

SRC Facilities Pre-start Health and Safety Checklist

The following checklist is to be used as a guideline for supervisors to prepare for and manage re-entry to SRC spaces as part of Ryerson University's re-opening protocol.

Additional measures have been included as a reminder to incorporate the general public health directives imposed on all workplaces by the federal and provincial public health agencies.

Prior to Resumption of Activities

I. Facilities Management Inspection

1. Upon approval of your Request for SRC Facility Access Form by your chair or director, dean, and VPRI, Facilities Management and Development ("Facilities") will inspect the spaces to ensure mechanical and electrical systems are running and functioning properly, drains will be primed and water flushed in sinks and emergency showers. A general cleaning of sinks, dusting and mopping of the floors and wipe down of obstruction-free benches and desks will be conducted.

Equipment and countertops will not be touched and researchers should mark any additional sensitive areas with a sign indicating "Do Not Touch".

II. PPE, Cleaning Supplies, and Other Laboratory Consumables

1. Assess stock of mandatory PPE for general lab practices (gloves, face masks/shields, safety glasses/goggles, coveralls/isolation gowns). Work with your department chair or school director to complete the Ryerson PPE Procurement Form to ensure supplies have been ordered to be on hand to undertake your proposed research, or to resupply any that may have been donated during the shut down.
2. Order any disinfectants or cleaners (10% bleach or 70% ethanol are suitable) that might be required for cleaning and disinfection of high-use areas, as well as areas not cleaned by custodial services or housekeeping (e.g. countertops in laboratories, equipment, etc.)
3. Ensure routine laboratory consumables (plastics, media/reagents, materials, chemicals, etc.) are ordered for intended SRC activities through the normal purchasing process. Consider any recurring orders that may have been cancelled or paused during the shutdown.

Upon Re-entry

When re-entering the SRC space after a temporary shutdown or extended closure, enter with a sense of caution.

I. General Laboratory Checklist

1. Do a quick visual by looking up to the ceiling and around the wall area looking for signs of water leakage or other damage, note any unusual odours that would not be directly associated with the space having no occupancy for a long period of time.
2. Check whether any materials may have been damaged.
3. Check all rubber tubing before connecting to glassware as they may have dried out and cracked. Replace as necessary.
4. Check all electrical equipment that remained plugged in during closure (incubators, freezers, fridges etc.) to ensure they are at the appropriate temperatures, pressures and settings.
5. Check fire extinguishers to ensure clear access and arrow indicates ready for use.
6. Flush eyewash station: flush for 3-5 minutes noting clarity of water, appropriate temperature and pressure. Review section [7.0 of the emergency eyewash and shower SOP](#) for full inspection requirements.
7. Check compressed gas cylinders for any evidence of leakage.
8. Check and verify any gas shut off lines are returned to normal operational status.
9. Confirm local exhaust hoods (eg., fume hoods, biosafety cabinets, laminar flow hood and exhaust arms/snorkels) are functioning with appropriate draw where indicated. Verify that the annual inspection or service date has not expired.
10. Check hazardous material storage: open cabinets and complete a visual inspection ensuring integrity of containers has not been compromised.
11. Assess chemicals that may have become unstable during the shut down and manage any expired, outdated, peroxide-forming, self-reactive, or other reagents with a limited lifespan appropriately. *Do not touch these chemicals* (potential peroxide formers). Also, look for chemical containers that are bulging or have imploded. Submit a chemical waste pick up for chemicals in these categories.
12. Check soap dispensers and ensure they have adequate content and are working properly.

Operational checklist

1. Prepare for supply chain disruptions and limited availability of materials.
2. Review equipment manuals for safe startup instructions.
3. Review equipment state and safely release or mitigate any stored up energy sources.
4. Review start-up procedures for any compressed gas cylinders, gas generation station, and/or gas distribution systems

II. Training and Education

1. Ensure safety training has been completed for all authorized users and training certificates are not expired (eg., radiation safety, biosafety). Visit the [mandatory EHS Training](#) webpage for information on training requirements.
2. Ensure returning lab users are refamiliarized with general and standard operating procedures related to equipment operation, processes and protocols.

