

ATRF Laboratories: Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: I noticed a sign by the eyewash to flush weekly. Is that correct?

A: Yes, eyewashes need to be flushed and documented on attached eyewash flushing tag on a **weekly** basis by lab personnel. It is best to choose a designated person and day so as not to forget. Eyewash water can easily become stagnant if not flushed routinely, resulting in contaminated water.

Q2: What about the Safety Showers?

A: These will be flushed semiannually by FME, but it is the lab's duty to keep the areas under these showers free from obstacles.

Q3: Am I allowed to bring my water bottle into the lab to drink?

A: No. Food and drinks may not be stored or consumed in labs, or lab corridor areas, even water. Please keep all food/drinks in the office/administrative areas and atrium kitchenettes.

Q4: It is cold in my office, so I sometimes wear my lab coat in there. Is this ok?

A: No. Lab coats or gloves are not to be worn outside of the lab, or lab corridor areas. This includes office areas, administrative areas, 1st 2nd & 3rd floor atriums, restrooms and outside the facility.

Q5: So, if I cannot wear my lab coat in my office, may I use a personal space heater?

A: Yes. Personal space heaters may be used. Please make sure that you have an EHS approval sticker on yours before using and follow a few simple rules:

- Only plug these into wall outlets, NOT power-strips or cubical outlets.
- Keep combustible object away from the heaters front, back, and sides.
- Unplug when not in use and before you leave the facility each day.

Q6: There are several labs that I frequent that are located within the same lab wing. How can I safely transport my tissue samples between these labs?

A: When transporting hazardous materials between labs in the same wing and floor carry in racks, trays, or pans. Seal tubes with Parafilm or a tight fitting cap to contain the contents.

Q7: What about when I need to transport to another wing, or a different floor within the same wing?

A: When transporting hazardous materials between lab floors/wings (buildings A, B, C, and D) place the primary container in a suitable sealed, leak proof **secondary** container (a plastic tub or tray with a tight fitting lid works well). Clearly mark all containers as to contents.

Q8: But, can I walk through the “food” areas with this?

A: Do not transport any hazardous materials through the lunch areas (kitchenettes) in the atriums on the 2nd and 3rd floors (please walk outside of, or around these areas), or into any office or administrative areas in the facility. This includes office areas located in the lab wings.

Q9: Do I use the stairs, or elevators, for transport between wings or floors within the same wing?

A: Do not use the stairs for transportation of lab materials. Elevators within the lab wings may be used for such transport. Please remember that secondary containment must be utilized for transport into lab wing elevators. You may carry your lab coat and spare gloves with you, but do not don these until you are reach the lab.

Q10: Where do I exit in the event of a fire?

A: In the event of a fire, proceed to the **nearest** marked exit. Do not use the elevators. There are stairs located at the end of each lab wing for those folks working in buildings A, B, C & D on the 2nd and 3rd floors. First floor occupants can exit the back of the lab wing or, if closer to the Atrium, they may exit from there. Building E occupants may exit at the employee entrance, visitor’s entrance, or the doors located between buildings B & C and C & D off the atrium. For those located in building E on the 2nd or 3rd floors there are stairs at either end of the atriums that lead out.

Q11: Where is the evacuation/fire assembly point located?

ATRF Assembly Area is located on the concrete areas and walkways outside the employee entrance at the rear of the building.

Q12: I was cited for not having a hazardous waste tag on my waste container. Where can I find printable tags for use in the lab?

A: Hazardous waste tags must be attached (yes, attached as in taped) to the container as soon as the first drop of waste is added. Please do not wait until the container is half full, or full and awaiting pick-up, to attach the tag. Click the link for tags: [ATRF Hazardous Waste Tag](#)

Q13: Where can I get more information about proper waste disposal at the ATRF?

A: For information on ATRF waste disposal procedures click on the following link:

[ATRF Waste Guidelines](#), or contact the ATRF-EHS office 301-846-6082.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Tammie Ford via email at: fordtb@mail.nih.gov , or stop by the ATRF-EHS office: B1510.