

Introduction

Moving your lab to a new location? EHS offers guidance and assistance to make your move safer and less stressful. You and your laboratory team will need to do some preparation, but we promise it will make the moving process easier!

Lab moves present several potential hazards to researchers, graduate students, and the people who work and study in the affected building(s). Some are obvious - the hazards associated with lab chemicals or biological samples- but others are less evident such as the ergonomic hazards of moving large or bulky (not to mention expensive and delicate) lab equipment. To minimize moving issues, develop a moving plan to figure out what you have and what will be done with it (e.g., what needs to be moved, where things will go in your new space, how you will get rid of items you no longer need, and then set out packaging and moving your stuff).

Read through this document to get a feel for an organized moving process and use it as a checklist to proceed with your move safely. Contact Heather Coats at heather.coats@ttu.edu or 806-834-7716 with any questions.

Prior to Moving

1. **Inventory the lab space to be moved.** Assemble a current list of chemicals, samples, equipment, and furnishings.
 - a) **TTU EHS** can provide a current list of barcoded chemicals, radioactive sources, and lasers by room number.
 - b) **TTU Property Division** can provide an inventory of furnishings in each room.
 - c) Check with the **Building Manager** – they may have equipment inventories on file.
2. **Determine what will be moving to the new space and identify items that may require special transport considerations.** This is an opportunity to clear out unneeded chemicals, samples, and equipment. NOTE: requests to EHS to remove wastes or complete laboratory clean outs will be put on the waste pickup schedule; it may take some time to get the items moved out of your lab space so please plan ahead.
 - a) General - identify high hazard chemicals: compressed gases, toxic, shock-sensitive, pyrophoric, infectious biological materials, and radioactive items all require special handling during transport.
 - i. Your **DSO** can assist with this process as can **TTU EHS Lab Safety** personnel. [Find your DSO](#) or contact ehs.lab.safety@ttu.edu.
 - ii. NOTE: you and your laboratory team should not move high-hazard items.
 - b) Chemicals - identify old, expired or unneeded chemicals. Chemical containers that are compromised must have the contents transferred to a container in good condition. Chemicals that are older than five years old, show signs of degradation or are no longer needed should be disposed of.
 - i. Reuse: unused chemicals may be useful to others. Check with your department and provide **TTU EHS** with a list. If chemicals are transferred, the **receiving lab** should complete a [Chemical Transfer Form](#) to have their online inventory updated.
 - ii. Disposal: some chemicals and most hazardous wastes will have little use to other faculty or teaching labs. For normal amounts of routine waste,

submit a [Chemical Waste Request](#) to EHS; for larger amounts of chemicals, submit a [Lab Clean Out Evaluation](#) and **TTU EHS Environmental Protection** personnel will work with you to prepare and remove unwanted items.

- For compressed gas cylinders, follow the [Gas Cylinder Return](#) policy.
- b) Samples - identify unneeded samples for disposal and samples that might require special shipping considerations (biological hazards or radioactive).
 - i. Materials requiring disposal should be properly prepared for pick up and submitted for EHS pick up using the appropriate [Waste Request Form](#).
 - ii. Some samples may require environmental controls during transport such as placing cold items on dry ice in coolers. Ensure your cooler is not sealed completely to prevent over-pressurization and it is best practice to transport coolers in a well-ventilated manner (i.e., in the back of a pickup truck, on a cart between buildings (for short moves)).
- c) Equipment - identify what lab equipment will be moved and contact the manufacturer for transport and re-calibration requirements. Have dimensions for equipment on-hand to help map out the location of moved items in the new space.
 - i. Decontamination: Any potentially contaminated equipment must be cleaned with an appropriate disinfectant or cleaner prior to being removed from the laboratory.
 - ii. Recertification: Some equipment, such as biological safety cabinets require re-certification if moved (including within the same lab space). Find certification vendor information on the [Equipment Testing webpage](#).
 - iii. Reuse: some lab equipment may be useful to others. Check with your department and EHS to see if anything can be transferred to others.
 - iv. Disposal: if equipment is no longer useful, it must be decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant and disposed of. Contact ehs.lab.safety@ttu.edu for assistance determining appropriate disinfectant or cleaning procedure. Complete an [Equipment Decontamination Form](#) and get the item cleared by **TTU EHS Lab Safety** after submitting the [Equipment Clearance Request](#). Once cleared, you may then contact property.surplus@ttu.edu for pickup.
- d) Furnishings and other lab items - figure out what you want in the new space (and what will fit in that space) and surplus or dispose of items that will not make the move.
 - i. Reuse: some lab furnishings or lab gear may be useful to others or may be required to stay in the space (e.g., seating). Check with your department.
 - ii. Disposal: contact property.surplus@ttu.edu for pickup of unneeded items with a TTU inventory tag. Check with your department and/or building manager about what to do with untagged items.

3. Figure out where things will go in your new lab space.

- a) **TTU Facilities Inventory Manager** may be able to provide a floor plan of the new space.

