

Laboratory Relocation Guidelines

This policy has been developed as a guideline to help minimize hazards to University of South Alabama personnel and students and to maintain compliance with all regulations during lab relocations.

General Guidelines

- Moving Policy: Don't wait till the last minute. Begin planning and identifying possible problems as soon as the relocation has been confirmed. Contact the Safety & Environmental Compliance Department (SEC) [6-7070] for help and information as soon as you know that you are moving. With sufficient notification, the SEC department can be available to help move chemicals between buildings. The University movers are not permitted to move any hazardous materials. The primary investigator and his/her staff are responsible for moves within the same building or complex.
- Moving Hours: Package and move hazardous materials only during normal working hours (Monday-Friday 8-4:30). Help should be available if there is a spill or an accident. Work in pairs and never transport hazardous materials by yourself.
- Personal Protective Equipment: All laboratory personnel must wear safety glasses/goggles; closed-toe shoes lab coats and appropriate gloves while handling chemicals. (*NOTE: There is an extra danger in sloshing and breakage during the move of hazardous materials.)
- Transportation Routes: Never move open or structurally unsound containers of hazardous materials. Do not leave hazardous materials in the hallway or other items in the hallway during moving. This violates the fire code. Use freight elevators when available. Use caution when entering or exiting any elevator.
- Transportation Equipment and Vehicle: Obtain structurally sound moving boxes or plastic bins and a sturdy wheeled cart, hand-truck or dolly. Mark the outside of the boxes with an inventory of the contents and its hazard class and pack only compatible materials in each box, You may NOT transport hazardous materials in your private vehicle. In many cases this activity will permit private insurance companies to cancel your policy and the US Department of Transportation has very specific regulations regarding the transportation of hazardous materials.
- Spill/Accident Response: Ensure that you have access to adequate and proper materials for clean-up of a spill/accident at all times during a move. Have containers for broken glass ready and available before you begin a move.
- Moving Safety: Use an approved stepladder to bring high objects down from upper shelves. Never use a chair, desk or other pieces of furniture as a ladder. Ask for help to hand down objects. If something is too heavy to move alone, get some help or reduce the quantity to be lifted.

Moving Hazardous Materials Within a Building

- Inventory all chemicals that you want to relocate from your current lab to the new facilities. This is a good time to identify and disposed of old and unneeded chemicals. Check with members of your department and other investigators that may need your unwanted chemicals. Do not move waste materials. Call the SEC department for pick-up and disposal.
- Replace any damaged or illegible labels before moving. All containers must be labeled with the full chemical name. No laboratory abbreviations, trade names or formulas may be used. Unknowns are a very expensive disposal problem and the generating department will be held financially responsible for all identification costs.
- Check containers and lids for cracks and other damage. Replace any faulty caps. Transport hazardous materials in structurally sound moving boxes or plastic bins—packing according to the hazardous classes specified below. Use sufficient packing materials to prevent breakage. Do not pack boxes too heavy--a maximum of 25 pounds total weight per box. Open or structurally unsound containers cannot be transported.

Label the outside of each box with the following:

- Principle investigators name and contact phone number
 - The new laboratory number where the chemicals are to be taken
 - Hazard class of chemicals located in the box
 - Attached inventory list of each chemical placed in the box along with quantity and container size (i.e., Acetone 1 gallon).
- Segregate chemicals into the following hazardous classes:
 - Oxidizers
 - Flammable liquids
 - Inorganic acids
 - Organic acids
 - Inorganic bases
 - Flammable solids
 - Miscellaneous organic compounds
 - Miscellaneous inorganic compounds
 - Special packaging precautions must be exercised in transporting noxious smelling chemicals (i.e. Mercaptans, etc.). Containers with this type of material should be in sealed and double contained to prevent spreading odors throughout corridors and elevators during transportation. If the outside of a chemical container is contaminated with odoriferous residues, wiping down with bleach will often eliminate the problem.
 - Special packaging precautions must be exercised in transporting highly toxic chemicals. If there is any evidence of residue on the outside of a container, consideration should be made on whether the material is kept or to be sent out as hazardous waste. If the material is to be kept for use in the new laboratory, the container should be wiped down. The materials used to wipe the container must be disposed of as hazardous waste.
 - Refrigerators must be completely empty and dry prior to moving them; otherwise transportation will result in a trail of possible contamination leaking from the refrigerator. Ten percent (10%) bleach can be used to help deodorize and decontaminate the surfaces of the refrigerator. Wear gloves while applying bleach solution.
 - If possible, have the vendor relocate all compressed gas cylinder to the new laboratory. However if you must move the cylinders yourself, follow the following guidelines:
 - Never move a cylinder with a regulator in place
 - Make sure the valve cap is securely in place before moving any cylinders
 - Secure label with packaging tape to prevent it from falling off
 - Never move a cylinder by rolling it across the floor. Specialized carts are available for moving cylinders.
 - Never drop cylinder or bang it against another cylinder or object
 - Report all suspected leaks immediately—if the material in the tank is highly toxic, evacuate the area immediately and notify the University Police (511).
 - Small leaking cylinder should be placed in a fume hood, if possible, until the vendor can remove it for disposal.
 - Never leave a cylinder un-strapped on the moving dolly or in the laboratory
 - When the chemicals arrive at the new location, lab personnel will need to check contents for breakage or damage. Chemicals will need to be removed from boxes and placed in their designated locations within the laboratory. As an added safety precaution, toxic chemicals should be unpacked within the confines of a working fume hood.
 - Laboratory personnel must be present, in both the old lab and in the new lab, during the entire time that hazardous materials are being moved.
 - Revisit your previous lab space after "everything" has been moved to the new facilities. Re-check all drawers, cabinets and remaining equipment for anything that has been left.
 - Has all remaining equipment been re-assigned or correctly identified (and paperwork submitted) for removal by the Property Department?
 - Has the equipment been decontaminated or have arrangements been made to have the SEC department decontaminate the equipment, prior to pick-up by Property?
 - Have all hazardous chemicals, biological and radioactive materials been removed to the new facilities?
 - Has all biological, chemical and radioactive waste materials been properly identified and removed?
 - Have all unknowns been identified?