

Laboratory Door Safety

Laboratory doors provide more than just facilitating your entry point to the space. They are designed to withstand flames, as well as chemical and physical deterioration. Here are some key points to ensure your laboratory door is effective.

Let the door hit you on the way out

Laboratory doors are required to be self-closing to maintain their fire resistance. Propping the door open violates this requirement and compromises its effectiveness in controlling a fire. If you must prop the door open temporarily, ensure it's done properly to avoid damage. Do not use a pipette tip box, tape, or other measures to prop the door open as it can cause permanent damage to the door, possibly even requiring it to be replaced.

Best Practice

Refrain from directly posting paper or other combustible materials on the door. These can fuel a fire and cause more damage than the flame itself. If necessary, use non-combustible materials like laminated posters or stickers, ensuring they don't cover the entire door surface.

Regularly assess your laboratory door to ensure it functions properly and immediately report any concerns or issues to Facilities via a work order. Additionally, keep door signage updated with accurate hazard information and emergency contacts.

You may also notice a sign on each laboratory door, like the ones to the left. This sign communicates what hazards are present within the space. This is especially important in an emergency in the lab, such as a fire. The hazard symbols on the door help responders prepare to effectively address and remove the hazard from the space.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact EH&S for guidance and assistance.

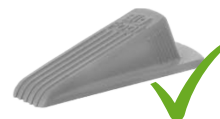
Have more questions? Reach out to EH&S at Labsafety@columbia.edu or give us a call

CUIMC: (212) 305 - 6780

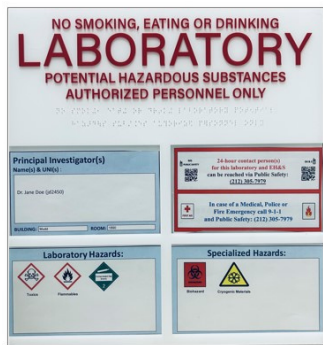
Manhattanville/Morningside: (212) 854 - 8749

Fun FAQ!

Curious about the fire rating of your door? Check the labels on both the door frame and the door itself to know the specific fire rating, typically ranging from 45 minutes to an hour and a half.



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An example door sign from the MS/CUIMC campuses

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[Door Sign Generator >](#)

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