

Laboratory Decommissioning Procedure

Laboratory decommissioning is the process of safely closing a lab when a Principal Investigator (PI) or department is vacating, relocating, or renovating a lab space. This process ensures the safe removal and disposal of all hazardous materials including chemicals, biological agents, and radioactive materials, as well as the proper decommissioning of equipment, as required by applicable legislation and the University. Additionally, all laboratory surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. These measures are essential to minimize potential risks to personnel, contractors and future occupants of the space.

Please ensure the laboratory decommissioning procedure is initiated **at least 4 weeks in advance** following the timeline below to avoid potential delays with handing over the space.

4 WEEKS OR GREATER PRIOR TO CLOSURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principal Investigator or Department to contact UTM EHS regarding upcoming lab closure: UTM Health and Safety Officer, Reza Nazari (reza.nazari@utoronto.ca) UTM EHS Manager, Wei-Ting Shek (weiting.shek@utoronto.ca) ▪ UTM EHS will schedule a meeting and walkthrough of all applicable lab space(s) and review the Laboratory Closure Guidelines and EHS Laboratory Exit/Renovation/Decommissioning Form with the PI or designated lab member. In the case of laboratory renovation, EHS will notify the Project Manager. ▪ UTM EHS will review any permits attached to the lab space(s) and reach out to the appropriate EHS Safety Officer(s) to initiate process to archive and/or transfer the permits (chemical, biological, radioactive (including laser)). A site visit may be scheduled with the applicable EHS Safety Officer.
1-2 WEEKS PRIOR TO CLOSURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommend to cease lab work at least two weeks prior to the closure to commence closure activities <p><i>Removal and Transfer of Materials</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove all materials and devices from the lab space(s) to be decommissioned (e.g. from fume hoods, lab benches, desks, storage cabinets, drawers, etc.) ▪ If there is a Complete Laboratory Exit, when permits are archived, shared areas (e.g. cold rooms, tissue culture rooms, equipment rooms, etc.) should be cleared of all materials and equipment belonging to the PI. ▪ Any transfer of high hazard chemicals, biological or radioactive materials must be done only with approval from UTM EHS and must be reflected in HECHMET, SPROUT (EHSA) and in the receiving Principal Investigator’s permit(s). ▪ The methods of transfer or disposal of high hazard chemicals, biologicals or radioactive materials must be stated in the decommissioning form. If these materials are transferred, indicate the new location. ▪ Any equipment (e.g. laser, biological safety cabinet) must not be removed from the lab until it has been cleaned, decontaminated and tagged with a completed and signed “Safe to Remove Tag”. ▪ Any equipment being offered to other PIs at the University must be cleaned, decontaminated, and tagged with a completed and signed “Safe to Remove Tag”, beforehand. If the equipment is under a

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permit (e.g. laser), UTM EHS must be informed in advance to ensure the new PI has a proper permit and their lab meets any infrastructure and operational requirements. The move cannot occur without EHS approval.

Disposal

- Dispose of hazardous waste and unwanted materials (including unknowns) following proper procedures for [chemical](#), [biological](#), [radioactive](#), and [sharps](#) waste.
- Return unwanted compressed gas cylinders to UTM Stores for proper disposal or return to supplier.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- All surfaces including doors, floors, benches, cabinets and drawers (inside and outside), sinks, chairs, fridges, flammable cabinets, fume hoods and cabinets underneath must be cleaned with detergent and disinfected with 0.5% bleach solution (1:9 dilution of household (5%) bleach).
- A work order can be submitted to Facilities Management & Planning via [ServiceNow](#) to have trained caretaking staff (who have completed EHS953 Lab Safety Awareness for Non-lab Staff) clean and disinfect the floors ONLY as part of the lab decommissioning process.
- Comply with any permit decommissioning requirements. Professional fumigation must be completed for any BSC being moved or disposed from the lab. This work must be coordinated and paid by the PI/department. Contact H.E.P.A. Filter Services Inc. 905-669-1991. The completed fumigation report must be attached to the BSC.
- Any equipment that needs to be discarded or moved by non-lab staff (e.g. external moving company, caretaking staff) must be cleared out, cleaned and disinfected. A completed and signed [Safe to Remove](#) tag must be adhered to the equipment before disposal or transport can occur. PI or department should contact caretaking to arrange for removal of non-hazardous equipment.
- Remove all hazard or permit signs.
- Complete and submit the [EHS Laboratory Exit/Renovation/Decommissioning Form](#) signed by PI and Department Chair to UTM EHS for review.

CLOSURE (when lab has been vacated)

- UTM EHS will schedule and conduct a preliminary walkthrough and identify any outstanding items that need to be addressed if applicable.
- UTM EHS will schedule and attend the decommissioning walkthrough with Environmental Protection Services (EPS) with the PI or designated lab member present.
- PI and UTM EHS will be notified of any issues. Once outstanding issues have been addressed, photos or a walkthrough by UTM EHS will be needed to confirm.
- EPS issues decommissioning report to PI, Department Chair, and UTM EHS to formally close out the lab which is now ready for renovation or new occupant. If needed, a work order can be submitted by the department to have caretaking conduct a full cleaning of the vacated space(s) after it has been fully decommissioned.