

Laboratory Equipment Clearance Guidelines

Scope: This guidance document applies to all laboratories at UT Health Science Center at San Antonio and is a supplement to the University's Biological, Chemical, and Radiation Safety Handbooks.

Background: Various types of laboratory equipment are used for storing and processing hazardous materials such as chemicals, biological agents, and radioactive materials. This includes, but is not limited to, refrigerators, freezers, centrifuges, water baths, incubators, biological safety cabinets, gel dryers, vortexes, hot plates, and vacuum pumps. In order to protect personnel who may come in direct contact with equipment (movers, service or repair technicians, laboratory staff, and surplus/auction personnel), all hazardous elements must be properly removed and equipment properly decontaminated and cleaned prior to relocating, moving, servicing, or sending to surplus (Warehouse). Additionally, efforts must be made to ensure that hazardous agents are not accidentally released into the environment or public areas. To this end, these guidelines have been developed and shall be followed for laboratory equipment that is designated for relocation, service or repair, or surplus.

Equipment Cleaning/Decontamination Procedures: Prior to submitting an Equipment Clearance request, please follow the steps outlined below:

- Make sure all chemical, biological, and radiological elements have been removed from item to be cleared (including vacuum pump oil). Submit a Chemical or Radioactive Materials Waste Pick-Up Request for any expired, unused, or unwanted materials.
- Make sure all lab supplies (tubes, vials, etc.) have been removed from the unit.
- All items are to be cleaned or disinfected thoroughly and wiped down with 10% bleach (freshly-prepared), 70% ethanol, or another approved disinfectant (i.e. Bleach Rite).
- If the unit to be cleared is a refrigerator or freezer, the unit must be unplugged, defrosted, and wiped dry. **DO NOT** defrost freezers labeled with Radioactive Material stickers without first obtaining Radiation Safety clearance. When defrosting, place absorbent materials (pads, paper towels) around the unit and monitor periodically to prevent water from collecting onto the floor. Additionally, all samples should be removed **prior** to unplugging refrigerators or freezers to avoid the generation of offensive odors.

Requesting Equipment Clearance: An Equipment Clearance request shall be submitted for laboratory equipment used for storage or processing of hazardous agents (biological,

chemical, and radiological) that is to be moved or relocated, serviced, or transferred to the Surplus Warehouse. Equipment clearances are submitted through the Environmental Health & Safety website:

<http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety/equip-clearance.shtml>

After equipment is inspected by EH&S staff, a Clearance Sticker will be filled out and affixed to the equipment (see below):

<p>University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio</p> <p>Equipment Clearance Notice</p> <p>This unit has been cleared by Environmental Health & Safety for the following hazards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Chemical _____<input type="checkbox"/> Biological _____<input type="checkbox"/> Radiological _____ <p>Clearance Valid Until _____ for: Moving Service/Repair Surplus/Warehouse</p> <p>Questions? Contact Environmental Health and Safety at 7-2955</p>

Once the equipment has a clearance label affixed, the equipment can be moved, relocated, serviced or transferred to the warehouse. The equipment clearance label is effective for 15 days from the date of the clearance.

For additional information or to request an Equipment Clearance, contact:

**Environmental Health & Safety, 1.343T DTL
(210) 567-2955**

<http://research.uthscsa.edu/safety>