



Is your Laboratory Prepared for a Hurricane?

Laboratory equipment, materials and research can be protected from loss during severe weather events by taking precautions that will minimize the impact of dangerous conditions (e.g. wind, rain) and loss of services (e.g. electric power, heat, air conditioning, water). Prepare a lab contingency plan that meets your specific needs. This plan should be shared with your lab, your department and your Building Manager for inclusion in the Building Emergency Plan. The plan should be implemented whenever a severe weather event has been issued. Remember, you must take responsibility to protect your laboratory and research.

Before a Storm

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Does your lab have a list of all equipment that must be reset or restarted if the power is lost?			
Do you have manuals/instructions for restarting the equipment?			
Does the continuously operating equipment (e.g. heaters) have a safety shut down procedure that includes no automatic restart?			
Do you have a list of critical equipment that should be on emergency power?			
Did you check that all critical equipment is plugged into the emergency power supply (if available)?			
Have you identified the most valuable samples that could be stored in small liquid nitrogen containers that could be removed from the lab in an emergency?			
Is your computer plugged into a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) unit?			
Have you identified files, notebooks and computers to be removed in the event of an emergency and who is responsible for each item?			
Do you know where to get emergency supplies of dry ice or liquid nitrogen?			
Do you have safety equipment (cryogenic gloves and faceshield) to handle dry ice or liquid nitrogen?			
Did you check the refrigerators and freezers that are not "laboratory safe" and remove any containers with flammable liquids?			

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Is there a flashlight and extra batteries available for staff to safely evacuate when the power goes off?			

When the Storm Warning has been Issued

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Shutdown experiments that could be affected by the loss of electricity, water, or other services.			
Remove all chemicals and glassware from bench tops and store safely in cabinets.			
Close the sash on all chemical fume hoods.			
Remove all infectious materials from biosafety cabinets, and autoclave, disinfect, or safely store them as appropriate.			
Ensure that all chemical, radioactive and hazardous waste containers are properly covered, sealed and in secondary containment.			
Ensure that all gas valves are closed. If available, shut off gas to area.			
Turn off all appliances, computers, hot plates, ovens and other equipment. Unplug equipment if possible.			
Consolidate storage of valuable perishable items within storage units that have backup systems.			
Fill dewars and cryogen containers for sample storage and critical equipment.			
Ensure that water reactive chemicals are in sealed containers and stored in areas that are unlikely to become wet.			
Check that all gas cylinders are secured. Remove regulators and use caps.			
Elevate equipment, materials and supplies, including electrical wires and chemicals, off of the floor.			
Cover and secure or seal vulnerable equipment with plastic.			
Make sure arrangements have been made for the care and feeding of laboratory animals.			

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Update emergency contact information for lab and give copy to department. Post emergency contact name and number on lab doors. See EH&S templates.			
Secure lab notebooks by storing them in water tight containers. Backup critical data on computers and keep the backup copy at a different location.			
Close and latch or secure with tape all cabinets.			
Remove all visual obstructions (paper, etc) from the door windows.			
Close all doors, including cabinets, storage areas, offices and utility chase-ways. Lock all exterior lab doors before leaving.			

While the Power is Off

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Secure all hazardous experiments. Make sure that any experiments in progress are stabilized and discontinued.			
Securely cap all chemical containers, extinguish all flames, close gas valves, store cultures and secure radioactive materials.			
Completely close the sash of each fume hood.			
Power off all equipment so it does not reenergize when power is restored to the building. Unplug equipment if possible.			
Close all interior lab doors to reduce spread of hazardous vapors and improve fire safety risks.			
Check any equipment on emergency power. It may take up to 30 seconds for the emergency power to kick in. Items not permanently connected to emergency power outlets should not be connected during a power interruption.			
Exit the lab, lock doors and evacuate the building.			
If the power loss occurs during off hours, check all laboratories that may be running overnight experiments. Contact the persons involved so that they can properly secure their hazardous experiments.			
Coordinate the use of temporary emergency power with the Building			

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Manager. Do not bring in electrical generators to operate equipment.			

When the Power Returns

ITEM	YES	NO	TO DO
Return to the campus only when it is safe and entry has been authorized by Emergency Personnel.			
Make sure your lab is safe for entry. Do not enter the lab alone after the power has been off for an extended period. Only essential staff should return until normal operations have resumed.			
Reset/restart/check equipment.			
Check to ensure airflow of your fume hood has been restored. If your fume hood has not automatically re-started, call CO&M (2-6400 or 4-2400 for UH). Keep the sashes closed and do not use the hood until you are sure the hood exhaust system is working.			
If your lab flooded, wear protective gloves when working in contaminated water or handling contaminated objects.			
Wash hands after cleanup or decontaminating equipment. Use soap and clean water or waterless, alcohol-based hand rub.			

Additional Resources from EH&S (<http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/lab/labemerg.shtml>):

EH&S Policy 2-2 *Laboratory Emergency Spill Plan*

Laboratory Emergency Information template for lab door. Includes space for emergency contact information and hazard warnings.

Laboratory Emergency Plan template. Includes evacuation and emergency response information.

Additional information for Stony Brook University Emergency Management can be found on-line:

<http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/emergency/>