Standard Operating Procedure – Laboratory or Equipment Decommissioning

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I. SCOPE

The following procedure must be implemented by any principal investigator, researcher or instructor who is decommissioning a laboratory, laboratory area or laboratory equipment where chemicals, biological hazards, lasers and/or cannabis and are present. Decommissioning is required prior to leaving the University, relocating or renovating a laboratory. It is also required prior to relocating laboratory equipment or sending laboratory equipment for disposal, repair, maintenance or calibration.

Note: Refer to the Radiation Safety Manual Edition 7.0 for information on decommissioning a Radiation laboratory.

II. PURPOSE

For the purpose of this SOP decommissioning is defined as the administrative and technical actions taken to allow the removal of some or all the regulatory controls from a facility handling regulated hazardous materials. This SOP describes step-by-step procedures for decommissioning a laboratory. More information is available in the relevant EHS Safety Manuals listed below:

- General Lab Safety - http://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/laboratory/lab-safety-manual
- Biosafety - https://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/laboratory/biosafety
- Radiation Safety - https://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/laboratory/radiation/manual
- Laser Safety - http://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/laboratory/laser-safety/laser-safety-manual
- Cannabis and Controlled substances -

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

Department Chair or Designate

- Ensure Principal Investigators are aware of and compliant with the Laboratory and Equipment Decommissioning Standard Operating Procedure (this document).
- In the event of a project involving the decommissioning of laboratories or multiple PIs laboratories, the department will designate a responsible person to oversee the decommissioning.
- The department will absorb the cost of non-compliance with this Standard Operating Procedure, for example leaving the lab in a contaminated state or abandoning hazardous

materials and non-functional equipment.

Principal Investigator (PI) or Responsible Person

- Ensure compliance with the Laboratory or Equipment Decommissioning SOP (EHS-SOP-010).
- Communications as required with Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).
- Safely disposes of hazardous materials.
- Ensures hazardous materials under their authority are not abandoned.
- Ensures all equipment and surfaces are left in a condition that is safe for re-occupancy or removal from the laboratory, and affixes a "safe to remove" equipment tag (EHS-FORM-107)
- Ensures the staff performing the decommissioning have completed all hazard specific training as identified on the relevant hazard permits in myLab (https://mylab.mcgill.ca/ehsa/).
- In accordance with the federal regulatory bodies, maintains all documentation related to the laboratory or equipment decommissioning and provides documentation to the department prior to departure.
- Provides information to EHS to complete updates to their myLab account.
- Completes the Lab Decommissioning Checklist (EHS-FORM-085) and signs PI declaration at the end of the checklist.

Environmental Health and Safety

- Assigns an Environmental Health and Safety Officer to advise the lab occupants during the decommissioning process. The EHS Officer will be assigned based on the hazardous materials present in the laboratory.
- Act as subject matter expert where required to assist to determine the required steps for decommissioning.
- Inactivates or modifies the myLab, Chem, BIO and Laser permits as applicable.
- Issues a decommissioning letter once the decommissioning is complete.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Decommissioning: Removal of hazardous materials and decontamination of a laboratory. Following decommissioning the laboratory is not considered hazardous and there are no specialized entry requirements. A decommissioning can be:

- *Partial:* Where a portion of the laboratory is isolated and decommissioned. The rest of the laboratory remains open. Laboratory activities and storage of hazardous materials may continue in the section of the lab that is not decommissioned. Usually performed:
  - For a small renovation where arrangements can be made to isolate the renovation work from the laboratory activities
  - To remove an old piece of equipment
- *Complete:* Removal of all hazardous materials in a laboratory. Usually performed:
  - When a Principal Investigator vacates a laboratory
  - When a lab is closed for renovation
  - When a laboratory will no longer be used for handling hazardous materials
- *Equipment:* Removal of hazardous materials from a piece of equipment. Decommissioning equipment is required when:

- Sending out laboratory apparatus for repair or service
- Arranging on-site service
- Discarding unwanted equipment
- Moving furniture of equipment to a new location

V. PROCEDURES

5.1 Decommissioning

Partial and complete decommissioning follow the same basic procedure and documentation. For partial decommissioning it is necessary to describe the specific area or equipment to be decommissioned, and the method used to physically separate the areas within the laboratory that have been decommissioned from the area where hazards are still being handled.

EHS must be notified of any partial or complete decommissioning to ensure that all permit information in myLab is updated.

Note: If it is not possible to adequately seal the areas for partial decommissioning, a full decommissioning will be required.

