

Virginia Commonwealth University

Laboratory Closeout Procedure

Procedure for Laboratory Closeouts

Whenever a principal investigator or other researcher leaves the University or is moved to another laboratory space, the individual in charge of the laboratory must contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) to coordinate the disposal of all hazardous materials prior to leaving the space. The laboratory and/or their department are responsible for the proper handling and management of hazardous materials. Failure to do so may result in charges for identification and disposal services.

Only those individuals with Hazard Communication and/or laboratory safety training should conduct laboratory cleanout and chemical handling activities.

The following procedures must be followed when closing a laboratory.

1. The Chemical/Biological Safety Section of OEHS (828-1392) must be contacted to schedule a walk through and coordinate the disposal of hazardous chemicals in laboratories.
2. Prior to disposal, the researcher should make every attempt to transfer any usable chemical to other laboratories. This saves the University money in purchase costs and is more environmentally friendly.
3. All chemicals must be stored in appropriate containers with their tops securely closed. The name of the chemical(s) and approximate percentage of each constituent must be clearly marked on each container. Unlabeled, improperly containerized, or unknown chemicals will not be accepted and/or may result in charges to the department.
 - Research laboratories may not dispose of any hazardous chemical through the sanitary sewer system or regular trash. Such actions may result in citations and/or fines from regulatory agencies and adverse publicity for the University.
 - If during the course of the laboratory cleanout shock sensitive chemicals (picric acid, ethers, azides, etc.) are observed either in a dry state or with crystal formation, discontinue the cleanout and contact OEHS as soon as possible.
4. The laboratory must fill out and submit a Waste Disposal Form the chemicals. Chemical waste will not be accepted which does not have all necessary paper work included. Complete information regarding chemical waste disposal can be found on the following url:
<http://views.vcu.edu/oehs/chemical/chemwaste.html>
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5. If laboratory equipment (refrigerators, laboratory benches, etc.) must be thoroughly cleaned prior to leaving to remove any residual contaminants. Any laboratory equipment sent to surplus must be cleaned and noted as such on the equipment.
6. All compressed gas cylinders must be capped and returned to the distributor. Lecture bottles that cannot be returned must be plugged and marked as either empty or full for disposal through OEHS
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 - When the laboratory is cleaned and wastes are ready for disposal, contact OEHS at 8-1392. Chemical wastes are accepted on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in Sanger B2-001. . For large quantities, onsite pickup may be arranged.

Disposal of Infectious Materials

The individual in charge of the laboratory is responsible for assuring that all infectious material and/or wastes are properly disposed of prior to vacating their laboratory. The Chemical/Biological Safety Section does not accept infectious/medical waste for disposal. For further information on infectious waste, please see the following url: <http://views.vcu.edu/oehs/chemical/biosafe/Bborne.html>.