

Housekeeping Services in Research Laboratories – Guidance for Housekeeping

Laboratories use a variety of hazardous materials and equipment in their spaces that can be challenging to work around while performing housekeeping activities. These hazards are generally described on yellow door signs outside the laboratory. It is expected that housekeeping personnel consult the door signage to familiarize themselves with the potential hazards within their work area.

The specific location of hazards, safety controls, and safe entry procedures are different from lab to lab, so it is critical that Housekeeping and the research groups coordinate before service is scheduled to protect both workers and the research materials, which can be sensitive to service-related disruptions. It is important to discuss the scope of planned work including the duration, description of activities, possible disruptions (e.g., outage, noise, vibration), and the exact location of the work area that must be prepared. Ask about the hazards in the space and how they may impact work activities and what safety measures needed. It is also important to clarify who will serve as the main contact from the lab in case of questions or concerns. Some research areas may have additional requirements or procedures due to security or specific hazards. Housekeeping staff are expected to follow these requirements.

Researchers are responsible for preparing the laboratory for housekeeping by securing hazards and arranging for safe access to the work area. Researchers should post a completed copy of the **Safe To Clean Lab Sign-Off** document to the external door and/or near the work area to confirm that the space has been appropriately prepared. If a service area within a lab has not been appropriately prepared, or there are unexpected safety concerns present, do not proceed with the service and contact your supervisor.

General Tips for Facilities Personnel	
Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with lab occupants as soon as service is planned • Review entrance signage with research safety or FM safety to understand hazards • Survey the service area for hazards before starting work • Be aware of surroundings to avoid disturbing research materials • Wear assigned PPE for the task • Wash hands after removing PPE and when work is complete • Immediately report spills or incidents to CRC • Ask questions and raise concerns with your supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move chemical containers, gas cylinders, or hazardous waste • Pick up research-related trash (e.g., pipette tips, tubes) • Move research equipment or containers (OK to move chairs, empty boxes, regular trash bins) • Clean up spills or incidents yourself • Try to fight a lab fire • Leave behind tools, packaging, or trash from your work • Enter if an unknown alarm is sounding • Leave without closing and locking the lab door • Eat or drink in the laboratory