

LABORATORY DECOMMISSIONING GUIDELINES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

Office of Research
Research Integrity and Safety

I. Purpose & Scope

This standard operating procedure provides direction and guidance for proper decommissioning of a laboratory whether it be due to retirement, relocation, or the Principal Investigator (PI) ceasing to work at UGA. Outlined below are the minimum safety and regulatory requirements that must be met by laboratory personnel before a PI can be relieved of the responsibility for a space.

II. General Decommissioning Guidelines

- a. When preparing for a laboratory decommissioning, the PI or their designee should first fill out the online Laboratory Closing/Relocation Form. This not only informs the Office of Research Safety of your intentions, but also allows ORS the opportunity to consult with other offices that need to be involved in the lab decommissioning. Ideally, this form should be submitted 45-60 days prior to the planned date of decommissioning and/or relocation.
- b. Any packaging or moving of lab items should occur during normal business hours so that in the event of a spill or accident, safety staff will be readily available to respond and assist the lab.
- c. Equipment designated for relocation to a new laboratory and laboratory equipment to be left in place for the next occupant should be cleaned and decontaminated in accordance with the Laboratory Equipment Decontamination SOP. The transportation of heavy equipment should be arranged with FMD Support Services.
- d. During cleanup and decommissioning, laboratory staff are expected to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary for whatever task they are performing.
- e. PIs or their designees have the responsibility to remove all waste and hazardous substances from their assigned laboratory spaces before ORS can remove them from responsibility for their lab spaces.
 - i. Arrange for pickup of sharps containers through an approved vendor. Some departments already have contracts in place so contact your department for additional information.
 - ii. Any biohazardous waste must be properly disposed of (e.g., autoclaved).
 - iii. Any EPA regulated hazardous waste must be picked up by the UGA Hazardous Waste Group. These include any hazardous waste streams generated by the lab during normal operations as well as any hazardous chemicals that the PI is planning to leave behind. See below for information on transferring unwanted chemicals to other researchers. The appendix to this SOP details how to create waste cards and request pickups of your hazardous chemicals and EPA regulated waste.
 - iv. Any radioactive waste must be disposed of through the Office of Radiation Safety. If you have a piece of equipment destined for property surplus with a sealed radioactive component, that component must be removed by the Office of Radiation Safety prior to the equipment being sent to surplus.
 - v. Glass disposal boxes should be sealed shut and taken to the nearest dumpster by laboratory staff.

- f. Refrigerators, freezers, and cold rooms should be emptied, cleaned, and decontaminated (see the Laboratory Equipment Decontamination SOP). If samples are being left behind for use by another research group, these samples must be clearly labeled to indicate their contents. Labeling these sample containers with just initials or sample ID numbers is not acceptable.

III. Special Considerations for Chemical Hazards

- a. If there are chemicals intending to be transferred to another laboratory, please keep a list of the following information for each chemical container being transferred. Once transfers have been completed, this list will need to be sent to the Office of Research Safety to ensure that inventory records are accurate:
 - i. UGA Chematix barcode number
 - ii. Building number and room number that the chemical is being transferred to
 - iii. Last name of researcher taking responsibility of the chemicals
- b. If chemicals need to be transported within a building or to an adjacent building, these transfers may be done by lab staff using a hand-truck or cart. Chemicals should be packaged in sturdy, compatible containers with absorbent pads or absorbent materials when transporting liquids. Special care should be taken to not package incompatible materials together (e.g. oxidizers with flammables, acids with bases). If hazardous chemicals are needing to be transported to an offsite location or to a non-adjacent campus building, please contact the Office of Research Safety to coordinate the transfer. See the [ORS Guide to Relocating Hazardous Materials](#) for additional information.
- c. If the lab has compressed gas cylinders, these cylinders must have all regulators removed and safety caps replaced. Pickup will need to be coordinated with the vendor.
- d. For labs with IBC protocols, IACUC protocols, or radioactive material permits, you should contact the appropriate office to discuss how to amend or close your existing protocols or permits.

IV. Guidelines for Transport of Freezers Containing Infectious Agents

- a. Everything within the freezer must be secured. Any item that cannot be secured must be packaged and transported in accordance with DOT/IATA regulations.
- b. Perform a surface decontamination of the outside of the freezer with an appropriate disinfectant. Affix a decontamination tag and the PI's name on the front of the freezer.
- c. Place tape around the seal of the freezer door.
- d. Lock the freezer door with a keyed or combination padlock.
- e. At least two wide moving straps must be tightly secured around the freezer (one at the top and one at the bottom).
- f. Tape a large Ziploc bag containing an itemized inventory of the freezer contents to the freezer. Any applicable transport permits will need to be included with the inventory.
- g. FMD Support Services should only use a truck with a generator and outlets to move these freezers whenever possible. They must be certain that freezers are secure prior to transport.
- h. PIs must amend transport permits as needed. Movement of freezers to new locations will require escort by a certified shipper who must have a biological spill kit readily available. If the lab does not have a certified shipper, please contact the Office of Biosafety.

V. Contact Information

Biosafety	706-542-7265
Radiation Safety	706-542-0107
Research Safety	706-542-9088
FMD Support Services	706-542-7584

Appendix: Creating Waste Cards and Submitting Pickup Requests for EPA Regulated Hazardous Waste

Creating Waste Cards

- Go to <https://chematix.uga.edu> and login with your UGA ID and password
- Click the Waste Module at the top of the screen
- Click 'Create A Waste Card'
- Then you can click whichever link is applicable (either 'Chemical Mixture By Percentage' or 'Pure Chemicals in Individual Containers').
- Fill out the applicable information and click 'Generate Waste Card'. Also, note that if this is a waste stream that you generate frequently, you can add it to your Hotlist by clicking Save to Hotlist at the bottom of the page. This enables you to simply click that Hotlist link next time and automatically generate a waste card rather than having to fill out all of the information every time.
- You will complete this step any time you start to fill a container with waste; once the containers are full, you will need to then create a Waste Pickup Request.

Creating a Pickup Request

- Go back to the main Waste Module page within Chematix.
- Click 'Create Waste Pickup Worksheet'
- Select your location from the drop down list and then your created waste cards should be populated.
- Select the ones you want to be picked up and then click 'Add Selections to Worksheet'
- Once that is done you should see a button that says 'Submit for Pickup'
- There is sometimes a 1-2 week turnaround for waste pickups because our waste vendor is based out of Atlanta.