

## **LABORATORY AND RESEARCH AREAS CHECKLIST**

### **PREPARATION FOR HAZARDOUS WEATHER**

Departments and Principal Investigators are responsible for taking protective actions for their own laboratories. This checklist is designed to identify suggested tasks and facilitate assignment of responsibilities for preparing laboratory areas. Not all items are appropriate for all areas. Departments and researchers should add actions specific to their individual laboratories if needed.

When impacts from hazardous weather are possible, consider necessary preparations to suspend ongoing experiments involving biological materials, radioactive agents and hazardous chemicals. In the event that the University announces the suspension of normal operations, researchers should postpone operations in the laboratory, secure their equipment and complete the checklist. **Note, personnel should not stay in the laboratory during a storm if the University has suspended normal operations.**

When returning to the laboratory after a hazardous weather event, check the lab for any leaking or broken chemical containers or non-functioning safety equipment such as fume hoods or biosafety cabinets. Contact EHS for assistance.

Additional mitigation steps can be taken year-round to reduce impacts from hazardous weather and other incidents, including:

- Keep chemical, radiological and biohazardous materials in your inventory to a minimum.
- Dispose of hazardous wastes and old chemicals routinely to minimize accumulation of hazardous materials in your facility.
- Laboratories with exterior windows should identify a secure area for storage of water reactive chemicals, radioactive materials and biohazardous agents. Ideally, materials with significant, potential hazard should be moved to interior rooms. (e.g. – solvents containing reactive metals, glove boxes containing air reactives)
- If dry ice will be needed pre- or post-incident, document vendor information, payment method and delivery or pick-up options. Note, dry ice should not be transported in a closed vehicle for safety of the occupants.
- Maintain a supply of plastic, waterproof containers to store reactive chemicals, lab notes, research documentation, electronic data and other important materials.
- Plan in advance how to ensure the protection of valuable research equipment, samples and data.
- Maintain a stock of critical supplies to prevent delivery disruptions.
- Update and distribute emergency and contact information to laboratory personnel.

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action/Task	Location	Staff Responsible		Notes
			Primary	Alternate	
	Turn down refrigerators and freezers to the lowest practical settings and plug into emergency power where available. Red outlets typically designate emergency power.				
	Place recording maximum/minimum thermometers in refrigerators and freezers containing temperature critical supplies and samples.				
	Plug incubators into emergency power outlets if you must maintain cultures in vitro.				
	Cover and secure or seal vulnerable equipment with plastic.				
	Remove or secure equipment from outdoor and rooftop locations.				
	Ensure arrangements have been made for the care and feeding of laboratory animals. Follow recommended actions of the Animal Resources Center.				
	In areas subject to flooding, relocate or elevate equipment, chemicals, wastes and other important items from the floor to prevent damage.				
	Secure radioactive isotopes, biohazardous agents, recombinant materials and hazardous chemicals to prevent breakage and release.				
	Fill dewars and cryogen reservoirs for sample storage and/or critical equipment.				
	Over-pack reactive chemicals in plastic, waterproof containers.				
	Remove regulators and cap gas cylinders, except for CO <sub>2</sub> needed to maintain cell cultures. Ensure all cylinders are secure.				

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			Primary	Alternate	
	Autoclave or inactivate infectious or rDNA waste.				
	Due to the possibility of power outages, store volatile, toxic materials in tightly sealed, break-resistant containers rather than fume hoods or open room.				
	Protect valuable files, research samples and notebooks in place or move to a safer location.				
	Protect notebooks and secure samples/data as necessary for colleagues unable to reach the lab.				
	Update emergency contact information. Add and expand temporary contact information if staying at a different location during storm.				
	Close and latch (or secure with tape if needed) filing cabinets and cupboards.				
	Back-up electronic data and store in multiple locations.				
	Follow IT provider instructions for computer equipment preparations.				
	Close and lock all doors and windows before leaving.				