- b) **TTU Building Manager** can provide access to the space so you can be sure that necessary hoods, storage cabinets, and power sources are available and operational.
 - c) **TTU EHS** can walk the space with you and ensure safe storage exists for the items you are transferring and ensure appropriate safety equipment is in place.
 - d) **Floorplan** - rough out a floor plan for items so that things get put in the right place on moving day. Use blue tape on the floor and lab benches to mark off areas for specific equipment or furnishings.
4. **Travel path:** look at your intended move route. Is this a short move across the hall or across campus? If vehicles will be needed to move your lab, it will be more complicated. Large items may require removal of doors or movement of common space furniture which will need to be coordinated with the **TTU Building Manager(s) of the effected buildings** and **TTU Operations Planning & Administration**.
 5. **Scheduling:** work with **TTU Building Managers** to ensure your move will not occur during scheduled building maintenance (like freight elevator repair) that may impact your plans. Check with **TTU Campus Police** for campus-wide events that may impact your ability to move between buildings. Finally, check with **TTU EHS** and let them know your intended move date and planned route.

Packing

Proper packing of items will minimize damage and loss during the move and will protect delicate lab equipment and prevent spills.

1. Chemicals
 - a) High hazard items
 - i. Compressed gases: only to be moved by vendors. Visit EHS [webpage](#) for vendor contact information to schedule.
 - ii. Shock-sensitive, dangerous when wet, pyrophoric, toxic chemicals: coordinate with **TTU EHS Lab Safety** for proper packaging of these items for shipment.
 - b) Segregate chemicals according to [storage group](#) and place in secondary containment. **TTU EHS** offers totes (secondary containment) and packaging materials for consolidating small chemical containers and drum dollies for larger drums. *Totes must be returned to EHS after move is complete.*
 - c) To ensure containers remain upright, pack small containers into secondary containment with non-reactive filler material like kitty litter.
2. Samples
3. Radioactive items
 - a) These should be moved under the supervision of the TTU EHS Radiation Safety Officer.
4. Equipment
 - a) Large or highly sensitive equipment should be packaged for movement by a company recommended by the manufacturer or distributor.

- b) For moves of large labs or moves requiring travel on roadways, EHS suggests using a professional moving company to pack items.¹
- c) Where possible, use original packaging for equipment.
- 5. Furnishings - similar to equipment, the use of a professional moving company may be best for larger or more distant lab moves.
 - a) Ensure moving parts of furnishings are removed or secured so they will not shift during transport.
 - b) Where possible, break down large items into pieces for easier and safer moving.
- 6. Other
 - d) Glassware – pack glassware with filler material such as bubble wrap or packing paper to prevent breakage during transport.

Transport

The big day! Your moving team should be appropriately attired for working in lab spaces (safety glasses, solid footwear, arms and legs covered). If moving potentially hazardous items or TTU equipment or furnishings on the road, use TTU vehicles or a third-party contractor rather than personal vehicles.

1. Briefing: since lab moves are uncommon activities, **TTU EHS** will deliver a safety briefing to your moving team (including contractors) prior to the move.
2. **TTU Operations Planning & Administration** offers assistance with small moves on campus. Submit a Work Order Request on the [Operations website](#) to obtain a quote and schedule. Should the need be greater than Operations can manage, a professional moving company will be recommended.
3. **TTU EHS** can provide a van and driver for chemicals and lift gate truck for bulky items.
4. **Tracking:** one lab team member should keep track of the inventory of items being moved and ensure that items are placed in appropriate locations in the new lab space.

Moving In

Whether the move was simply across the hall or if you are in a new building - congrats on the new digs! We know you are anxious to get unpacked and get back to work, but there is still some work to be done before hand. First, you will need to make sure that your old laboratory space is made ready for a new occupant with a bit of clean up and decontamination of the area to the extent it is required by your department / building manager. Second, you will need (re)evaluate the location(s) of safety equipment and fire alarms and review the building Emergency Action Plan (EAP) as it pertains to your new location. Lastly, update your WASP with this safety information (and any other information) pertinent to your new space.

1. **TTU EHS** and the **TTU Building Manager** can brief you and your research team on safety equipment and the EAP for the site. Do this as soon as possible.
2. Re-inventory your new space to ensure items ended up in the correct locations (including chemical/biological/radioactive materials).
 - a) If your team used EHS totes for transporting chemicals, work with your EHS move liaison to return totes.

¹ Professional Movers and Riggers has been identified as an option to move equipment and furnishings (**not chemical, biological or radioactive materials**). Phone is (806)-745-7671.

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3. Re-calibrate and/or re-certify your equipment and instrumentation.
4. Double-check your old lab space to make sure nothing was missed during the move.
5. Conduct a self-survey or invite **TTU EHS Lab Safety** to do a walk-through of your space to make sure you are starting off safely in your new space.
6. Request updated Door Signs for your new space(s) from **TTU EHS Lab Safety**.

If you see additional ways in which TTU can support lab moves, please contact safety@ttu.edu.

Contacts

TTU Property Division – property.surplus@ttu.edu

EHS – safety@ttu.edu, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ehs/>

EHS Lab Safety – ehs.lab.safety@ttu.edu

EHS Environmental Protection – ehs.environmental.safety@ttu.edu

TTU Operations – 742-4OPS, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/operations/> (to submit a Work Order – describe the need as a lab move and the locations involved and the request will be routed to the Planning & Administration division)