III. COVID-19 Precautions

Communicate infection prevention and control on proper hand hygiene, physical distancing and cleaning and disinfection. Provide all returning users and occupants with the following information:

a) Everyday actions:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Sneeze and cough into a tissue or your sleeve and dispose of tissue immediately and wash your hands (respiratory etiquette)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are sick

Ministry of Health and Long Term Care [everyday action poster](#)

b) Hand hygiene

In addition to the everyday actions above, ensure the following:

- When entering and before leaving the space, wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Dry your hands with a paper towel, or with your own cloth towel that no one else shares

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with a minimum alcohol content of 60% or greater) if soap and water are not available

Public Health Agency of Canada [hand hygiene poster](#)

c) Physical distancing in a SRC space

Physical distancing does not replace the normal requirement for wearing PPE in the laboratory e.g. safety glasses, lab coat, gloves.

- Physical distancing within labs should be implemented to the extent possible (i.e. maintain a 2 metre distance between individuals in the lab).
- Limit the number of individuals in a space at any one time.
- If needed, implement alternating work schedules to meet the demands of the laboratory while limiting close contact with others to ensure the safety of colleagues.

Public Health Agency of Canada [physical distancing guidelines and resources](#)

d) Cleaning and disinfection recommendations

There are a number of guidelines that labs should be aware of when performing routine and more frequent cleaning:

- Disinfect common areas and high-touched surfaces (e.g. door knobs, sink handles, freezer doors, fume hood sashes, phones) more frequently with disinfectant using proper cleaning materials such as paper towels.
- 10% bleach in water is an approved disinfectant.
- Although 70% ethanol is not recommended for all surfaces, it may be appropriate for electronics and other delicate surfaces.
- Not all products with the name “Lysol” or “Clorox” are necessarily effective against Coronaviruses. Follow the Public Health Agency of Canada’s [guidelines for hard surface disinfectants](#) to be used for COVID-19.
- Never mix cleaning chemicals together, especially with bleach. Remember to properly label cleaning supplies and store them accordingly.

e) Additional cleaning considerations

Locations and equipment with a high frequency of handling and contact represent a higher probability of viral loading in the work area and should be considered as part of more frequent cleaning. Common surfaces and equipment should be wiped down at the beginning of use and before the end of use on a given day, or before use by another individual.

Before returning to work, managers should identify high-touch locations and equipment specific to each space. Examples include:

- Benchtops
- Equipment handles, latches, controls and touchpads
- Drawer and cabinet handles
- Bin and water incubator lids
- Hand tools
- Micro-pipettes and other shared tools
- Faucet handles and sprayer grips
- Baskets, bins, trays, etc.
- Exteriors of shared chemical bottles and caps
- Chair backs and armrests
- Pens, whiteboard markers, etc.

f) Personal protective equipment (PPE) considerations

Regular PPE that is required based on safe lab practices (use of lab coat, gloves, closed-toed shoes, safety glasses, etc.) is different from PPE that may be considered during COVID-19.

Primary controls for COVID-19 infection prevention and control (physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and surface disinfection) should be implemented before considering additional PPE as a control strategy. In the event that these controls can not be maintained in your workplace, as a last resort, additional PPE may be necessary. PPE is only effective if people wear it correctly and understand the proper use, handling, maintenance, cleaning and limitations. Training on PPE includes the fit, use, care, as well as donning and doffing of the PPE.

For faculty who are contemplating providing PPE to personnel, there are government websites they can go to for additional info:

- [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#)
- [Health Canada Specifications for COVID-19 Products](#)

Before additional PPE is considered, contact EHS at ehs@ryerson.ca for consultation.