HARVARD
Environmental Health & Safety

Lab Emergency Response Guide

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Principal Investigators must prepare laboratory personnel for emergencies, such as injuries, fires or explosions, chemical spills, floods, power failures and earthquakes. To prepare for an emergency, laboratory personnel should plan, obtain response kits and materials, and practice responses. New employee laboratory emergency procedures need to be included as part of their new employee orientation. All staff should participate in periodic drills and exercises, including "table top" discussions, to keep knowledge current and safety first.

Accident Preparedness and Prevention

- Update door placard with emergency contact information.
- Make sure all staff know the locations of emergency equipment such as spill kits.
- Make sure all staff know how to retrieve SDSs for laboratory chemicals.
- Separate incompatible chemicals. A chemical storage guide is available from EH&S.
- Frequently dispose of chemical wastes and clean out unneeded chemicals and surplus.
- Ensure electrical wires and equipment are in good condition.
- Discuss accidents and near misses to prevent future accidents.
- Attend departmental safety committee meetings.
- Discuss safety topics periodically during lab meetings.

Hazards Assessment/Risk Minimization

When a new experiment or process is in development, assess possible hazards and identify ways to reduce risk. Contact EH&S for assistance.

Fire and Explosion Prevention

Prevent and minimize the effects of fires and explosions when using flammable, reactive or explosive materials.

- Determine if a less hazardous substitute is available.
- Minimize quantity used at any one time.
- Maintain proper clearances for sprinkler heads (18 inches).
- Close fume hood sashes when not in use.
- Keep containers securely closed.
- Practice good housekeeping, such as recycling boxes and properly disposing of unnecessary or outdated chemicals.
- Wear fire-resistant lab coats or aprons, when appropriate.
- Use chemicals and reaction systems in a ventilated enclosure, such as a fume hood.
- Reduce or eliminate open flames and spark producing equipment.
- Use a refrigerator/freezer rated to store flammable materials.
- Train staff on chemical hazards and necessary precautions.

Spill Prevention/Spill kits

Laboratory supervisors should identify chemicals likely to spill during common laboratory procedures, as well as during emergency events. The procedures for cleaning spills in a

laboratory should be included in the SOPs developed for each of the laboratory's processes.

- Pay special attention to additional precautions for pyrophoric, water reactive, oxidizing chemicals, and those that may generate toxic gases if a reaction were to occur.
- Use chemicals in small quantities to limit the amount spilled if a container ruptures.
- Chemicals should be transported between rooms in a tub or bottle carriers designed to prevent breakage and to hold the contents in case of breakage.
- All laboratories should have a chemical spill cleanup kit appropriate for the chemicals in the lab.
- Staff should be trained on the location and use of spill kits during lab orientation.

Unattended Operations and Floods

- Avoid leaving operations or experiments unattended. Post the name and phone number of the person responsible for the operation on the door to the room in case of emergency. In addition, identify the chemicals in use and post clear directions for shutdown so that an untrained person could shut down the operation during an emergency.
- Water: If it is necessary to have running water unattended, install a commercial water flow device that sets off an alarm if a leak occurs or use a shutoff valve that kicks in if the water level rises too high. Use copper tubing with proper fittings or Tygon tubing, which is less likely to become brittle than rubber tubing. If using tubing, make sure the ends are tightly connected. Anchor outlet hoses into sinks or drains.
- Flame: Do not leave open flames unattended.

