

34.01.01.R0.01 **Laboratory Decommissioning**

Approved September 3, 2024

Next Scheduled Review: September 3, 2029



Procedure Summary

East Texas A&M University is committed to protecting faculty, staff, students, visitors, the public, and the environment in which the University conducts its work. The laboratory decommissioning procedure applies to all laboratories and auxiliary spaces serving as laboratories on campus.

This procedure will ensure safe and compliant transitions in laboratory occupancy. Principal Investigators (PI) and Department Heads (DH) are equally responsible for complying with this procedure. These overlapping requirements are to ensure that depending on the situation; at least one of these entities will have the ability to comply with this procedure. The laboratory decommissioning procedure requires that none of the investigator's research material will be left behind in the laboratory. Once completed, this procedure requires the assurance from the responsible personnel that proper laboratory decommissioning has been conducted, e.g., that all laboratory equipment, fixtures, furniture and space are properly cleaned and decontaminated.

This procedure will be administered by the Department of Emergency Management and Safety (DEMS) in coordination with Research Integrity and Compliance (RIC) and the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC).

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1 Laboratory Decommissioning:

1.1.1 This procedure must be applied to the removal of hazards from laboratory spaces when the PI is:

1.1.1.1 Leaving the University,

1.1.1.2 Moving to another building on campus, or

1.1.1.3 Relocating to another laboratory within the same building.

1.1.2 This procedure must also be applied to the removal of hazards from

laboratory spaces undergoing general renovation.

1.1.3 When laboratories are vacated, all chemical, radioactive and biological materials, sharps and other wastes must be disposed of or transferred in a proper manner.

1.1.4 All non-fixed equipment and supplies must be removed from laboratories for closeout or relocation. Laboratory equipment must be decontaminated before it is:

1.1.4.1 Removed from service,

1.1.4.2 Stored in another location, or

1.1.4.3 Disposed of in a proper manner.

1.1.5 Working surfaces and storage locations must also be properly decontaminated.

1.2 Equipment Decommissioning

This procedure must be applied to the removal of hazards from equipment when the equipment is:

1.2.1 Part of a laboratory decommissioning process as defined above;

1.2.2 Removed from service and/or stored;

1.2.3 Leaving the University; or

1.2.4 Moving to another laboratory or building on any university campus, or released to surplus or otherwise disposed of in a proper manner.

1.3 Controlled Substances

Abandonment of a controlled substance is a violation of Federal regulations and university policies.

1.3.1 Controlled substances must remain with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) license holder or be appropriately transferred to another DEA license holder. The transfer must be done via DEA regulations and all appropriate paperwork must be submitted to the DEA and maintained by both parties.

1.3.2 Appropriate disposal of controlled substances can be arranged through DEMS by the DEA license holder.

- 1.4 No hazardous materials shall be disposed of down drains or into regular trash receptacles. Biohazardous materials not containing or contaminated with other hazards (e.g., radioactive materials, hazardous chemicals, or controlled substances) may be disposed of down drains or into regular trash receptacles after having first been subjected to an approved method of disinfection.
- 1.5 If this procedure is not followed and the laboratory is not properly closed out, any costs incurred, including DEMS staff time, disposal costs, fines, etc. will be charged back to the department involved.
- 1.6 DEMS and RIC acknowledge that a departmental policy towards cost recovery from the PI/Laboratory supervisor is under the purview of individual departments.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Academic Deans, Department Heads, and Directors are responsible for ensuring that faculty members, researchers, and graduate students understand their responsibilities and that all procedures are adhered to when a faculty member, researcher, or graduate student leaves the University, transfers to a different department or laboratory, or decommissions laboratory equipment.
- 2.2 Department Heads are responsible for:
 - 2.2.1 Verifying that DEMS and RIC have been notified at least 30 days in advance when a PI plans to vacate a laboratory.
 - 2.2.2 Ensuring the PI or responsible parties are aware of and follow the procedures contained in this policy.
 - 2.2.3 Paying all costs associated with decommissioning if this policy is not followed.
- 2.3 The PI or Laboratory Supervisor is responsible for proper disposition of all hazardous materials used in laboratories. This includes:
 - 2.3.1 Arranging before leaving for the transfer or disposal of chemicals, radioactive materials, biological materials, and controlled substances;
 - 2.3.2 Submitting a request to terminate the IBC permit, if applicable;
 - 2.3.3 Ensuring that all labs, storage areas, equipment and work surfaces within these spaces are thoroughly cleaned before vacating the space(s);
 - 2.3.4 Ensuring that all equipment is decontaminated in the proper manner when decommissioned;

2.3.5 Correcting all non-conformances that remain after a closeout inspection by DEMS and/or RIC; and

2.3.6 Ensuring all decontamination work is performed by lab personnel with proper training.

2.4 DEMS is responsible for:

2.4.1 Consulting with the PI/Laboratory Supervisor prior to the laboratory closeout survey; and

2.4.2 Conducting the laboratory closeout survey.

2.5 RIC, the Biosafety Officer, and the IBC:

2.5.1 Consulting with the PI/Laboratory Supervisor prior to the biosafety closeout survey.

2.5.2 Conducting the biosafety closeout survey.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 Laboratory Decommissioning

3.1.1 This process must be started at least three months before vacating the chemical-use room/laboratory to allow ample time for proper disposal of all materials.

3.1.2 DEMS must be notified as soon as the PI or laboratory supervisor is informed that his/her lab will be closed or relocated. DEMS will then schedule a consultation to ensure a successful laboratory decommissioning. Notification can be made as directed by DEMS.

