

HAZARD COMMUNICATION IN SHARED LABORATORY SPACES

INTRODUCTION:

Modern research supports efficient use of resources by sharing laboratory space and equipment. Evolution of the “open lab” concept helps researchers share lab space, equipment, bench space and support staff. It is often a challenge to address safety and compliance issues in shared spaces. By default, the Department Chair is responsible for the safe operation of their department’s labs. A faculty member can be assigned the responsibility and authority for safety and regulatory compliance in that lab. OEHS recommends that faculty members designate a trained individual or group to help coordinate the management of specific hazards being used in each shared laboratory. The following common principles should be implemented in all shared laboratory spaces in order to facilitate clear communication and improved safety awareness.

COMMON PRINCIPLES

- Emergency contact information for responsible PI must be provided at each entry point
- Inform OEHS of responsible PI for shared space(s)
- Access only provided to authorized users
- Hazard communication:
 - inform all research groups of the hazards present
 - establish clearly-defined work areas or rooms for specific hazard types
 - label entryway and equipment with appropriate hazard warnings, especially when hazard is in use
 - SDS for high hazard chemicals should be stored in the shared space
- When using high hazard material, maintain a continuous line of sight until returned to storage
- Maintain [hazardous waste](#) in a secure location
- No food or drink stored or consumed in laboratory
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures for use with potentially hazardous material
- Personal Protective Equipment required for the highest hazard present must be used by all personnel in the shared space
- Post the [Emergency Procedures Poster](#) in a prominent position
- Share any hazard specific emergency interventions with all users of the facility
- Ensure all emergency equipment is being correctly maintained
- Perform monthly [safety self-inspections](#)
- Perform monthly purges of expired chemicals/waste

RADIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

- Permission to work with [radiological hazards](#) must be obtained prior to initiating work
- [Radioactive waste](#) must be tagged with a yellow tag & submit a request online

- All workers (including support staff) who have access to that space are required to complete [“Radiation Awareness Training”](#)
- Equipment emitting ionizing radiation must have an associated log book to record usage
 - individual researchers must be screened for training and to determine if any special monitoring is required
- Contact the WSU [Radiation Safety Officer](#) for further information

CHEMICAL HAZARDS

- PIs must share relevant safety data sheets with all personnel who share the lab space
- Chemical waste must be tagged, labeled and stored in a secondary container
- Chemical Fume Hoods must be certified and utilized when appropriate
- Contact the WSU [Chemical Hygiene Officer](#) for further information

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

- Work with biological agents may require approval from the [Institutional Biosafety Committee](#)
- PIs must provide relevant safety information to all personnel utilizing the lab space, including:
 - routes of transmission
 - signs and symptoms of infection
- Requirements for BSL-2 facilities remain in effect at all times
- Biological Safety Cabinets must be certified and utilized when appropriate
- Biological waste must be disinfected prior to disposal or placed in red biohazardous waste container for collection by OEHS
- Contact the WSU [Biosafety Officer](#) for further information