Emergency Preparedness

- Be familiar with how to obtain information during an emergency.
- Sign up for MessageMe
- Know the evacuation routes and meeting sites for your office and places you visit during the business day.
- Know whom to contact for different types of emergencies, both to obtain assistance and report problems within your department.
- Be vigilant in your areas and report situations which seem dangerous or suspicious.
- Review other safety resources such as the annual Playing it Safe guide from HUPD, EH&S website, resources available from HUHS, guidance from your local HR department or supervisor, www.ready.gov and the American Red Cross Association for helpful tips and advice.
- Take personal responsibility for your own preparedness by taking steps to educate and equip yourself for an emergency.
- Prior to an event that may result in an interruption of lab operations (e.g. severe weather), labs should follow the Lab Emergency Preparedness Checklist

FIRE AND EVACUATION PREPAREDNESS

Evacuation Planning for the Disabled

Disabilities or physical limitations, either temporary or permanent, may prevent or impede effective or timely evacuation. Limitations may include the use of crutches, a wheelchair, a cane, a vision or hearing impairment, and so forth.
You can confidentially report your limitation(s) to Harvard Disability Services by emailing DisabilityServices@harvard.edu or by calling (617)495-3630. HDS will help you devise an alternative method of evacuation that is compatible with your physical limitation(s).

If a Fire Alarm Sounds

- Stop all activities and immediately initiate evacuation in low-rise buildings. High-rise buildings, typically more than 70 feet above the ground, call for limited or "staged" evacuation initially, and include the floor of fire origin, the floor immediately above, and the floor immediately below. Always evacuate when the audible alarm signal follows a short, recorded message.
- Close doors behind you as you leave, if it is safe to do so.
- Assist visitors, guests, and the impaired, as necessary.
- Go to the nearest emergency exit or follow exit signs to the nearest stairwell. If the primary evacuation route or exit is blocked, seek a secondary route.
- Do not travel by elevator.
- Once outside the building, report to your designated meeting site. Wait for instructions from your safety monitor or from emergency response personnel.
- Do not reenter the building until the fire department says it is safe to do so.

If You Discover Smoke Or Fire, Remember R.A.C.E.

Relocate Be aware of those who may need assistance. Guide people from immediate danger, if you can do so without endangering anyone. Remind others to report to their designated meeting site.
Alarm Pull the building fire alarm to alert others. Call **911** immediately; then, call the Operations Center. Report the exact location of the fire or smoke.

Operations Center Contact Information

Cambridge Campus Allston Campus School of Public Health	Harvard Medical School
(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

Confine Close doors as you exit, if it is safe to do so. Shut off fuel sources such as piped or bottled gas, but only if this can be done safely.
Evacuate Leave the building. Exit via a safe path of travel. Do not use an elevator. Do not open doors that are hot. Proceed to your designated meeting site. Alert emergency response personnel to others trapped or left behind in the building.

If Clothing is On Fire

Stop moving.
Drop to the floor.
Roll on the floor to smother flame.
Drench with water from an emergency shower or sink hose.
Seek medical assistance, if necessary.

Using a Fire Extinguisher

- Handle an extinguisher only if you have been trained to do so.
  - You can enroll in "Fire Extinguisher" training on the Harvard Training Portal
- Use an extinguisher only on a small fire that just starts to smolder or flame.
- Never turn your back to a fire. Keep a clear exit path between you and the fire at all times.
- Use the appropriate extinguisher for the fire (Type A, B, C, D, or K) and remember **P.A.S.S.**
  - **P**ull the pin or ring.
  - **A**pproach the fire and stop about 8 feet away. **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire.
  - **S**queeze or press the handle to activate discharge.
  - **S**weep the nozzle slowly from side to side, **aiming at the base of the fire.**
  - Continue to discharge until the fire is extinguished or the extinguisher is empty.
- Exit to a safe location and look for a responding Harvard police office or a building representative.
- If you use a fire extinguisher to extinguish a small fire, you must report the event to the Harvard Operations Center.

