



UAB Environmental Health and Safety

Laboratory Safety Updates & Resources

New Federal Policy: What UAB Researchers Need to Know About High-Risk Life Sciences Research

Recent federal policy initiatives may expand oversight and compliance requirements for certain life sciences research. Investigators should be aware that existing Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) approvals were reviewed under the federal requirements and guidance in effect at the time of approval. As federal expectations evolve, previously approved research activities may become subject to additional review, risk assessment, registration, or oversight.

Proposed federal policy changes could broaden the scope of research requiring institutional biosafety review, including activities involving biological agents, toxins, emerging pathogens, enhanced organisms, synthetic biology, and other biohazardous materials.

Investigators should not assume that existing IBC approvals or historical determinations will satisfy new or future federal requirements. Principal Investigators are encouraged to review active research portfolios and consult with the UAB Biosafety Office regarding projects that may be affected by evolving federal oversight.

To support proactive compliance, the UAB Biosafety Office and IBC Research Safety Committee encourage investigators to amend existing IBC registrations, as appropriate, to allow for updated review and risk assessment. Early engagement can help minimize disruptions as new requirements are finalized and implemented.

For a detailed list of proposed changes, or to weigh in with your comments, visit the following links:

NIH guidelines: [Draft Policy Table of Changes](#)

NIH Request for Comments: [NOT-OD-26-112: Request for Comment: Draft NIH Biosafety Policy for Research Involving Biohazards](#)

DGOF: [USG-Policy-for-Stopping-High-Risk-Life-Sciences-Research_July-2026.pdf](#)

Questions may be directed to biosafety@uab.edu

Chemical Inventory News!

As part of our continued efforts to support laboratories in maintaining effective, accurate, and sustainable safety practices, Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) is implementing several updates to our laboratory safety inspection process and related documentation.

Changes to Annual Chemical Inventory Reconciliation Requirements

In recognition of the efforts made by laboratories to maintain accurate chemical inventories, Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) is updating the annual chemical inventory reconciliation process, effective immediately.

During Laboratory Safety Reviews, EH&S will assess inventory compliance using the following criteria: **Is the laboratory actively maintaining its chemical inventory in EHSA?**

EH&S personnel will verify this by:

- Spot-checking chemicals present in the laboratory against the inventory in EHSA.
- Reviewing recent inventory updates and activity within EHSA.

If actively maintaining inventory:

- Considered compliant with inventory requirements.
- No annual inventory reconciliation required.

If not actively maintaining inventory:

- A deficiency will be noted in the inspection report.
- Full inventory reconciliation required within the corrective action timeframe.

Hazardous Waste Container and Labeling Rules

Following UAB's recent ADEM inspection, please ensure all hazardous waste containers meet the following requirements:

- **Container condition:** Containers must be compatible with the waste and in good condition. Do not use containers with leaks, bulges, or damage.
- **Required wording:** All waste containers must be labeled with the words "Hazardous Waste."
- **Keep containers closed:** Containers must remain closed except when adding or removing waste. Use screw-type lids.
- **Use the UAB hazardous waste label:** Properly complete the [UAB Hazardous Waste Label](#), including the details shown below.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

University of Alabama at Birmingham | Start Date 05/20/2024
Occupational Health & Safety 4-2487 | Full Date _____

Accumulation start date:

The date you begin adding waste to this container.

Chemical Name (written in words)	% (approx.)
Acetone	60
Ethyl alcohol	30
Toluene	10

Chemical names written in words, not formulas:

List each hazardous chemical using its name (for example, "Acetone"), not a chemical formula (for example, " $(CH_3)_2CO$ ").

Approximate volume or weight percentage:

Estimate how much of each chemical is in the waste mixture. The total should add up to 100%.

Circle Primary Hazard

Flammable Reactive Corrosive Toxic Oxidizer

Primary hazard circled at the bottom of the label:

Identify the single most significant hazard of the waste mixture and circle it.

This helps others know the main risk when handling the container.

Please review your hazardous waste containers and correct any deficiencies to ensure compliance with these requirements.

Safe Science Webinar Series – Session 3

Managing Chemical and Biohazardous Waste



October 1st | 10:00 a.m.

Zoom Webinar

Learn practical strategies:

- How to determine what belongs in biohazardous waste versus hazardous chemical waste
- How to correctly package biohazardous waste to prevent leaks, exposures, and rejected pickups
- How to package hazardous chemical waste safely, including selecting compatible containers and preventing leaks or spills
- How to complete a hazardous chemical waste manifest in EHSA



Join the Webinar

Scan the QR code to add this session to your calendar and access the meeting.

Hosted by UAB Environmental Health & Safety

Partnering with you to support safe, compliant, and efficient research environments.

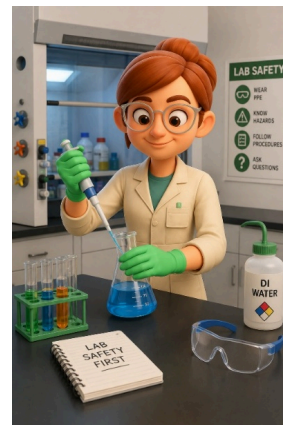
Laboratory Safety Workshop

Enhance Your Laboratory Safety Knowledge

Join EH&S for an upcoming Laboratory Safety Workshop designed for faculty, staff, researchers, laboratory managers, and students.

Topics may include:

- Hazard identification and risk assessment
- Chemical safety best practices
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Emergency preparedness and response
- Laboratory inspections and compliance



Date: Thursday, October 22, 2026

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Check in at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in CH19 (Press B in the elevator)

Registration:

1. Go to the [Laboratory Safety Workshop Course](#) in the Campus LMS
2. Click "Login with BlazerID"
3. Click the green "ENROLL" button

Whether you are new to the laboratory or an experienced researcher, this workshop offers valuable guidance and practical safety information.

Safety Reminder

No Food or Drinks in Labs

Food and drinks are not permitted in laboratory areas—including water.

Even when you are not actively working with chemicals or biological materials, lab areas can contain hazardous substances or contaminated surfaces that can transfer to food, drinks, or your hands.

- Keep **all food and beverages out of the lab**, including water bottles, coffee cups, and other drinks.
- Use designated break areas for eating and drinking.
- Do not store food or beverages in laboratory refrigerators, freezers, cabinets, or other lab storage areas.

Please leave all food and drinks outside the lab before you enter. A few extra steps can help prevent accidental exposure or contamination.

Thank you for your commitment to maintaining a safe, healthy, and compliant research environment at UAB.

UAB Environmental Health & Safety

Supporting Research. Promoting Compliance. Protecting People.

About Safety Shorts

Safety Shorts is a publication of UAB Environmental Health and Safety.

[Subscribe to Safety Shorts](#)

For more information contact:

Julie Gray

 grayj@uab.edu

 205-975-4341

UAB Powered by will.

How are we doing? Please take a minute to complete our survey:

<https://www.uab.edu/ehs/customer-survey>