

To: Academic Department Health and Safety Coordinators
Faculty Executive Officers

From: Kate Windsor, Director of Safety

Subject: **December Holiday Laboratory Shutdown Notice**

Date: December 7, 2020

Please note for the holiday shutdown that due to winter weather conditions, utilities (especially electricity) may be affected. It is a general rule that all laboratory processes be designed to safely survive a service failure. During the holiday shutdown this is particularly important and the following precautions are recommended.

COVID-19 Special Message

Campus-wide COVID-19 public health cleaning precautions WILL NOT be maintained while the University is closed, and temperature/ventilation will be lowered. Only research and lab maintenance that has received special approval by a Faculty Dean will be serviced as per a planned schedule.

Prepare your laboratory:

- Suspend lab operations by **Thursday, December 23, 2020 @ 4:00 pm**, resuming no earlier than Monday, **January 4, 2021**.
- Shut down all processes vulnerable to failure of utilities.
- Remove hazardous waste from the lab. Last day for main campus hazardous waste pickup and drop off at the Environmental Safety Facility is **Friday, December 18th**. For more information call x35755.
- Store hazardous materials properly and in containment areas and ensure that containers are closed or sealed.
- Shut off compressed gases and gas supply lines to equipment.
- Turn off and unplug, where possible, electrical equipment such as hot plates, computers and, if not containing hazardous materials, fume hoods and environmental chambers. This prevents damage to equipment due to power surges while reducing energy waste.
- Ensure lab contact information is updated with names, phone numbers and addresses in a location accessible to emergency response personnel (e.g. inside of door), and provide emergency contact information to UW Police via email (uwpolice@uwaterloo.ca). If applicable, include documentation on contents of sensitive freezers and refrigerators in the lab.
- Anyone approved to work in a lab during shutdown must have supervisor and departmental approval and adhere to the [Working Alone Guidelines](#) posted on the Safety Office website. Building access keys and named authorized persons must be arranged to be left with UW Police to be signed out only to those people that have specifically been authorized.
- If you have any questions about preparing your lab for shutdown contact the Safety Office at x35755.

What to do if you have a lab incident:

- Report failures of equipment or physical plant to Plant Operations at x33793.
- If lab or building has been without power, allow the lab exhaust systems to operate for at least 2 hours before entry to lab or building.
- Contact Safety Office or UW Spill Team through UW Police at 519-888-4911 or x22222 if you have concerns relating to hazardous materials spills.