

# Hurricane Preparations for Laboratories

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Laboratory Personnel

**FROM:** Kenneth P. Capezzuto, Executive Director  
Office of Environmental Health & Safety

**DATE:** May 31, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Hurricane Preparations for Laboratories

When a hurricane threatens, time for preparation may not be available, therefore, the Principal Investigator and/or laboratory director should perform advance planning and preparation appropriate to the specific needs of that laboratory. Current Emergency Preparedness information for the University can always be found at <http://www.miami.edu/prepare>. It is recommended that the [Disaster Plan](#) be reviewed, particularly the section on **Unit Level Preparations**, which addresses matters requiring consideration when developing a plan specific to that laboratory. Additional general information regarding the handling and storage of chemicals and biological agents may be found in the [Laboratory Safety Manual](#). The following recommendations are intended to minimize the damage resulting from a hurricane should the integrity of the laboratory structure be compromised.

### EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND DOCUMENTS

1. Secure computers and other laboratory equipment.
2. Back up key data and store off site.
3. Move desks, file cabinets, and equipment away from windows. Store as much equipment as possible in closets or in windowless rooms away from external walls. **DO NOT STORE ITEMS IN CORRIDORS.**
4. Remove all items from window ledges.
5. Protect books, valuable papers, and equipment by covering with plastic sheeting secured with duct tape.
6. Disconnect all electrical equipment, except refrigerators and freezers. Refrigerators and freezers should be left **ON** at the coldest setting.

### CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

7. If applicable, consider sending critical samples out of the area through pre-existing arrangements with bio-repositories and non-local collaborators/colleagues. If you do not currently have any arrangements, you

may establish such through a University-approved vendor such as [Kryosphere](#), [Novare](#), or [Fisher Bioservices](#). If you need special facility needs contact Facilities at 305-243-6375.

8. Clean all laboratory benches as completely as practical.
9. Confirm the spill control kit is stocked and its location marked.
10. Store chemicals and biological agents in isolated and windowless rooms. If an isolated windowless room is not available, store chemicals in cabinets or closets that can be locked or secured. Use care when handling and storing chemicals to avoid an accidental release. Chemicals should be segregated based on their compatibility.

For further information on these guidelines, contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at 305-243-3400.

