Departmental Procedure

Guidelines for Laundering Lab Coats

In-house laundering or use of a laundry service vendor

OSU Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) requires that "protective clothing (PPE) must be worn while working with hazardous materials. To avoid cross contamination, laboratory coats should be properly stored in a designated space without stacking. Disposable PPE must be discarded properly after use. **Reusable PPE (i.e., laboratory coats) must be laundered professionally or onsite and shall not be taken home by personnel**. If sent offsite for laundering, it must be properly bagged, and the laundry facility must be notified of potential contaminants."

Laundering of lab coats is the responsibility of each faculty member or laboratory manager/supervisor that oversees a laboratory within the Department of Food Science and Technology (FST). To ensure cleanliness, lab coats must be washed on a regular basis with washing intervals not normally to exceed once per month. For heavy use, a weekly wash schedule is recommended; for less frequent use, washing should be completed biweekly.

In the course of working in an FST laboratory or pilot plant, there exists a potential to contaminate one's lab coat. This contamination may be from food and beverage soils or biological or chemical materials. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide guidance on routine cleaning of lab coats and how to handle lab coats after contamination. The information is contaminate-material specific (food/beverage, biological, chemical, or mixed).

Use minimal handling and agitation to remove potentially contaminated lab coats. There should be minimal risk for street clothes to become contaminated if proper PPE is worn. However, should street clothes become contaminated, the following guidelines may also apply.

Chemical Guidelines

- If a substantial chemical spill occurs on a reusable lab coat or if the spilled material is highly toxic, corrosive, or persistent (non-evaporating), the lab coat must be discarded according to hazardous waste disposal procedures. Coordinate with OSU EHS to dispose of the lab coat as hazardous waste.
- Coats that should be discarded include those that are still wet with contaminants; contaminated with volatile carcinogens, teratogens, or toxic materials with an LD50 < 50mg/kg; contaminated with a strong smell of chemicals; contaminated with materials that permeate nitrile gloves; or contaminated with large amounts of concentrated acids or corrosives.
- If the spill does not meet any of the above conditions, the coat may be washed and reused according to the procedures detailed in this document.

Biosafety Guidelines

- In the event of a known or suspected contamination from ANY biological agent (regardless of risk group assessment level or biosafety lab level), all contaminated clothing and lab coat must be decontaminated by disinfection or autoclaving before laundering. Clothing potentially contaminated with microorganisms in spore form must be autoclaved.
- If using disinfection as a means of decontamination, treat area of contamination and the surrounding area with an appropriate disinfectant at label-specified dilution and contact time.

- If autoclaving, use the autoclave's GRAVITY CYCLE, fold the lab coat, tape with autoclave tape, and place the lab coat in a tray inside the autoclave. Do not put water in the tray with the lab coat. Rather, place a second tray containing water into the autoclave.
- Autoclave tape will not be provided by the department and is the responsibility of each principal investigator (PI).
- Do not autoclave biologically contaminated lab coats that are also contaminated with a highly toxic, corrosive, or persistent chemical. Coordinate with OSU EHS to dispose of the lab coat as hazardous waste.
- After clothing is decontaminated (by disinfection or autoclaving), proceed with routine laundering.

In-house Laundering

- In-house laundering of laboratory owned lab coats is available via a washer and dryer located in Parker 071T. A G61A-16, G61A-2, or G61A-4 key is required for entry, and the room should remain locked at all times.
- If you are interested in washing other types of reusable items, contact the FST Safety Coordinator to identify a solution.
- Each lab is responsible for reserving the washer and dryer using the FST Laundry Room Calendar in Microsoft Outlook. To view the calendar for availability, select +FAES FS 071T Laundry Room from your list of rooms in Outlook. **To request a reservation, create a meeting on your Outlook calendar and set the location to +FAES FS 071T Laundry Room**. Reservations should be made for 3-hours. Contact the FST Safety Coordinator if you have difficulty accessing the calendar or if you would like to establish a routine/recurring reservation.
- HE Liquid detergent, dryer sheets, and bleach (for the washer's SELF CLEAN cycle) will be provided by the department. Contact the FST Safety Coordinator if any of these items are in low supply.
- Other consumables such as bags and special detergents will not be provided by the department and are the responsibility of each PI.
- Laundering may be delegated to an appropriate member of each laboratory (undergraduate student, graduate student, or staff). If a PI needs assistance, the PI must communicate laundering needs to the FST Safety Coordinator who will work with the PI to identify solutions.
- The PI or their delegate must transport the coats to and from the laundry room. All coats should be properly bagged and labeled with the PI's name and lab location to avoid confusion.
- The PI or designee is responsible for routine care and cleaning of the washer and dryer according to the manufacturer's instructions (owner's manuals for the washer and dryer are available in the laundry room).

1. All lab coats must be washed using the SANITIZE + ALLERGEN wash cycle.
   a. Loosely add garments into the washer and close the door.
   b. Press the POWER button or turn the cycle selection knob if the display screen is dark.
   c. Turn the knob to select the SANITIZE + ALLERGEN wash cycle.
   d. Open the dispenser and add HE detergent to the detergent compartment as instructed on the detergent's label. Gently, close the dispenser.
   e. Press the START button to begin the wash cycle. The door will lock, and the machine will weigh your coats and add the proper amount of water. When the wash cycle is finished, the door will unlock.
   f. After the wash cycle is completed and the garments have been unloaded, close the door and select ULTRAFRESH VENT to help eliminate excess moisture in the washer.
2. Loads must be segregated based on use (i.e., lab coats worn in food grade labs must be washed independently from lab coats worn in BSL-1 labs).
3. All BSL-1 or BSL-2 wash cycles must be followed by a SELF CLEAN cycle.
   a. Remove any garments or objects from the washer and ensure the washer basket is empty.

   b. Open the washer door and pour one cup (250 ml) of liquid bleach or other washing machine cleaner into the basket.
   c. Close the door and select the SELF CLEAN cycle. Push the START button.
   d. When the SELF CLEAN cycle is working, the display will show the estimated cycle time remaining. The cycle will complete in about 90 minutes. Do not interrupt the cycle.
   e. After the cycle is complete, the washer will automatically start an ULTRAFRESH VENT operation so that the door can remain closed until the next time you use the washer. After the completion of a SELF CLEAN cycle, the interior of the washer may have a bleach smell.
4. Once a wash cycle is complete, promptly remove the load and transport the coats to your laboratory to air dry or transfer to the dryer and initiate a COTTONS dry cycle.
   a. Inspect and clean the lint filter, loosely add garments, and close the door.
   b. Press the POWER button if the display screen is dark.
   c. Select the COTTONS dry cycle. Push the START button.
   d. After the cycle is complete, check to make sure the load is dry, clean the lint filter, and transport the garments to your laboratory.

SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR FURTHER OPERATIONAL DETAILS.

Use of a laundry service vendor

- Impressed Dry Cleaning is the university's preferred local laundry services vendor for routine laundering of reusable lab coats. If you choose to utilize a laundry service vendor, do not use a local dry cleaner that does not specialize in lab coats as they generally are not familiar with proper handling of potentially contaminated items. Contact the supplier account contact (information below) to inquire about laundering procedures and cost, and ensure they understand the possible contamination that may be on lab coats from your lab.

  Ronald Williams, Owner
  Phone: 614-855-8847
  Mobile: 614-704-2470
  Email: ronald@impresseddrycleaning.com