

## Chapter 17 Laboratory Housekeeping

Good housekeeping in laboratories reduces risks, protects the integrity of biological experiments, and provides work areas free of significant sources of contamination. Even though all laboratories are expected to maintain high standards of housekeeping, the standards required of each laboratory is as proportionately high as the BL designation of the laboratory. Hence, stricter standards are expected of a BL-3 laboratory than of a BL-2 laboratory.

Laboratory personnel are responsible for cleaning laboratory benches, equipment and areas that require specialized technical knowledge. Additional laboratory housekeeping concerns include:

Keep the laboratory neat and free of clutter. Surfaces should be clean and free of infrequently used chemicals, glassware and equipment. Access to sinks, eyewashes, emergency showers and fire extinguishers must not be blocked.

Properly dispose of chemicals and wastes. Old and unused chemicals should be disposed of promptly and properly. Call RM&S at 621-1790 for details.

Biohazardous and radioactive waste must be disposed of in specifically labeled containers, and processed in accordance with University of Arizona policies.

Provide a workplace that is free of physical hazards. Aisles and corridors should be free of tripping hazards. Attention should be paid to electrical safety, especially as it relates to the use of extension cords, proper grounding of equipment, avoidance of overloaded electrical circuits and avoidance of the creation of electrical hazards in wet areas.

Individuals using common equipment and facilities must clean up after use.

Remove unnecessary items on floors, under benches or in corners.

Properly secure all compressed gas cylinders.

Never use fume hoods for storage of chemicals or other materials.

Maintain an up-to-date inventory of the chemical and biological agents in the laboratory. Include on the inventory the locations of the materials (such as in a freezer, safety cabinet, or shelf).

### Practical Custodial Considerations

Housekeeping staff will not enter areas they are not authorized to enter, or do work for which they have not been properly trained, or which has not been specifically assigned to them. Housekeeping will not remove biologically contaminated or radioactive trash or move within a lab containers holding such trash. Housekeeping will not assist in spill clean up. If you need assistance with a laboratory spill call Risk Management and Safety.

Where vacuuming is required, the use of vacuums equipped with high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters is recommended in the biological research laboratory. Wet and dry units with HEPA filters on the exhaust are available from a number of manufacturers.