



UCCS SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURE

29. HOUSEKEEPING IN LABS AND CHEMICAL HANDLING AREAS

(For assistance, please contact [Environmental Health & Safety](#))

Housekeeping is important in any work area. **A clean, well-maintained work area improves safety by preventing accidents and can enhance the overall efficiency** of work in the space. Many of the housekeeping tips below are common sense. It is suggested a cleaning routine be established for the work area, with weekly pick-up, and thorough cleaning once a month. PLEASE NOTE THAT CUSTODIANS ARE NOT TRAINED IN CHEMICAL HAZARDS AND ARE NOT EXPECTED TO CLEAN AREAS WHERE CHEMICALS ARE IN USE.

- ✓ **Keep the area as clean as the work allows.** Work surfaces should be kept as clean as possible, with only those items needed for the immediate project.
- ✓ **Ensure that working surfaces are cleaned at the end of each day.** Keep floors clean and free of trip hazards.
- ✓ **Chemical products should be returned to their proper place after use.**
- ✓ **Clean up all small spills immediately.** Know what to do in the event of a hazard material spill and take appropriate action immediately.
- ✓ **Do not let stored items project beyond the front of shelves or counter tops.**
- ✓ Restrain material stored near aisles, when necessary, to prevent them from falling.
- ✓ **Keep stairways, hallways, passageways/aisles and access to emergency exits dry and free of obstruction.**
- ✓ **Store items so they do not block access to the fire extinguisher(s), safety equipment, electric panel boxes, or other emergency items such as an eyewash or safety shower.**
- ✓ **Do not allow combustible material such as paper, cardboard boxes, or pallets to accumulate.** Do not place these materials in hallways. Set up a process for immediate disposal.
- ✓ **Do not let excess materials accumulate.** Ensure chemicals, materials, and equipment that are no longer needed or are not in use, are properly stored, disposed or turned in as excess. Make sure you know how to manage your specific laboratory wastes properly.
- ✓ **Do not let materials accumulate in laboratory hoods.** Workplace safety and ventilation flow rate will be compromised.

Last reviewed by Cynthia Norton on September 22, 2021