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Revision: 1.1	Subject: Laboratory Decommissioning	

1. Introduction

The Environmental Health & Safety Standard Operating Procedure for Laboratory Decommissioning was developed by the Department of Environmental Health & Safety in accordance with the University's Policy Statement on Health and Safety and to ensure compliance with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Act and Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines.

2. Scope

This SOP applies throughout the University and for off-site laboratories. It includes procedures for decommissioning a laboratory if a principal investigator closes a laboratory, leaves the University or transfers to another location. It also includes procedures for circumstances where a principal investigator wishes to discontinue working with radioactive or biohazardous materials.

3. Applicable Legislation

Canadian Nuclear Safety Act
Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines 3rd Edition - 2004

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Responsibilities of Department Head

The Department Head must ensure that this policy is distributed to all principal investigators and laboratory technicians in their department.

The Department Head must ensure that this SOP is implemented in all facilities under his/her authority.

The Department Head must notify the Department of Environmental Health and Safety if a principal investigator is leaving the University, transferring their laboratory to another location or closing down a laboratory. Ultimate responsibility for hazardous materials management lies with each department.

4.2 Responsibilities of Principal Investigator

When a principal investigator vacates or shuts down a laboratory they must notify the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. The laboratory must be left in a condition which is safe for the next occupant, or for construction/renovation workers.



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It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that all hazardous materials in use in the laboratory are disposed of in the proper fashion.

5. Laboratory Closeout Procedure

- a. Download the Laboratory Decommissioning Procedures Checklist at: [Lab Decommissioning Checklist.pdf \(queensu.ca\)](#) (PDF, 22 KB)
- b. Perform the steps that apply to your laboratory.
- c. Sign the form and have the Department Head review and sign.
- d. Send the completed form to the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.
- e. Environmental Health and Safety will inspect the laboratory to ensure that all conditions of this policy have been met.
- f. The completed approved form will be returned to the Department Head. **Renovations may not begin, nor a new researcher take possession of the laboratory until the closeout has been approved by the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.**

6. Chemicals

All chemicals including waste chemicals must be removed from the laboratory.

Empty Containers

Empty containers **MUST BE DEFACED** of all hazardous symbols and warnings prior to disposal in regular garbage. Ensure no hazardous residue is present.

Waste Chemicals

Waste Chemicals **MUST** be disposed of as per Queen's University Hazardous Waste Policy and Procedures [SOP-CHEM-01 \(hazardous Waste Disposal August 2022.pdf \(queensu.ca\)\)](#)

Transferring Chemicals

Chemicals being transferred to another location external to Queen's University, or to a Queen's laboratory outside of the main campus, must be packaged and shipped as per Queen's University Transportation of Dangerous Goods Policy and Procedures [SOP-CHEM-02 NOV-24-2022.pdf \(queensu.ca\)](#). Guidance and assistance with shipping documents and packaging may be obtained from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (ext. 74976).

For renovations, transfer chemicals to a temporary storage area. Use appropriate secondary containments when transferring chemicals.

Gas Cylinders



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Large gas cylinders must be returned to the supplier prior to vacating the laboratory. Cylinders that are not returnable (e.g. lecture bottles) must be disposed of as per Queen's University Hazardous Waste Policy and Procedures [SOP-CHEM-01 \(hazardous Waste Disposal August 2022.pdf \(queensu.ca\)\)](#)

7. Radioisotopes

Inventory

All radioactive stocks and/or sealed sources must either be transferred to another authorized permit holder or disposed of through the Department of Environmental Health and Safety as per Queen's University disposal procedures for radioisotopes. The University Radiation and Laser Safety Officer must be notified prior to the transfer.

Decontamination

A thorough contamination survey (swipe tests) must be completed. All bench tops, floors, storage areas and equipment must be surveyed. Areas that exceed the criteria in the Radiation Safety Manual must be decontaminated and reswiped. Records, including scintillation counter printout must be forwarded to the Department of Environmental Health and Safety with the Laboratory Decommissioning Procedures Checklist.

Waste

All radioactive waste must be disposed of through the Department of Environmental Health and Safety as per Radiation Safety Policy and Procedures Manual (Section 12)

Signage

All radioactive warning signs must be removed (including door signs, storage/work area stickers)

8. Biohazardous Material

- a. If moving within Queen's University, apply for an amendment to your biohazard permit using the form at <https://www.queensu.ca/risk/safety/biohazard>
- b. If moving outside of Queen's University, inform the Biosafety Officer in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.
- c. To transport/export biohazards off campus, apply for Canadian Food Inspection Agency and/or Health Canada permits if applicable.
- d. Biological safety cabinets require decontamination prior to moving and recertification after the move. Contact the Department of Environmental Health and Safety to schedule these services.



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- e. Dispose of biohazardous material (biological toxins, cultures, frozen stocks, tissues, etc.) by chemical destruction, autoclaving or incineration as appropriate.
- f. Dispose of preservatives as waste chemicals
- g. Clean and disinfect all laboratory surfaces and equipment.

9. Housekeeping

- a. Clean and decontaminate laboratory equipment.
- b. Ensure all laboratory surfaces including floors, bench tops, counters, fume hoods, sinks and drawers have been cleaned and/or decontaminated.
- c. Ensure that no garbage, residues or debris remain.
- d. If laboratory equipment is to be discarded, clean and/or decontaminate the equipment, then complete the Decommissioning Request Form at [EHS Research Equipment Decommissioning fillable 2022.pdf \(queensu.ca\)](#)

Revision History

1.0: June 26, 2007

1.1: November 8, 2007