



## Preparing the Laboratory for Housekeeping Services: 3 Basic Steps

Preparing the areas for the housekeeping staff to safely carry out their work, as well as ensuring effective communication, ensures people are not put in a position where they need to make a decision as to whether a laboratory is safe to clean or not. This guide presents the three basic steps for researchers to follow when preparing a lab for housekeeping services.

### Clear the Floor

### Prepare the Lab Surfaces

### Communicate

#### Clear the Floor

- Regular lab trash (non-hazardous waste containers): housekeepers can handle/move.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of the floor and **remove research-related waste items** (e.g. tips, tubes, etc.). Housekeepers will not handle research related waste items.
- **Cylinders:** double check to ensure cylinders are secured (housekeepers mop around them).
- **Chemical bottles** or chemical containers (e.g. solvent bottles): remove from the floor so they don't get knocked over.
- **Chemical waste (liquid):** maintain in secondary containment and closed (housekeepers will mop around it).
- Support staff will not pick up lab trash on the floor (broken glass, pipet tips) or proceed with the requested housekeeping services if they see liquids or spills on the floor. Address "Floor stains" from historical spills to ensure no residual chemicals could have an adverse reaction with the floor cleaning solutions.
- Secure electrical plugs along the floor from getting wet.
- **Radioactive Material Labs:** The PI shall ensure a meter survey (or wipe test for H-3) of the floor where radioactive material is used has been conducted prior to vacuuming or mopping services. Conduct the survey after the last use and prior to the housekeeping work; it can be part of the after-use survey. RSO approval is required for all stripping/waxing services.
- **Radioactive Waste:** dry solid waste and vials remove from the floor or stage on a secondary tray (housekeeper will vacuum or mop around it); liquid waste maintain closed in secondary containment (housekeeper will mop around it).
- **Biosafety Labs:** All housekeeping in BSL-3 labs requires prior approval by the Biosafety Officer. **BSL-2 and AUTOCLAVE ROOMS:** vacuuming is not permitted, mopping is acceptable after lab preparation; vacuuming may occur in the other labs after proper lab preparation.
- **Biological Waste:** When possible empty bins. Waste bags must be in hard-walled containers, housekeepers will mop around them. No biohazard waste bags should be on the floor. No un-autoclaved waste should be stored in the autoclave room.

#### Prepare the Lab Surfaces

- Close all hood sashes (including biosafety cabinets).
- Close/cover containers with liquids on the bench and move experimental apparatus, sharps containers and glassware away from the edges of the bench. Accidents in the past have been caused by mop handles and vacuum packs knocking over glassware, solutions and apparatus that was left too close to the edge of benches.
- Do not schedule "next morning" housekeeping when an overnight reaction is occurring. An exception to this may be permitted after a risk assessment. Contact DES/Office of Research Safety for assistance.
- **Radioactive Material & Biosafety Labs:** Secure/lock up radioactive material stock vials and biological cultures.
- Ensure all work areas where biological or radioactive material is used, are appropriately posted. Housekeepers are trained to identify hazard warning labels and stay away from these areas.

#### Communicate

- **Communicate to FM the lab is ready.** Complete a "SAFE TO CLEAN" checklist or equivalent communication (e.g. email). A "SAFE TO CLEAN" checklist is available on the DES Office of Research Safety web page or by contacting DES.
- **Provide any special instructions or precautions** for the housekeepers to the Housekeeping Zone Supervisors. Labs with electrical or voltage risks, open beam lasers, or strong magnetic fields will require special arrangements with the housekeepers to ensure hazards present are addressed. A lab member may need to be present during housekeeping activities.
- Recommend researchers review lab preparation directly with housekeeping staff for initial housekeeping or when lab operations change, affecting housekeeping duties.
- Contact DES Office of Research Safety with questions or for support.