



# EHS Fact Sheet

## Laboratory Clutter

### Clutter & Housekeeping in the Laboratory

Cluttered laboratory spaces are more than just eye-sore; that can negatively impact research. Not only are clean, uncluttered laboratories safer, but a well-organized laboratory helps:

- facilitate good relations within a lab
- improves lab technique with greater efficiency and reduces error
- frees up valuable space
- prevents items from becoming “lost,” and
- makes it a space that the researcher can be proud to show off to visitors.



### What to Look For

1. Keep aisles, corridors and doors clear and free of trip hazards.
2. Maintain access to safety equipment; eg safety showers/eyewashes, fire extinguishers, electrical panels, etc.
3. Do not use fume hoods and bio-hoods as storage.
4. Surplus or throw away old, unused, obsolete, or broken equipment.
5. Rout old, unused, out-of-date chemicals through EHS Materials Mgmt..
6. Do not store combustible material within 18 inches (sprinklered rooms) / 24 inches (unsprinklered rooms) of the ceiling.

### Tips for Maintaining a Clutter-Free Laboratory

1. Spend 5-10 minutes every day straightening up your work area.
2. Devote late Friday afternoons to a lab-wide general cleanup.
3. Buy only what chemicals are needed rather than in bulk.
4. Properly dispose of waste (including trash) in a timely manner, before it piles up.
5. The “Maybe I’ll Use It Later” will never arrive; get rid of excess items.
6. Clean up messes immediately.