

Hurricane Preparedness for Laboratories

As you are preparing to leave your laboratory in the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster, USF Division of Environmental Health and Safety recommends the following minimum guidelines:

Chemical Safety

- Label and cap all chemical containers including waste containers.
- Move all chemicals to appropriate storage locations.
 - Store water-reactive chemicals in tightly sealed, waterproof containers.
 - Place flammable materials in approved flammable cabinets.
 - Remove chemicals from upper shelves and limit storage on bench tops.
 - Move all chemicals away from exterior windows.
- Cap gas cylinders and secure to a permanent fixture using a cylinder strap or chain.

Fume Hoods

- Close fume hood sashes completely. If the building experiences a complete loss of power, fume hoods may become inoperable.
- Remove all chemicals from fume hoods and secure in appropriate storage areas.

Equipment

- Unplug all non-essential equipment (e.g. hotplates, magnetic stirrers, heat mantles.)
- Use surge protectors to protect sensitive equipment in the event of a power surge.
- Turn refrigerators/freezers to coldest setting.
- Ensure that all bench-mounted gas fixtures are in the off position.
- Move computers and equipment as far from windows as possible.
- Backup important computer files.

Security

- Close and lock all laboratory doors.
- Avoid blocking exits and hallways.
- Update and post emergency contact information for laboratory personnel.

Please protect your laboratory and research equipment. During hurricane season it is imperative that employees and departments protect and secure their areas. This will minimize the potential damage and loss of research in the event of a hurricane.

For assistance or additional information, please contact the Division of Environmental Health & Safety at 974-4036.