

Food and Beverages in the Lab

If food or beverages are being used for research purposes, they must be labeled, “For Experimental Use Only” or “Not for Human Consumption.” Food and beverages for human consumption cannot be stored in any laboratory refrigerator or consumed in a lab where chemicals, biological, and radioactive materials are kept.

Some labs wherein very few relatively non-hazardous materials are used (e.g. buffers, small amounts of ethanol, microscope immersion oil) may be given an exemption from the food/lab policy. Any consumption or storage of food or drink in a laboratory must be approved by Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S). This procedure is to be used to identify and authorize areas within a low-hazard laboratory for limited storage and consumption of food and drink.

1. Laboratory personnel must initiate the request for evaluation. Requests must include an up-to-date chemical inventory and identification of general activities to be conducted in the laboratory.
2. EH&S staff will evaluate the laboratory using the following criteria:
 - a. The food storage room or area must have appropriate storage cabinets or refrigerators and must have a hand-washing sink. The food storage and consumption area must be segregated from lab activities that use or generate any chemicals, biological materials, or radioactive materials.
 - b. Chemical use and storage must be minimal and stock amounts of radiological or biological materials must always be below regulatory levels. In accordance with National Research Council's Prudent Practices, no chemicals with an acute toxicity hazard identified as medium or high may be used or stored within the room if food storage or use is to be permitted.

| Hazard Rating | Toxicity Rating | Oral LD50 (Rats, per kg) | Skin Contact LD50 (Rabbits, per kg) | Inhalation LC50 (Rats, ppm for 1 h) | Inhalation LC50 (Rats, mg/m ³ for 1h) |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| High | Highly toxic | 50 mg | 200 mg | 200 mg | 2,000 |
| Medium | Moderately toxic | 50 to 500 mg | 200 mg to 1 g | 200 to 2,000 | 2,000 to 20,000 |
| Low | Slightly toxic | 500 mg to 5 g | 1 to 5 g | 2,000 to 20,000 | 20,000 to 200,000 |

Acute Toxicity Hazard Level
(pg. 59, Prudent Practices, 2011)

- c. The room shall be large enough with adequate counter/desk space to provide complete physical separation of the food area and laboratory use area.
- d. One sink shall be designated as sanitary use only (handwashing, dishwashing). The sanitary use sink shall be adjacent to the requested food use area and separated from

any hazardous material use. If a sink is needed for laboratory operations, a second sink must be available

- e. Ventilation in the room must be oriented such that general airflow is away from potential food areas.
 - f. Laboratory cleanliness must be maintained at a very high level to ensure no inadvertent contamination of laboratory and food areas.
 - g. EH&S will conduct periodic inspections of any authorized laboratories to ensure continued compliance.
3. EH&S will provide evaluation results to laboratory personnel. If the laboratory is approved, a laboratory posting describing the policy exemption will be provided to the lab.
 4. Reevaluation of designated areas may be conducted to ensure adequacy of the space, controls and minimal hazardous material use.
 5. EH&S can revoke the food and drink privileges for failure to maintain compliance with any of the above requirements.