



Laboratory Activation Guidelines

The Office of Clinical and Research Safety (OCRS)

Phone: 322-2057 Fax: 343-4957

Emergency: 875-3779

www.vumc.org/safety

Hazard Signs. Hazardous work areas and equipment must be posted for biohazards, carcinogens, radiation, and lasers. Make sure the proper signs are obtained and posted. Contact OCRS with any questions concerning proper hazard signage.

Emergency Evacuation Plan: Every department should have an Emergency Evacuation Plan that addresses all work areas within the department. When relocating to a new area, the Principal Investigator or Laboratory Instructor should be notified to update the existing department plans to incorporate new locations and procedures. The locations of safety showers, eyewashes, fire extinguishers, pull stations, and spill kits, all available means of exit from laboratories and the building, and evacuation assembly areas must be reviewed with employees in the new lab. Have your supervisor document your review for inclusion in your Laboratory Chemical Hygiene Plan.

Location of Emergency Equipment: An emergency eyewash and shower should be working and accessible within 100 feet of your lab and require no more than 10 seconds to reach. Be sure the water runs clean out of these devices and access to them is not blocked. Arrange with your department's administrative office to have Facilities Management correct any problems. No point in the laboratory should be more than 50 feet from the nearest ABC fire extinguisher. Consult Facilities Management for proper location and mounting of fire extinguishers.

Aisle Clearance: There must be a minimum of 22" clearance in the aisles.

Storage Areas: The following safety elements should be included in setting up storage areas in your new lab.

- Lab / Office furniture (i.e.: computer desk, rolling carts, printer stands, plant stands, etc) should not be used for permanent storage of hazardous chemicals.
- Store large or heavy bottles and containers close to the floor and secure overhead objects.
- Shelves should be secured (bolted) to a wall.
- Storage area should be well lit, properly ventilated, and have an even temperature.
- Secondary containment of chemical containers in polyethylene trays is recommended for spill protection.
- Shelves above eye level (approx. 60") should have fall guarding attached.

Fume Hoods: Before laboratory functions begin in the new laboratory, an inspection of all fume hoods shall be performed by OCRS.

Personal Protective Equipment: If you are employing personal protective equipment (PPE) in the laboratory (i.e.: respirators, laser eye wear, protective gloves, etc.) before using these items in the new laboratory, consult OCRS on their adequacy and proper usage.

Chemicals: Please refer to "Chemical Retention and Storage" fact sheets.