



## Syracuse University Environmental Health and Safety Services Decommissioning a Laboratory Refrigerator/Freezer

This guidance document provides information to assist laboratory personnel in properly disposing of laboratory refrigerators/freezers used to store chemicals and other hazardous materials. Prior to disposal, laboratory personnel must empty and clean the refrigerator/freezer, and then arrange to have Syracuse University Physical Plant evacuate (remove) the refrigerator/freezer's refrigerant. Refrigerants contain chemicals like chlorofluorohydrocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) which degrade the protective ozone layer in the stratosphere. The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires that the refrigerant be removed from the refrigerator/freezer by a certified refrigeration technician prior to disposal.

### Decommissioning Procedures

*If the refrigerator was used to store radioactive materials, contact EHSS at [EHSS@syr.edu](mailto:EHSS@syr.edu) or 315-443-4132 for assistance prior to decommissioning the refrigerator/freezer.*

- Remove all material from the refrigerator/freezer. Properly relocate any material that is to be maintained for future use in the laboratory.
- Dispose of all biological or chemical material that is expired, leaking, no longer has beneficial use, or is inherently waste-like:
  - Carefully label each container to be disposed with a hazardous waste label, and place the labeled container into the closest Satellite Accumulation Area (SAA).
  - Contact EHSS for a pickup of the waste at either
    - 315-443-4132, or
    - Complete a service request via <http://ehss.syr.edu/about/request-for-service>
- If contamination or staining is present in the refrigerator/freezer and the material(s) that caused the contamination/staining is **known**:
  - Determine the appropriate protocol and personal protective equipment (PPE) to use to clean up the materials(s) which caused the contamination/staining.
  - Using the appropriate PPE and protocols, carefully clean the contamination/stain.
  - If the refrigerator/freezer was used to store infectious materials, clean the inside of the refrigerator/freezer with a disinfectant.
  - Bag all waste cleaning materials, label the bag with a hazardous waste label, and put the bag in the closest Satellite Accumulation Area (SAA).
  - Contact EHSS for a pickup of the waste at either
    - 315-443-4132, or
    - Complete a service request via <http://ehss.syr.edu/about/request-for-service>
- If contamination or staining is present in the refrigerator/freezer and the material(s) causing the contamination/staining is **not known**, contact EHSS to determine the proper course of action.
- If there is no contamination or staining present in the refrigerator/freezer, wipe down the inside of the refrigerator/freezer with an all-purpose cleaner.
- After the refrigerator/freezer is emptied and cleaned, contact Physical Plant to request to have the refrigerant evacuated from the system by certified Physical Plant personnel. The refrigerant should be evacuated before the refrigerator/freezer is removed from the laboratory space.
  - Complete a service request via <http://facilities.syr.edu/physical-plant-request-form/>

