What is a Chemical Fume Hood?

- Fume hoods are often the primary control device for protecting laboratory workers when working with flammable and/or toxic chemicals. Proper usage can help prevent unnecessary laboratory accidents.

- OSHA’s Laboratory standard (29 CFR 1910.1450) requires that fume hoods be maintained and function properly when used.

Before you operate a chemical fume hood, you should:

- Ensure that you are trained and understand how the hood works.

- Know the hazards of the chemical you are working with; refer to the chemical’s Safety Data Sheet if you are unsure.

- Ensure that the hood is on.

- Ensure that the sash is open to the proper operating level, which is usually indicated by arrows on the frame.

- Use appropriate eye protection.

When using a fume hood:

- Never allow your head to enter the plane of the hood opening. For example, for vertical rising sashes, keep the sash below your face; for horizontal sliding sashes, keep the sash positioned in front of you and work around the side of the sash.

- Do not permanently store any chemicals inside of the fume hood.

- Ensure the airflow is not blocked through the baffles or through the baffle exhaust slots.

- Elevate large equipment (e.g., a centrifuge) at least two inches off the base of the hood interior.

- Keep all materials inside the hood at least six inches from the sash opening. When not working in the hood, close the sash.

- Avoid creating air currents or cross-drafts across the hood’s open sash.

- Do not work in fume hood posted with an “OUT OF SERVICE” sign on the sash.