University at Buffalo

Checklist for Safe Use of Biological Safety Cabinets

**Preparing for Work in a BSC:**

* Put on PPE.
* Turn UV light OFF (if used).
* Turn fluorescent light ON.
* Turn the cabinet ON, allow it to run for 4 minutes (or Manufacturer’s recommended time) to purge the BSC of particulates. Some cabinets may alarm until purge is complete.
* Verify proper sash height and that sash alarm is ON.
* Verify drain valve underneath the cabinet is closed (valve handle is perpendicular to valve body).
* Check cabinet’s certiﬁcation sticker expiration date is within 1 year.
* Check the pressure differential gauge reading (if present), compare it against the calibration set point.
* Decontaminate all surfaces of the cabinet.
* Collect all materials needed for the work.

**Use of a BSC:**

* Place absorbent plastic-backed material to protect the work surface, if required.
* Decontaminate the external surfaces of any equipment or supplies that you will need to place in the BSC.
* Place materials as far back in the cabinet as practical without blocking front and rear grilles.
* Separate clean/sterile items from dirty/potential contaminated items inside the BSC.
* Work from clean to dirty to minimize cross-contamination.
* One person at a time should work in a cabinet.
* Move your arms slowly in and out of the BSC. Do not move arms in sweeping, sideways movements.
* Do not use open flame.
* Adjust the stool/bench height so your face is above the bottom of the sash and your arms enter the cabinet with elbows at 90° angles, armpits level with the bottom of the sash. Use a foot rest if your feet do not touch the floor.
* Discard all waste in a biohazard bag **inside** of the BSC.

**After Completing Work in a BSC:**

* Do NOT turn cabinet OFF while removing items and decontaminating the cabinet.
* Close and surface decontaminate ALL containers and lab materials before removal.
* Surface decontaminate the exterior of the biohazard waste bag/container before removal and disposal.
* Decontaminate cabinet interior, including sidewalls, back wall, inside of sash and work surface.
* Remove the gloves you were using in the BSC and dispose of them as Regulated Medical Waste.
* Turn fluorescent light and blower motor switches OFF.
* Turn UV light ON. Keep the sash closed while the UV light is on.
* Wash your hands.

Questions?

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