

# SAFETY *GUIDE*



Environmental Health & Safety

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## Laboratory Safety During Utility Shutdowns

A utility shutdown can happen due to an adverse event or during scheduled maintenance. Depending on the scope of the shutdown, there are simple steps your can follow in order to ensure the safety of your laboratory and the people who work in it.



In the event of a water shutdown:

- Stop all procedures involving the use of hazardous materials and hazardous equipment (Bunsen burners, hot plates, etc). There may be no water available for emergency showers or eyewashes.
- Do not conduct work that requires the use of ice or water, such as cold baths or stills, and do not use equipment that uses running water (microscopes, DI-units, condensers, autoclaves).
- Turn off water valves to equipment within the lab. When the water is turned back on, sudden pressure change can cause damage to some equipment or loosen connections—this can lead to accidental flooding.
- Avoid bringing animals to the lab during a shut down if possible, but make sure all water containers are filled before the shutdown is scheduled.
- Restrooms may not be in service, as well as water fountains. Make sure your personnel know where the nearest available restrooms and potable water are during a shutdown.
- Loss of water may also affect heating within the building, so dress in layers accordingly.

For electricity shutdowns / power outages:

- Shut down all powered laboratory equipment. Follow the proper procedures according to laboratory instruction or manufacturer instructions to avoid damaging the equipment or losing valuable data
- If the power goes out during an operation, follow instructions on rendering the equipment safe for when power is restored. Turn off equipment switches, lasers, machinery, as instructed.
- Make sure your lab personnel are aware of any special shut down or return to service procedures for hazardous equipment.
- Avoid opening refrigerated equipment (refrigerators, freezers, cold rooms) as much as possible.

For Gas shutdowns:

- Close gas valves to all lab equipment.
- If you hear any gas or oxygen alarms when approaching the lab—DO NOT ENTER. Call UPD immediately 631-632-3333 (x333 from any campus landline phone)
- If you smell gas when first entering the lab, exit immediately and call UPD.

For operations that must continue during a shutdown—EHS can assist in conducting a hazard assessment for the operation(s)

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