

Laboratory Decommissioning Procedure

Laboratory decommissioning is the process of safely closing a lab when a Principal Investigator (PI) or department is vacating, relocating, renovating, or repairing 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 |
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| <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 (ERD) 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 and X-ray)). 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 and/or when permits are archived, shared areas (e.g. cold rooms, tissue culture rooms, equipment rooms, etc.) should be cleared of all materials, equipment, and signage 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 ERD 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 |

Laboratory Decommissioning Procedure

permit (e.g. laser or X-Ray), 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

- All hazardous waste and unwanted materials (including unknowns) must be disposed of following the proper procedures as outlined in the [UTM Hazardous Waste Disposal Procedures](#) and [UTM Bucket List](#).
- All empty or unwanted compressed gas cylinders must be returned to UTM Stores for appropriate disposal or return to the supplier.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Once items are removed from the lab, all surfaces (doors and door handles, floors, benches, back splashes, cabinets and drawers (inside and outside), walls up to 6ft height, wire molds, light switches, sinks and faucets, chairs, fridges, flammable cabinets, fume hoods and cabinets underneath, etc.) must be cleaned with detergent and disinfected with 0.5% sodium hypochlorite 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, once all other surfaces are decontaminated.
- Ensure compliance with all permit decommissioning requirements. If a biological safety cabinet (BSC) is being relocated or disposed of, professional fumigation is required. This service must be arranged and funded by the principal investigator or department. For vendor information, please contact EHS. A copy of the completed fumigation report must be affixed 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 \(ERD\) 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.



Laboratory Decommissioning Procedure

- EPS issues final decommissioning report to PI, Department Chair, and UTM EHS to formally close out the lab and remove any permits. The lab space can now be reallocated or renovated. 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.