

<b>University of Pittsburgh Safety Manual</b>	EH&S Guideline Number: <b>03-007</b>	
Subject: <b>LAB INSPECTIONS</b>	Effective Date: 03/01/2008 Review Date: 02/05/2026	Page 1 of 2

## LABORATORY SAFETY SURVEY PROGRAM

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) strives to support the core laboratory research and teaching mission of the University of Pittsburgh. EH&S manages a comprehensive laboratory inspection program to ensure that work within laboratories is occurring safely and in compliance with applicable laws, guidelines and University procedures. EH&S coordinates the inspection of University laboratories. Inspections are conducted for new investigators upon their arrival at the University.

Principal investigators (PI) are the key to research safety programs. The PI is responsible to train and supervise lab workers, and to ensure that the conduct of workers and research is compliant with safety and health standards. The lab inspection program aids the investigator in providing education and advice. The inspection focuses on ensuring:

- Workers are aware of the risks associated with the work in the lab, including animal hazards, physical hazards, biological hazards, and chemical hazards.
- Workers are trained on how to mitigate those risks, through facility design, engineering controls, safe work practices, and protective equipment.
- Workers comply with regulatory requirements, such as potential exposure to bloodborne pathogens or other infectious materials, and storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous chemicals

Specifically, the lab inspection covers the following items:

- Laboratory security
- Personnel training and documentation
- Laboratory safety design
- Hygiene and personal protective equipment
- Laboratory practices
- Sharps safety
- Chemical storage, handling, and disposal
- Spill and infection control
- Biological safety cabinets, fume hoods and other containment equipment
- Biological and chemical decontamination and waste disposal
- Animal experiments

The lab inspection process begins when the EH&S lab inspector contacts the PI to schedule the inspection. It is recommended, but not required, that the PI responsible for the laboratories accompany EH&S on the inspection. If the PI is not available, the individual accompanying EH&S on the inspection should be familiar with the work occurring in the laboratories. To prepare for the inspection, the EH&S laboratory inspector reviews the PI's Institutional Animal Care and Use (IACUC) protocols and recombinant DNA protocols to better understand the work occurring in the lab.

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EH&S utilizes a standardized laboratory inspection checklist during the inspection. The lab inspector visits the labs used by the PI, including shared laboratories, such as shared cell culture rooms. The lab inspector communicates recommendations verbally during the inspection. Concerns that require follow-up may be handled by the lab inspector or forwarded to other qualified EH&S staff.

An inspection report is sent to the PI and the lab contact shortly after the inspection. As necessary, copies of the reports are forwarded to the department chairperson, department chemical hygiene officer, and/or respective Dean. The report includes a summary of the work that is occurring in the PI's labs, as well as findings noted during the inspection.

On occasion, critical safety hazards are identified on laboratory inspections. In such cases, EH&S will perform a prompt follow-up, and seek or oversee corrective action. If a condition is identified as posing an imminent hazard to safety or health, the operation can be suspended by EH&S and the University's administration after consultation and approval by the Dean of that particular school, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences, or the Executive Vice Chancellor.

After the inspection, the lab inspector may return to the laboratory to verify that recommendations have been implemented and also provide additional follow-up for special projects, such as the use of safety engineered sharps devices. If the scope of the laboratory work changes significantly, such as an increase in the biosafety level of the laboratory, EH&S will conduct another inspection.

BSL-3 laboratories are inspected by the Biorisk Management Division.