

# Stanford University - Cold Room Work Practices

oper work practices within cold rooms are essential to ensure clean and safe research environments. Bad work practices can significantly impact the quality of research projects in the following ways:

- ***Mold growth on cold room surfaces*** – Unabated mold growth may lead to mycological contamination of research experiments. Spores can also be tracked out of the room and around the entire floor of the building.
- ***Chemical health and safety issues*** – Improper chemical storage and/or use in cold rooms may result in safety and health issues (e.g., electrical, fire, chemical exposure).
- ***Structural compromise*** – Moisture or spilled chemicals may lead to rust, corrosion or degradation of cold room integrity (e.g., shelves, walls).

## **PREVENTING MOLD GROWTH**

Controlling room water condensation/ moisture and promptly disposing of wet or damp organic materials (e.g., paper products, cardboard, miscellaneous trash, etc.) are main keys to preventing mold growth.

- **Promptly clean up spilled laboratory liquids (e.g., buffers).**
- **Report any facilities leaks from plumbing, etc. to Engineering and Maintenance (3-5555).**
- **Store paper products (e.g., Kim wipes) in a closed plastic container.**
- **Use wet methods (e.g., damp cloth with disinfectant), rather than sweeping, dusting, or brushing to clean up existing mold. Remove excess water.**
- **Keep door firmly shut – if left open, water condensation increases due to high relative humidity, promoting mold growth.**

## **SAFE CHEMICAL USE/ STORAGE**

**Avoid use or storage of the following within cold rooms:**

- ***Hazardous chemicals*** (e.g., carcinogens) – most cold rooms have closed air circulation, so chemicals are not exhausted properly resulting in potential personnel exposures.
- ***Volatile flammable solvents*** – exposed motors for circulation fans are potential ignition sources.
- ***Volatile acids*** – can corrode cooling coils in refrigeration system, leading to leaks.

**Prohibited Activities - storage of the following materials is strictly forbidden:**

- ***Asphyxiants*** (e.g., compressed gasses such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen) – hazard if there were a release.
- ***Food or beverage*** – can become contaminated by chemicals, biological organisms or other toxic materials.

**Report any unresolved facilities problems to Birgit Walker @ 725-8388.**

**Report health and safety concerns to Som Health and Safety Programs Office @ 723-0110.**