**Dos & Don’ts of Fume Hood Operation**

In a laboratory, the fume hood is the primary control device for protecting workers using flammable and/or toxic chemicals. OSHA’s laboratory standard (29 CFR 1910.1450) requires that fume hoods be maintained and function properly when used.

**Do**
- Ensure that the hood is on and the airflow is within the required range.
- Know the chemicals you are working with and consult MSDS if you are unsure.
- Make sure the sash is at the proper level – this should be at 18” or less and can be determined by an arrow.
- Be certain to use proper personal protective equipment, including eye protection, when working in the fume hood.
- Elevate large pieces of equipment, such as centrifuges, at least 2 inches above the base of the hood interior to prevent airflow blockages.
- Keep all materials inside the hood at least 6 inches from the sash opening.
- Place heat generating equipment near the rear of the hood. Heat generating equipment, such as hot plates or Bunsen burners, can generate undesirable air currents that can disrupt airflow.
- Notify your lab’s manager or health and safety officer if any hood is not functioning properly. Halftimbering equipment should be unused until repairs can be completed.

**Don’t**
- Operate the fume hood without proper training.
- Place your head inside the hood.
- Block the airflow through the baffles or through the baffle exhaust slots.
- Permanently store chemicals within the hood.
- Block the airflow. Large fans can absorbent paper on the floor of the hood can create and block the sash. This can be a deadly procedure that can conceal anyone and explode within a hood.
- Position fans or air conditioners so as to direct airflow across the face of the hood. This can interfere with airflow and chemical containment.
- Remove the side panels. Removal of the side panels will block the airflow and disrupt chemical containment. It is dangerous to operate a fume hood in this condition.
- Make certain that you understand your lab’s emergency action plan, especially when working with very hazardous chemicals.
- Use a hood for any function it was not designed for, such as perchloric acid or radioisotopes.

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