Operations Center Contact Information

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(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

- Provide the following information to the Operations Center
  - Location of fire
  - Cause of fire
  - Type of fire extinguisher used, and
  - Extent of damage
- Ask building management to replace the discharged fire extinguisher promptly

If You are an Evacuation Monitor

- Fulfill evacuation monitor training, if a formal program exists within your facility.
- Follow **R.A.C.E.**, if smoke or flame is discovered in your work area.
- Ensure that people follow the appropriate evacuation route, and that they are directed

to their designated meeting site.
- Be aware of impaired occupants who may need assistance.
- Account for all -- who work in your area or on your floor -- at the post-evacuation meeting site. Report the names and locations of missing individuals and those who may be incapable of evacuating promptly.
- Reveal your role to emergency responders at the designated meeting site.
- Remind others not to reenter the building until the fire department representative says it is safe to do so.

Evacuation Planning for Evacuation Monitors

To the degree evacuation monitors are a recognized part of your facility's life-safety plan:

- Ensure that everyone in your work group knows the location of all emergency equipment and procedure, including:
    - Two evacuation routes from the building
    - The designated post-evacuation meeting place (away from the building and the fire department's staging area.)
    - Two exit stairwells
    - Two fire alarm boxes ("pull stations")
    - The nearest fire extinguishers
    - The nearest drench hoses, emergency showers, and eye wash stations ✓the nearest automated external defibrillator (AED).
- Make sure paths of travel to the nearest exit stairwell doors are unobstructed.
- Make sure stairwell doors remain closed, latched, and unobstructed.
- Make sure stairwells and stairwell landings are clutter-free at all times.
- Review building maps for primary and secondary routes of evacuation.
- Participate in routine evacuation drills
- Condition your audience not to routinely block or lash doors in the open position. Closed doors reduce the spread of smoke and flame, reducing the risk of incapacitation.
- Be aware of those who may need to be assisted or alerted; for example, someone with a disability, or someone working in a noisy room or a sound-proof booth.
- Remind your audience that occupants with temporary or permanent disabilities may self-report their name, affiliation, telephone number, condition, and routine work area(s) to Harvard Disability Services, below. Information remains confidential and will be kept on file at the discretion of those participating in this voluntary program

MEDICAL EMERGENCY, ACCIDENT, OR INJURY

Obtaining Medical Attention

- For serious medical emergencies, go to the closest emergency room or **call 911**.
- Medical treatment (non-emergency):
  - Harvard employees/students, see Harvard University Health Services Locations (UHS) for your nearest location and hours.
  - For research animal related injuries please see the section **Animal Research Injury or Exposure**

Hazardous Material on Skin or Splashed in Eye

- Remove contaminated clothing, shoes, jewelry, etc.
- Immediately flood exposed areas with lukewarm water from safety shower, eyewash, or faucet for at least 15 minutes (use soap on skin for biological/blood exposure). Hold eyes open to ensure effective rinsing behind both eyelids.
- Immediately after rinsing, obtain medical attention.
- Review SDS(s) for hazards and report the incident (see below).

Needle Stick or Cut with Contaminated Sharp Item

- Immediately wash the area with soap and water for at least 15 minutes.
- Immediately after rinsing, obtain medical attention.
- Report the incident (see below).

Assisting in Medical Emergency or Personal Injury

- See above **Obtaining Medical Attention.**
- Do not move injured person unless there is a danger of further harm from remaining in the location. If the area is unsafe, then evacuate, close doors to area, and prevent access. Provide information to emergency responders.
- Remain with the injured person if it's safe to do so until medical assistance arrives. Initiate life-saving measures if necessary and you are trained.
- For information on evacuation procedures please see section on **Fire and Evacuation Preparedness**

Laboratory-Acquired Illness

Laboratory personnel who handle infectious biological materials must be trained on the safe handling and hazards associated with these materials. This includes an understanding of the signs and symptoms of infection that are specific to the infectious agent(s) found in the laboratory. If you suspect that you have acquired an illness due to your laboratory work follow the following steps.

