

Fume Hood Safety

To maximize hood effectiveness and minimize personal exposure to toxic vapors or gases, use fume hoods in accordance with these operational guidelines:

- ***Operate the hood at the proper sash height***, as indicated on the EH&S profile sticker located on the front of the hood. For variable air volume or bypass hoods sash heights will not be posted.
- ***Reduce pedestrian traffic in front of hoods***. Also minimize nearby disturbances, such as doors opening or closing, and any quick motion in order to prevent cross drafts.
- ***Do not position fans or air conditioners so as to direct airflow across the face of the hood***. This can interfere with airflow and containment of hazardous chemicals.
- ***Do not block airfoil***: The airfoil provides airflow across the floor of the hood. If you use absorbent paper in the hood, do not block the airfoil.
- ***Side panels must not be removed***. Doing so will interfere with airflow and containment, as air will be brought into the hood from these openings.
- ***Place bulky equipment away from sidewalls*** to allow airflow around the equipment.
- ***Place any bulky equipment towards the rear of the hood*** and raise it about 2 inches off the surface with blocks or bricks, but do not place this equipment against the rear wall of the hood, as it will block airflow to the rear baffles.
- ***Work as far inside the hood as possible***, at least 4 to 6 inches from the front edge with ***the sash face between you*** and task at hand. All equipment should be a minimum of 9-12 inches away from the hood face.
- ***Keep sash face clean and clear***. To encourage use of sash as added protection against splashes, sprays, etc. keep sash face clean. If sash face must be blocked with paper for certain experiments, please take it down after the experiment is complete.
- ***Do not use the hood as a storage cabinet*** for chemicals or equipment. Materials stored in fume hoods should be kept to a minimum and stored in a manner that will not interfere with airflow.
- ***Place any heat-generating equipment in the rear of the hood***. Heating devices in the hood produce convection currents that can disrupt airflow.
- ***Do not use a hood for any function it was not designed for***, such as perchloric acid, radioisotopes, etc. The generation of perchloric acid vapors requires specially designed fume hoods with wash-down systems. Hoods used for radioisotopes must be approved by Radiation Control.
- ***Wear protective equipment!*** Fume hoods do not prevent accidents or chemical splashes.
- ***Close sash when finished*** with hood work or ***when leaving experiments or chemicals unattended!*** This simple procedure has contained many fires and explosions within a hood.