RECOMMENDED WORK PRACTICES FOR LABORATORY FUME HOODS

Fume hoods are designed to be used while working with gases, volatile chemicals, aerosols, particulates and other airborne materials. Fume hoods are an engineering control which, when properly used, can prevent or limit exposure to hazardous chemicals. Fume hoods do however, have several limitations and may not be appropriate for work with all chemicals in all situations. There are several work practices which lab employees should follow in order to allow a fume hood to perform properly. The following list describes these work practices. It is important to keep in mind that more stringent practices may be necessary in some circumstances.

- Conduct all operations that use or may generate irritating and/or hazardous airborne contaminants inside a hood.
- Keep all apparatus and chemicals at least 6 inches back from the face of the hood. A stripe on the bench surface inside the hood is a good reminder.
- Do not lean into the hood or put your head in the hood when contaminants are being generated.
- Do not use the hood as a waste disposal method (i.e. volatilize chemicals).
- Do not store chemicals or apparatus in the hood. Store hazardous chemicals in an approved safety cabinet. Some hoods have acid or flammable storage cabinets below.
- During use, position the fume hood sash at or below the height indicated on the hood evaluation label.
- Keep the slots in the hood baffle free of obstruction by apparatus or containers.
- Use equipment with legs or otherwise raise it off the work surface to allow even air flow under equipment, as well as around and over it.
- Minimize sources of turbulence at the hood face (i.e. foot traffic, equipment, fans, moving arms in and out).
- Keep laboratory doors closed, whenever possible.
- Do not remove hood sash or panels except when necessary for apparatus set-up. Replace sash or panels before operating the hood.
- Do not place electrical receptacles or other ignition sources inside the hood when flammable liquids or gases are present. No permanent electrical receptacles are permitted in the hood.
- Use an appropriate barricade or shield, if there is a chance of explosion or eruption.

For further information concerning the use and/or performance of fume hoods contact Environmental Health and Safety at:

Cambridge/Allston Campus 495-2060

Longwood Campus 432-1720