- Seek medical attention (see **Obtaining Medical Attention** section above)
  - Be prepared to describe what you work with in the laboratory
- Report the illness to your supervisor or Principal Investigator

- Report the illness to EH&S
- Consult with a medical provider and local HR before returning to work

Reporting Instructions for Injury/Exposure

- Report all injuries, accidents, animal bites and scratches, and exposures to your supervisor so that they can complete the online Incident Report Form located at Harvard EHS Accident Reporting & Investigation
- In addition, report exposure incidents involving radiation, rDNA, or infectious substances to EH&S, which will notify the appropriate regulatory agency, if necessary.

Environmental Health and Safety Contact Information

Cambridge Office	Longwood Office
(617) 495-2060	**(617) 432-1720**

ANIMAL RESEARCH INJURY OR EXPOSURE

Emergencies Involving Research Animals

Animal research presents unique challenges to emergency response. Species and facility specific SOPs for responding to emergencies in the context of animal research have been developed by the research divisions responsible for maintaining these programs on campus. An understanding of these protocols is integral to your successful use of animals for research. Be sure to obtain and review these SOPs from the appropriate divisions below.

Harvard Center for Comparative Medicine (HCCM)	Office of Animal Resources (OAR)
www.hccm.med.harvard.edu	**www.oar-public.fas.harvard.edu**

This section of the manual will cover only those situations in which an injury is sustained or you are exposed to animal material or other hazardous material in the course of your work with research animals.

Injuries or Exposures Involving Research Animals

Obtaining Medical Attention for Animal-Related Injuries or Exposures

Researchers listed on IACUC protocols and approved to perform animal research have access to all medical resources listed in the **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury** section of this manual. In addition, researchers performing animal research also have access to the Occupational & Environmental Health Network (OEHN) Exposure Response Call Center (ERCC). This hotline is staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week. In the event of an injury resulting in exposure to animal material or other hazardous material during the course of animal research, follow the protocols below and seek medical advice from this hotline. You must dial the entire number, including the area code to be connected.

OEHN Exposure Response Call Center
1 (866) 360-8100

You will be connected to an occupational medicine professional who can triage your injury and provide advice on the next steps you should take. If needed, they will direct you to go to a nearby medical facility or emergency room for care.

Reporting Animal-Related Injuries or Exposures

Animal-related injuries or exposures are reported in the same manner as any other injury on campus. See Reporting Instructions for Injury/Exposure in the **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury** section of this manual.

Injuries Involving Non-human Primates (NHP) or NHP Materials

- Immediately stop what you are doing and secure the animal in its cage if safe to do so.
- EYE EXPOSURE: immediately rinse eye(s) in an eye wash for 15 minutes.
- BITE/SCRATCH/CUT: find the nearest B Virus Bite Kit.
- Wash the wound with the Betadine scrub brush for 15 minutes
- Rinse the wound with sterile saline solution and bandage with sterile gauze.
- Obtain medical attention for ANY exposure or possible exposure to a non-human primate (see above).
- Report the incident (see above).

All Other Injuries Involving Research Animals

- If applicable, remove contaminated clothing, shoes, jewelry, etc.
- Immediately flood exposed areas with lukewarm water from safety shower, eyewash, or faucet for at least 15 minutes (use soap on skin for biological/blood exposure). Hold eyes open to ensure effective rinsing behind both eyelids.
- Immediately after rinsing, obtain medical attention (see above)
- Review SDS(s) for hazards and report the incident (see above).

Illnesses Acquired from Research Animals

If you believe you have acquired an illness due to your work with research animals, seek medical attention from the **OEHN Exposure Response Call Center** as described above. Please see the Laboratory-Acquired Illness section on the **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury** page of this manual for further instruction.

CHEMICAL SPILLS

Any Chemical Spill

- Alert people in the immediate area to evacuate to a safe distance.
- Only dial 911 if there is a medical emergency and/or fire
- Attend to injured or contaminated person and remove from exposure, if it is safe to do so.
- Obtain medical attention, if necessary (See **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury**).
- For flammable liquids, turn off ignition sources near spill, if this can be done safely.
- Increase exhaust to outside, if possible, by contacting building operations. If the spill is in a laboratory fully open the sash of a fume hood.
- Close sash if the spill is in a hood. If available press the purge button for the fume hood.