5.1.1 Assess decommissioning requirements

1. In advance of the decommissioning date (~ 4 weeks), inform EHS of the need to decommission through the EHS JIRA Service Portal (https://hrservicedesk.mcgill.ca/servicedesk/customer/portal/16/user/login?destination=portal%2F16) and select "Laboratory Safety" option. Complete all required fields, some guidelines are listed below:
    a. Raise this request on behalf of – The request must be made in the name of the PI responsible for the laboratory. A request can be made by anyone, and they can select the PI (use the McGill email address to find the correct person). Additional names can be added by EHS once the JIRA ticket has been created
    b. Laboratory Safety Type – Select "*Decommissioning*"
    c. Description – provide a brief description of the scope and purpose of the decommissioning and list any personnel who will be assisting with the decommissioning
    d. An EHS Officer is assigned in JIRA to oversee the decommissioning.
2. Identify the hazardous materials, areas, equipment and any other materials that need to be decommissioned using the Decommissioning checklist (EHS-FORM-085). EHS can assist as required.
3. Co-ordinate with Hazardous Waste Management for the removal of hazardous materials and waste. Refer to the Hazardous Waste Management website for disposal guidelines.

Note: The PI as identified on the Permit for handling hazardous materials is responsible for ensuring that all hazards are managed appropriately during the decommissioning. The PI can delegate responsibility to qualified laboratory personnel to assist with the decommissioning. The PI must sign the final documentation. If the PI is unavailable the Chair of the Department must sign on their behalf.

5.1.2 Removal of Hazardous Materials from the laboratory

1. Cease work involving hazardous materials.
2. Wear a lab coat and disposable gloves while handling hazardous materials or potentially contaminated equipment.
3. Remove/transfer and/or dispose of all hazardous materials in accordance with McGill procedures.
4. Remove or deface all hazardous materials warning signs, including but not limited to:
    a. Laboratory Information Card
    b. WHMIS Pictograms and storage labels
    c. Radiation warning labels
    d. Biohazardous Materials warning signs
    e. Laser warning signs
5. Ensure all equipment to be removed from the laboratory has been decontaminated as per S*ection 5.3 - Equipment Decontamination*.

5.1.3 EHS verification

1. Following receipt of the completed Decommissioning Checklist (EHS-FORM-085) EHS will complete a walk-through with the PI or a designate to verify all hazards have been removed or safely stored and all hazard signage has been removed.
2. The EHS Officer responsible for the ticket will issue a Decommissioning Letter (EHS-FORM-088) to the PI. The EHS Director and all relevant stakeholders will be copied (i.e. Department Safety Chair, Project Management, etc.) on the Decommissioning Letter.
3. At the decommissioning visit an EHS Officer will note any deficiencies in the physical space that must be addressed if a laboratory is to be assigned to a new PI. These deficiencies will be noted in the Decommissioning Letter and noted in the JIRA ticket. Deficiencies must be addressed before EHS approves a new PI in the laboratory.

5.1.4 Administrative steps

1. Final signed copies of all documentation are attached to the JIRA ticket
2. EHS terminates or transfers hazardous materials to new permits in myLab following all official procedures for the specific hazard type.
    a. CHEM permit – email mylab.ehs@mcgill.ca
    b. BIO Permit – May require amendment following instructions on the EHS website (www.mcgill.ca/ehs/biosafety/biosafety-application).
    c. Laser –
    d. Cannabis & Controlled Substances –
3. The JIRA reference number is included in the comments section of the permit termination.

5.2 Equipment Decontamination

1. Identify the types of hazardous materials that have come into contact with the equipment to be decontaminated.
2. Review the information provided by the manufacturer to determine the process for decontaminating the equipment. The procedure should consider the manufacturers' recommendations and the types of hazardous materials present. Document the procedure used on the Equipment Decontamination Report (EHS-FORM-037).
3. The Principal Investigator or Owner of the Equipment must sign to certify that the

equipment has been decontaminated.

4. Once the equipment has been decontaminated, a Safe to Remove Tag (EHS-FORM-107) must be placed on the equipment.
5. For equipment decontaminated during the complete or partial decommissioning of a laboratory the Equipment Decontamination Reports (EHS-FORM-037) must be provided to EHS with the Lab Decommissioning Checklist (EHS-FORM-085).

VI. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Decommissioning documents are available on the EHS website:
https://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/forms/forms/lab-decommissioning-documents

- EHS-FORM-037 – Equipment Decontamination Report
- EHS-FORM-085 – Lab Decommissioning Checklist
- EHS-FORM-088 – Decommissioning Letter for Lab
- EHS-FORM-107 – Safe to Remove tag

VII. REFERENCES

- Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Biosafety Standards, 3rd edition.(2022).
- Public Health Agency of Canada, *CanadianBiosafety Handbook* (2015).
- McGill Hazardous waste disposal guidelines: www.mcgill.ca/hwm/guidelines
- McGill Laboratory Safety Manual: https://mcgill.ca/ehs/laboratory/lab-safety-manual
- McGill Biosafety Manual: https://mcgill.ca/ehs/files/ehs/biosafety_manual_ehs-sman-001_v1.1.pdf

VIII. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change/Amendment
1.0	4-Jul-12	Joseph Vincelli	Initial SOP
2.0	23-Sep-20	Joseph Vincelli	Update SOP template, define responsibilities, add references & set a timeline for decommissioning activities.
3.0	23-May-25	EHS Team	Add Definitions Section – defines types of decommissionings Clarify process following experiences with the decommissioning process Add Cannabis and Controlled Substances options Update administrative processes to remove HEAT and add JIRA