

## Lessons Learned

### What Happened:

On January 11, 2021, a laboratory that uses radioactive & biological materials was in the process of relocating their lab to a new space on campus. On the morning of the move, the lab was notified that certain equipment was not permitted to be moved until it was cleared by EHS.

The specific issues were:

- A Biological Safety Cabinet (BSC) used for radioactive and biological experiments was not properly decontaminated by ENV Services, prior to being moved by University of Utah Moving.
- Clean Benches used for radioactive materials were not properly decontaminated prior to being moved by University of Utah Moving.

### What went right:

The University of Utah Moving team recognized that the equipment had not been appropriately disinfected/decontaminated. The movers notified the lab staff that this specific equipment is not permitted to be moved until properly decontaminated.

### Lessons Learned:

This incident emphasizes the importance of properly decontaminating equipment prior to being moved to a new location. Contaminated and potentially

contaminated equipment pose a high risk of exposure to hazardous materials for personnel involved in the moving process. Luckily, this specific situation was resolved before an exposure occurred. These types of safety issues must be prevented by:

- Notifying EHS in an appropriate amount of time before moving lab spaces. EHS will provide a lab relocation/closure document and assist lab staff with the steps needed for closing out a lab space.
- A BSC must be fully decontaminated by the University of Utah's contracted technician, ENV Services, before it is moved to a new space. At least 2 weeks prior to the move, contact ENV Services at 1-800-690-3368 to request a price quote and schedule a date for decontamination. The process will take approximately 4 hours to complete: NOTE, if the cabinet was also used for hazardous chemicals, the decontamination procedure is more complicated and time consuming. Once ENV Services have decontaminated the cabinet, the technician will place a sticker on the sash confirming that it has been properly decontaminated. (see figure)

## Decontaminating Lab Equipment



- Clean benches do not need to be decontaminated by ENV Services, they are not designed for work with hazardous biological materials. Prior to moving a clean bench, the surfaces (inside and out) must be decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant (e.g. a freshly prepared 1:10 dilution of bleach). If using a bleach solution to decontaminate the work surface, the contact time for the bleach solution must be at least 20 minutes. After the 20-minute contact time, wipe the bleach residue off the surfaces with either water or ethanol.
- After BSCs and clean benches have been moved, they must be recertified by ENV Services' technician before they can be used. BSC recertification can be scheduled when a price quote and decontamination date is requested from ENV Services. To schedule a clean bench certification, contact the EHS Biosafety team at [biosafety@ehs.utah.edu](mailto:biosafety@ehs.utah.edu).

- Any questions regarding biological safety cabinets and/or clean benches can be sent to the EHS Biosafety team at [biosafety@ehs.utah.edu](mailto:biosafety@ehs.utah.edu).

The following guidelines will help ensure you are provided with information pertaining to biological safety cabinets and clean benches:

- Contact EHS to discuss options for repairs, decontaminations, or certifications of BSCs and clean benches (801-581-6590). All BSC repairs, decontaminations, and certifications must be performed by an NSF-certified technician and the University of Utah has a contract with ENV Services. No work on the BSC may be performed by University of Utah Facilities staff, with the exception of work/servicing on the exterior of the cabinet, such as connection of the cabinet to the vacuum system.
- You can view the Biological Safety Cabinets Fact Sheet at: <https://ibc.utah.edu/resources/documents/fact-sheets-and-sops/biological-safety-cabinets-fact-sheet.pdf>.