Operations Center Contact Information

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(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

If the spill involves **elemental mercury**, requires **respiratory protection** to clean, and/or has been **released into the environment** (down a drain, spilled outside, etc.) you need outside assistance.

Training

Anyone working in a Harvard lab needs to take LAB100 General Lab Safety in the Harvard Training Portal. As the title states this is a general safety training. Lab members are expected to understand the hazards of the material they are working with and any hazards that may be present in their work. This information can be acquired by reviewing SDSs for the material being use, reviewing lab SOPS, and demonstrating competency at the bench.

A Spill Your Lab Can Manage

- Secure immediate area to prevent access and exposure to personnel.
- Clean up chemical spills if you are trained to do so and you have the appropriate equipment available.
- Get a chemical spill kit and put on appropriate personal protective equipment including splash goggles, chemical resistant gloves, and a long-sleeved lab coat.
- Consult a Safety Data Sheet for hazard information and clean up instructions.
- Control the source and confine the spill to a small area using spill kit supplies. Avoid walking in spill or breathing vapors.
- Treat chemical if necessary and absorb free liquid using appropriate material
    - For **corrosive liquid** use a neutralizer
    - For **flammable solvent** use an absorbent such as kitty litter, vermiculite, or specific solvent absorbent from your spill kit
    - Never use organic material if cleaning up nitric acid or concentrated sulfuric acid. Kitty litter or vermiculite are good options litter or vermiculite are good options
- If the spilled material is a solid clean debris with a dust pan and hand broom.
- If there is broken glass with spilled liquid, use tweezers to collect the glass.
- Clean residue with water.
- Collect debris in an appropriate container, tightly seal or close container, attach a Hazardous Waste Tag, and move the waste to your Satellite Accumulation Area.
- Fill out an online waste pickup request at the EHS website.
- Contact your safety representative or building manager to ensure that all emergency supplies are replaced.

A Spill Your Lab Cannot Manage

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Cambridge Campus Allston Campus School of Public Health	Harvard Medical School
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- Alert laboratory to evacuate to a safe distance or assigned assembly area.
- Raise the sash to the chemical fume hood (unless the spill occurred in the hood), while evacuating, if possible.
- Turn off open heat sources: GC, Bunsen burner, hot plate, heat gun, cauterizing furnace, etc.—if spilled material is flammable and in large quantity, and if this can be accomplished safely, with haste, as you exit the space.
- Close door(s) to affected area. Isolate area and prevent reentry. Post a “Do Not Enter” sign or place barrier tape across the door(s).
- Relocate to a safe location or the designated meeting site if the alarm has sounded. A person familiar with the incident and laboratory should remain at the meeting location to provide information to emergency response personnel.

- Call the University Operations Center for assistance. They will need the following information:
    - Your name, a phone number that you can be reached at,
    - The name of your lab, and the exact location of the spill
    - What was spilled and approximately how much
    - If the fire department has been notified
    - If anyone was injured
- Do not re-enter the area until instructed to do so by the fire department or other emergency personnel

BIOLOGICAL OR BLOOD SPILL

Spills Involving Biological Materials at Biosafety Level 1 or 2 In the event of an extensive spill of pathogenic material, everyone should leave the affected area **immediately.**
If laboratory personnel have been exposed in conjunction with the spill, reference the **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury** section of this manual.

Only attempt to clean-up and decontaminate a spill involving biological material if you know the identity of the material, have the appropriate equipment, and are confident about following the spill procedures outlined in this manual. For assistance contact the Operations Center.

Operations Center Contact Information

Cambridge Campus Allston Campus School of Public Health	Harvard Medical School
(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

Reporting Spills Involving Biological Materials at Biosafety Level 1 or 2

Spills involving genetically modified or infectious material must be reported to your supervisor and Harvard Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) as soon as possible.

Environmental Health and Safety Contact Information

Cambridge Office	Longwood Office
(617) 495-2060	(617) 432-1720

Spills Involving Biological Materials at Biosafety Level 3

Follow your laboratory-specific standard operating procedure (SOP) for response to biological spills at Biosafety Level 3 (BL3).
Report all spills at BL3 to your supervisor and EH&S immediately.

Biological Spill Response

Spill Inside the Biosafety Cabinet

Leave the biosafety cabinet (BSC) turned on. The cabinet will prevent the release of aerosols into the laboratory space.

Spill Outside the Biosafety Cabinet

Alert people in the immediate area of the spill.

Attend to injured or contaminated personnel and remove them from the spill area if safe to do so. Follow instructions found in the Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury section of this manual.

Exit the laboratory and post "Do Not Enter" signage on the door.

Do not reenter the room until large droplets have settled and aerosols have been cleared by the building ventilation system (30 minutes, minimum), and the extent of the hazard and its dissemination has been determined.

Report the spill to your supervisor.

Personnel performing clean-up of the spill must wear proper protective gear (goggles/face shields, lab coat, and gloves).

Pick up any sharps or broken glass with tongs, forceps, or a dust pan and broom.

Discard sharps immediately into a sharps containers.

NEVER HANDLE SHARPS WITH HANDS – EVEN WHEN WEARING GLOVES.

Cover the spill with paper towels or other absorbent material.

Carefully pour a freshly prepared 1:10 dilution of household bleach (approximately 5,000 ppm sodium hypochlorite) in a circular pattern around the perimeter of the spill, moving inward towards the center of the spill. Avoid splashing.

Allow a minimum of 20 minutes of contact time.

Use paper towels to wipe up the spill, working from the edges into the center. If you suspect any shards of glass or other sharps are still present, use a mechanical method to pick up remaining sharps and paper towels (e.g. tongs).

Wipe the surrounding area and the spill area again with disinfectant.

Place used paper towels and other disposable items into the biological waste container.

Disinfect or autoclave any non-disposable materials used.

RADIATION INCIDENTS

General Response to Radiation Spills

- Alert people in the immediate area to avoid the spill.
- Prevent the spread of contamination by:
  - Restricting access to the contaminated area.
  - Carefully monitoring personnel before they leave spill area to ensure they are not contaminated.
  - Surveying area to establish extent of spill.
- Attend to injured or contaminated persons and remove from potential exposure. See **Medical Emergency, Accident, or Injury** section.
- Contact the Operations Center for assistance.

Operations Center Contact Information

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(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

Procedure for Small Spills

Clean up radiation spills only if you are trained to do so and the appropriate equipment is available.

- Wear safety goggles, disposable gloves, shoe covers and a long sleeved lab coat.
- Place absorbent paper towels over spill. Clean area working from the perimeter toward the center of the spill.
- Handle soiled absorbent towels with forceps, and place the used towels in a plastic bag. Dispose of bag in the nearest radioactive waste container.
- Clean area using standard cleaning agents. Dispose of cleaning materials in radioactive waste container.
- Monitor area, hands, shoes, and clothing for contamination with an appropriate survey meter or method.
- Repeat cleanup until contamination is no longer detected.
- Report spill to the Operations Center.

Procedure for Large Spills

For spills that are greater than 10 microcuries, or have spread beyond the immediate lab bench area or involve personal contamination:

- Contact the University Operations Center for assistance.
  - Remain nearby so responders can survey for potential containment.
  - Close and placard the door to prevent entry to affected area.
  - Assign personnel familiar with the incident and the lab to assist emergency response personnel.

Procedure for Airborne Releases

For releases that can become airborne (powder or volatile liquid):

- Leave the area and lock the doors.
- Contact the University Operations Center for assistance.
- Close and placard the door to prevent entry to affected area.
- Assign personnel familiar with the incident and the lab to assist emergency response personnel.