3.1.3 The PI or laboratory supervisor will use the Laboratory Decommissioning Checklist as a guidance document to help them prepare for the decommissioning inspection and to document completion of all parts of the process. All handling of hazardous materials shall be in accordance with proper procedures and regulations governing disposal or transport of hazardous materials. For additional information, contact DEMS at safety@tamuc.edu.

3.1.4 Once completed, the checklist should be signed and submitted to the user's Department Head and to DEMS.

- 3.1.5 Upon receiving the completed checklist, DEMS will schedule and conduct a laboratory decommissioning survey. This survey should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance of the lab closeout date. If biohazardous materials were in use in the lab, a staff member from RIC and the Biosafety Officer will also conduct a biological laboratory closeout survey. The checklist will be completed prior to vacating the space to ensure that all biohazards have been appropriately decontaminated and disposed of properly. A copy of the completed checklist will be provided to the PI/Laboratory Supervisor, Department Head and DEMS.
- 3.1.6 After conducting the decommissioning survey, DEMS will complete the Laboratory Decommissioning Clearance Authorization form, noting whether the decommissioning was successful. If any non-conformances are found, then they must be addressed by the PI/Laboratory Supervisor and a new survey scheduled. If the survey indicates successful decommissioning of the laboratory space, this will be noted on the Laboratory Decommissioning Clearance Authorization, and a copy of the signed form will be provided to the department and the PI/Laboratory Supervisor.

3.2 Equipment Decommissioning

- 3.2.1 This process, if not included in a Laboratory Decommissioning process, must be completed at least 1 day prior to relocation, storage, or disposition of the equipment.
- 3.2.2 DEMS will provide consultation as needed to ensure successful equipment decontamination. Notification can be made by email at safety@tamuc.edu.
- 3.2.3 The university Equipment Decontamination form is to be completed prior to moving or releasing the equipment. All handling of hazardous materials shall be in accordance with proper disposal procedures and regulations governing disposal of hazardous materials. For additional information, contact DEMS at safety@tamuc.edu.
- 3.2.4 Once completed, the checklist should be signed and attached to the equipment and a copy maintained by the releasing party.
- 3.2.5 To the extent equipment is considered export controlled, RIC should be consulted prior to relocation, transfer or disposal. RIC may be contacted at ResearchCompliance@tamuc.edu.

4 METHODS

4.1 Minimum Training Requirements

- 4.1.1 The minimum training required for persons performing the decontamination is:

4.1.1.1 Appropriate hazard training (e.g., hazard communication, biosafety, general radiation safety, etc.), and

4.1.1.2 Laboratory specific training on proper decontamination procedures.

4.2 Minimum Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

The minimum PPE to wear when decontaminating lab and/or clinic equipment shall be a lab coat, gloves, and chemical splash goggles. Additional PPE may be required depending upon contaminants and decontamination method(s) used.

4.3 Decontamination of Biosafety Labs

4.3.1 All surfaces in and equipment originating from biosafety laboratories must be decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant. All biohazards or materials potentially contaminated with biohazards (e.g., sharps, pipette tips, etc.) must be treated in accordance with university Biohazardous Waste Disposal Guidelines prior to disposal.

4.3.2 Appropriate choice of disinfectant may be determined by:

4.3.2.1 Referring to the approved IBC permit or laboratory SOPs, or

4.3.2.2 Referring to the EPA's website for selected registered disinfectants.

4.3.3 Appropriate use of disinfectants may be determined by:

4.3.3.1 Referring to the manufacturer's recommendation regarding concentration and contact time, and

4.3.3.2 Referring to the manufacturer's recommendation for removal of disinfectant residue where applicable.

4.3.4 Document the disinfectant used on the university Equipment Decontamination Form.

4.3.5 Biological Safety Cabinets designated for surplus or that will be disassembled for moving must be decontaminated via paraformaldehyde treatment.

4.4 Chemical Decontamination

4.4.1 Consult manufacturer recommendations for instructions on cleaning equipment surfaces.

4.4.2 Consult Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) for information on specific hazards and

decontamination methods.

- 4.4.3 Equipment that contains oil or refrigerants (e.g. air conditioners or refrigerators) or has a water jacket must be properly drained of its contents prior to disposal. It is the owner's responsibility to arrange to have the equipment drained and to ensure chemicals are properly disposed. Contact DEMS for guidance.
- 4.4.4 Contact DEMS at safety@tamuc.edu prior to draining oil suspected of containing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB).

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Regulation [34.01.01, Health and Safety Programs](#)

Definitions

Decommissioning: the process of verifying that laboratory equipment, chemicals, and waste have been removed from the laboratory; that remaining equipment and countertops have been decontaminated; and that the laboratory is ready for new occupants. This definition includes the process of releasing laboratory equipment to Surplus, or for moving the equipment on public roads.

Laboratory: defined as a space where research, diagnostic, or teaching is conducted and where any quantity of hazardous chemicals, biological materials, and/or radiological agents are used. This definition includes but is not limited to chemical and/or biological agent storerooms, autoclave rooms, waste storage areas, and service corridors.

Equipment: defined as any appliance, tool, or furniture regardless of size originating from a laboratory as defined above. Equipment includes but is not limited to glassware, consumable lab materials, furniture, appliances, tools, and/or reusable personal protective equipment (PPE).

Appendix

[Laboratory Decommissioning Checklist](#)

[Laboratory Decommissioning Clearance Authorization TAMUC Equipment Decontamination Form](#)

[TAMUC Biosafety Lab Decommission Checklist](#)

Revision History

Revised November 7, 2024 (University Name Update)

Contact Office

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