



SPECIAL GUIDE for Laboratory Research Safety During COVID-19 Severe Laboratory Research Restrictions

This guide provides **actions** to prepare your lab for the SEVERE research restrictions for on-campus research put forth by campus leadership, in effect by March 25, 2020. It includes a **daily checklist and support for labs approved to work** during the SEVERE research restriction period and **opportunities** and support from ESSR's Office of Research Safety while we all await reopening of the campus labs.

SECTION 1: RAMP DOWN SAFETY CHECKLIST TO DO NOW to **HIBERNATE** your lab before leaving UMD.

It is understood Principal Investigators and Directors are effectively coordinating and identifying the critical research that needs attention during the shutdown with College, School and Department leadership.

- Perform a final review of the "Preparing to Close" section of the [Laboratory Emergency Preparedness Checklists for Advanced Planning, Preparing to Close & Safe Re-Entry](#). The follow augments the current guide:
- Hazardous Waste:** As regular lab waste services will be reduced due to social distancing procedures, avoid placing a request for large lab cleanouts. Dedicate time to properly preparing **biological waste** that will become odorous if left for a long period of time, **chemical waste that may react or degrade** if left over a long period of time (e.g. peroxide-forming chemicals or other chemicals (i.e. pirhana etch) that may become unstable over time (plan for 2 months)) and **radioactive material waste**. [Place waste pick up requests](#) for these items and ensure they are ready for pick up. ESSR will collect the wastes after 3/25 when the labs are empty. ESSR will prioritize waste pickup.
- Store all flammable and combustible liquids, including flammable waste, in flammable liquids cabinets, and ensure compressed gas cylinders containing hazardous gases are properly secured for a possible long-term closure. Cylinders should be secured from falling, valves closed, regulators removed and protective caps installed.
- Turn off appliances, computers, hot plates, ovens, and other equipment. Unplug equipment if possible.
- Fume hoods:** Clear the hood of all hazards, decontaminate surfaces, and shut the sash.
- Biosafety cabinets:** Disinfect and remove all items from the biosafety cabinet, surface decontaminate the inside work area, close the sash and power down. Do NOT leave the UV light on.
- Secure all chemicals for long-term storage in appropriate cabinets/shelving. Use secondary containment bins to separate incompatible materials.
- Confirm and document inventory of controlled substances and exempt quantities of Select Toxins.
- Decontaminate areas of the lab as you would do routinely at the end of the day.
- Secure all radioactive material; perform a final laboratory wipe test for radioactive material use.
- Secure laboratory notebooks and other data.

SECTION 2: DAILY REVIEW FOR **LABS APPROVED** to work **DURING** severe research restriction.

It is understood Principal Investigators and Directors have received approval to conduct research on campus during this time of severe research restrictions.

- Adhere to the research requirements approved by leadership. Have signed memorandum authorizing activity, signed by Chair, Center Director, or other campus official, available to present if asked.
- Be knowledgeable of the campus communications and recommendations related to COVID-19 found at umd.edu/virusinfo.
- Maintain social distancing in all situations. As [defined by the CDC](#), social distancing means avoiding mass gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible.
- Ensure that the laboratory has adequate supplies of soap and paper towels for handwashing.

- Practice [CDC's prevention behaviors](#): do not come to the lab if you are unwell; clean hands often; avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth; cover coughs and sneezes, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the lab daily with [EPA-registered disinfectants](#) or [CDC cleaner options](#).
- The number of researchers and staff on campus will be significantly reduced. Review the [Working Alone Guidance](#) to ensure pre-planning to manage the risks and plan for emergencies.
- ESSR Office of Research Safety is prepared to provide “Just-In-Time” safety training, remotely. Contact labsafety@umd.edu if training is needed for researchers to **attain and maintain** their required safety training. For example, if job functions change and more immediate training is required (e.g. urgent laser safety training) for staff joining work in a lab. See [ESSR training requirements](#) and use the [ESSR Training](#) page to take or sign-up for training.
- The requirements put forth by the Governor of Maryland may change with little notice. Review the RAMP DOWN checklist above, at the end of each day to minimize the actions necessary if further (although unanticipated at this time) State restrictions apply to campus operations.
- Report all incidents and emergencies following existing campus and laboratory procedures. This has not changed. Contact University of Maryland Police (UMPD) at Mobile Phone #3333 or cell/campus phone (301) 405-3333.
- Report facility needs to the Customer Response Center (CRC) at (301) 405-2222. Other emergencies, including gas smells, smoke, or unusual odors should be reported to UMPD.
- The Office of Research Safety has suspended the automatic notifications from BioRAFT; however, labs operating during this time should ensure all safety related inspection items (e.g. chemical storage) are resolved. Administrative inspection items may be placed on hold for a while (e.g. a sign update or a refresher training needed) according to inspector discretion.
- Those conducting field work during this time: follow the “*Daily Risk Assessment for Field Research During Severe Research Restrictions*”.
- ESSR will have a reduced level of staffing on campus during the severe shut down and only on a limited basis to maintain on campus core functions (hazardous waste collection, regulatory inspections, etc.). ESSR staff are working remotely to maintain core functions. If you have safety-related questions, or need to request assistance or support contact the Office of Research Safety via labsafety@umd.edu or any of the emails below. [ESSR staff](#) will also have campus office phones forwarded to cell phones – please reach out for support.

SECTION 3: TERPS ARE RESILIENT. The Office of Research Safety recognizes the significant impact to our research community during this time of disruption. We stand ready to support you. In preparation of the day when we will return to campus, here are some ideas and actions that can be done remotely.

- Complete all your overdue [BioRAFT](#) safety trainings. When you log-in to BioRAFT, the necessary training will be listed on your initial profile page.
- Office of Research Safety has suspended the automatic notifications from BioRAFT; however, Principal Investigators can update [BioRAFT](#) profiles and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) registrations, as applicable.
- Contact Office of Research Safety to schedule a remote lab safety meeting via Zoom. We can provide training on many topics (risk assessments, chemical safety, regulations, biosafety) and we will work with you. Contact us at labsafety@umd.edu.
- Campus research oversight committees (IACUC, IRB, IBC, Radiation Safety Committee, Dive Control Board) plan on continued work, remotely. Continue to provide the Biosafety Officer, Radiation Safety Officer and Dive Safety Officer with committee documentation using the emails below.
- If you have safety-related questions, or need to request assistance or support contact the Office of Research Safety via labsafety@umd.edu or any of the emails below. [ESSR staff](#) will also have campus office phones forwarded to cell phones – please reach out for support.
 - Lab Safety (general) - labsafety@umd.edu
 - Env. Affairs/Haz Waste - envaffairs@umd.edu
 - Biological Safety - biosafety@umd.edu
 - Radiation Safety - radiationsafety@umd.edu
 - Fire Marshal - firemarshal@umd.edu
 - Risk Management/Insurance – insurance@umd.edu