Response to X-ray and Laser Incidents

- De-energize the system if it is possible to do so safely. Shut off power using the emergency shut-off button or circuit breaker to the room.
- If it is not possible to de-energize the system, evacuate the area.
    - Alert people in the immediate area.
    - Restrict access to the room until the system can be safely de-energized.
- Contact the Operations Center for assistance.

HAZARDOUS GAS AND OXYGEN DEFICIENCY INCIDENTS

When reporting a potential gas leak, provide the following information to the Operations Center:

- Your name
- Your location, and location of potential leak
- Type of gas, if known

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(617) 495-5560	(617) 432-1901

Inert Compressed & Liquefied Gas Release

If uncontrolled release, evacuate the lab area and contact the Operations Center**.**

For minor leaks, check for leaks in gas delivery system.

- If a leak is found, shut off the cylinder, and then tighten hose or pipe connections.
- Never attempt to repair a leak at the valve threads or safety devices.
- Ventilate the area by opening windows, if possible.

Natural Gas Leak

- **Activate the fire alarm if you think there is an immediate danger**
- Cease all operations and alert others in immediate area,
- Extinguish open flames,
- Ventilate area by opening windows, if possible and safe to do so,
    - Check for open gas sources and or nearby use of mercaptans,
    - If no source is found and odor persists, evacuate the area.
- Notify the Operations Center.

Blue Strobe Lights

What it means: Potential hazardous gas leak into a lab space.
What to do: Leave the building immediately, and meet at evacuation rally point. Notify the Operations Center.

Yellow Strobe Lights

What it means: Potential hazardous gas leak in an exhausted enclosure and/or loss of exhaust
What to do: Leave the immediate area and proceed to a location that is void of Yellow Strobes**.** Notify the Operations Center.
If no strobes are in alarm and you suspect an uncontrolled release of a toxic or flammable gas, pull the fire alarm and follow building evacuation procedures. Report to the designated meeting area.

White Strobe Lights or Oxygen Alarm

What it means: Potential oxygen deficiency in a lab area.
What to do: Leave the area, or do not enter an area that has flashing white strobes Notify the Operations Center.

BOMB THREAT OR SUSPICIOUS MAIL

Harvard Police Contact Information

Cambridge Campus Allston Campus	Longwood Campus
(617) 495-1212	(617) 432-1212

Bomb Threat by Telephone

Bomb threats usually come by telephone. They are made, generally, by individuals who want to create an atmosphere of anxiety or panic. Take all bomb threats seriously.
Schools or departments may follow their own bomb-threat procedures; if so, request a copy of the procedure from your building's facility manager.
The Harvard University Police Department (HUPD), the local fire department, or both, will determine if evacuation is necessary and will activate the evacuation via the building fire alarm system. If you do evacuate, move to your building's emergency assembly point and do not reenter the area until instructed to do so by Harvard police.

If you receive a bomb threat by telephone:

- Do not pull a fire alarm.
- Note the caller's telephone number from Caller ID.
- Note the time of call.
- Remain calm and listen carefully.
- Keep the caller on the telephone. Obtain an accurate description of what the caller says.
    - Note a distinctive voice or pitch or speech pattern; a local, regional, or foreign accent;
    - Other voice characteristics (loud, soft, angry, fast, nasal, mumbling);
    - The language used (foul, well-spoken, irrational, taped or read message);
    - The caller's sex and approximate age; and,
    - Any background sound(s).
    - If the voice is familiar, who does it sound like?
    - Try to remember the caller's exact words.
- Ask for the following information.
    - Where is the bomb right now?
    - Did you place the bomb?
    - What does it look like?
    - What kind of bomb is it?
    - What will cause the bomb to detonate; e.g., a radio signal, a time-delay fuse, other?
    - When is the bomb going to explode?
    - How can the bomb be stopped from going off?
    - Why was the bomb planted? At what or to whom is the bomb directed?

  - What is your name?
  - What is your address?
- Call the HUPD. Try to use a landline, not a cell phone.
- Call building management, your supervisor, or your department head.
- Perform a quick search of your area to identify suspicious or unfamiliar packages or items. Do not touch these items! Alert the HUPD to their location.
- The HUPD will immediately dispatch officers to investigate the call and to take whatever action is deemed necessary and reasonable for the safety of the community. When appropriate, the HUPD will search the building, in part or in whole, with the assistance and cooperation of the department head or building manager or both. Following onsite evaluation, the decision to evacuate or close a building shall be made jointly.

Written Bomb Threat

- Note the manner in which the threat was delivered, where it was found, and who found it.
- Limit handling the item by immediately placing it in an envelope for later forensic analysis. Wear disposable gloves, as necessary.
- Alert the HUPD and building management.
- Turn over the written threat to HUPD.

Bomb Threat by Electronic Messaging

- Call the HUPD and follow its instructions.
- HUPD will reach out to HUIT or the necessary school-affiliated IT group to trace the message.
- The respective IT organization will engage with its service providers to help with the investigation, to the extent possible.

Finding a Suspected Bomb

- Do not pull a fire alarm.
- Do not touch the suspected bomb.
- Leave the immediate area with all others. Prevent reentry. Secure the area, but do not guard it.
- Call the HUPD. Try to use a landline, not a mobile telephone, a portable radio, or a pager, unless a life-threatening emergency exists. Radio frequency energy can trigger an explosive device.
- Report the location of the suspected bomb to your supervisor or building manager or both.
- Await further instructions from the HUPD and building management.

Receiving Suspicious Mail (Envelope or Package)

Knowing the type of mail your program or department receives will help determine what is suspicious. If you are suspicious of a mailing and are unable to verify the content with the

addressee or the sender, do not open it. Call the HUPD.

- Remain calm.
- Do not open. Do not shake or bump. Do not taste or smell.
- Do not attempt to clean up a suspicious substance.
- Avoid unnecessary handling in order to preserve evidence for later forensic analysis.
- Isolate or cover the suspicious mail, package, or substance with paper, newspaper, a trash can, or another object, if possible.
- Leave the immediate area, alerting others to leave as well. Take your keys, wallet, and other personal items.
- Prevent further access. Close the door behind you. Post a do-not-enter sign.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Remove potentially contaminated clothing as soon as possible, placing it in sealable plastic bags. Turn over the sealed bags to the HUPD. Shower with soap and water, as soon as practical.
- List all persons who have touched the suspicious substance by mail. Include contact information. Make the information available to the HUPD**.**
- Call the HUPD. Follow their instructions. Await their arrival.

Things to Look For When Identifying Suspicious Mail (Envelope or Package)

- No return address, a nonsensical return address, or an unverifiable one
- Cancellation or postmark that differs from the return address
- Mail inconsistent with the types of mail normally received
- A poorly typed or handwritten address or cut-and-paste lettering
- Misspelled words, especially common ones
- The recipient's name or title is inaccurate
- The mail is addressed to a title, not a person
- Addressed to an incorrect or nonexistent department
- Excessive postage, packing tape, or packing string
- Separate instruction, exclamatory, warning, or notification labels such as "Fragile. Handle With Care," "Rush. Do Not Delay," "To Be Opened In The Privacy Of …," "Your Lucky Day Is Here," or "Prize Enclosed."
- A foreign postmark
- Restrictive markings such as "personal," "private," or "addressee only"
- Oily stains, discoloration, loose powder, or crystallization on the wrapper
- A strange or surprising odor
- Lopsided or uneven packaging, soft spots, or bulges
- Ticking or sloshing sounds
- Pressure or resistance noted when removing content from an envelope or package
- Protruding wire(s)
- Any letter or package arriving before or after a telephone call from an unknown person asking if the item was received.
- See the U.S. Postal Service poster illustrating suspicious mail and packages.