> </ul>	
<b>Laboratory Equipment</b>	
Decontaminate lab equipment that is to be left in place, moved, sold as surplus, or disposed of via EH&S.	
For refrigerators, freezers, centrifuges & other movable equipment that may be contaminated with: <b>Chemicals:</b> remove all chemicals & glass, clean with soapy water solution or suitable alternative. <b>Biological materials:</b> clean, disinfect with freshly prepared 10% bleach or 70% ethanol solution, remove warning stickers. <b>RAM:</b> clean, decontaminate using “rad con” or a suitable alternative, survey, wipe-test & contact Safety Officer for ‘Clearance’.	
For incubators, disconnect CO <sub>2</sub> line, drain water jacket, disinfect, remove warning stickers, & contact Safety Officer for ‘Clearance’ statement.	
For biological safety cabinets (BSC), contact maintenance service vendor to conduct gas-decontamination before relocating or discarding. Recertification by service vendor is required after a BSC has been relocated.	
Submit Facilities online-service request for removal of lab equipment to be discarded, after Safety Officer has provided ‘Clearance’ statement.	
<b>General Housekeeping</b>	
Lab spaces, including shared areas such as common equipment rooms, must be left in a ‘broom swept’ condition prior to vacating.	
Remove all debris from fume hoods, BSC, & bench tops.	
Clean & disinfect (using freshly prepared 10% bleach or 70% ethanol solution) bench tops, furniture, other surfaces, laboratory hoods, storage cabinets, & other fixed equipment. Contact Safety Officer for ‘clearance’ statement for equipment, spaces, etc.	
Contact Facilities to order trash/recyclable/red bag bins & to remove recyclable glass, plastic, universal waste (e.g., computers, lamps etc.). All computer hard drives must be wiped by CUIT.	
Clean glassware if necessary. Redistribute usable glassware to stockrooms & other laboratories.	
For other empty glassware, use practices commonly employed to empty the container (e.g., collect as chemical waste and then rinse clean). Deface the label & place in a cardboard box labeled “Caution - Glass” for Facilities to remove.	
<b>Oxygen Sensor - For areas with &gt;60 gallons cryogenic materials</b>	
If departing the University, contact <a href="mailto:labsafety@columbia.edu">labsafety@columbia.edu</a> to remove O <sub>2</sub> sensor & return it to inventory.	
If departing the University, lab must contact Tech Air (O <sub>2</sub> sensor service contractor) to satisfy any outstanding invoices.	
If remaining within the University, <a href="#">Lab safety</a> will remove O <sub>2</sub> sensor & arrange for reinstallation in new location.	
<b>Tissue Fixed in a Hazardous Chemical ( e.g., formaldehyde)</b>	
If being discarded, must be separated, with the tissue going into red bags and the chemical into a labeled container for chemical waste. If a large quantity of such material is to be disposed, contact EH&S.	
Complete the <a href="#">Chemical Waste Pickup Form</a> **	
<b>Gas Cylinders: Return/Disposal</b>	
Compressed gas cylinders <b>can only</b> be moved using a cylinder transportation cart, EH&S strongly advises contacting service vendor.	
Remove regulators, hosing & manifolds. Appropriately cap all cylinders & lecture bottles.	
Return cylinders to stockroom or supplier.	
Complete the <a href="#">Chemical Waste Pickup Form</a> ** for disposal of non-returnable lecture bottles.	

Laboratory Designee (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Laboratory Designee (Sign): \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Officer (Print Name & Sign): \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

List names of vendors expected to be used during this project: