

October 25, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Texas A&M University Faculty and Laboratory Staff

FROM: Dr. Richard E. Ewing  
Vice President for Research & Associate Provost

SUBJECT: University Research Facilities and Laboratories Security

In light of the recent acts of terrorism in our nation, it is necessary that the Texas A&M research community review the security of Texas A&M's research facilities and laboratories. While the University, and the Nation, consider possible long-term security and safety measures, we believe this is an appropriate time to examine, reinforce, and/or increase existing security measures across our campus. The actions that need to be taken at this time result from an assessment by the Office of the Vice President for Research, which is under my purview; the Environmental Health and Safety Department, which reports to Vice President for Finance and Controller William B. Krumm; and the University Police Department, which reports to Vice President for Administration Charles A. Sippial, Jr.

With that in mind, attached (at the conclusion of this memo) is a suggested Laboratory Plan to aid in your review of security procedures in your colleges' facilities and/or laboratories. These actions should be implemented immediately, as appropriate, in all University facilities and laboratories where hazardous chemicals, radioactive materials, biological agents or toxins are located, as well as at sites at which laboratory animal or human participants research is conducted.

Again, this is an intermediate security plan while, in conjunction with the Environmental Health and Safety Department and the University Police Department, we are in the process of developing long-term security and safety measures. We are also in the process of developing broader information to provide to you on security and safety concerns, which we hope to send to you in the near future.

On a related note, it is increasingly likely that faculty and staff will be contacted or visited by members of the media, law enforcement, or concerned citizens regarding hazardous materials and/or security. You are not obligated to respond to any of these individuals or groups.

Contacts and visits by law enforcement members or groups should be referred to:  
Robert E. Wiatt,  
Director of Security and University Police  
845-8058, or bobwiatt@tamu.edu

Contacts by the media should be referred to:  
Cynthia J. Lawson,  
Executive Director of University Relations  
862-2302, or cjl@univrel.tamu.edu or c-lawson@tamu.edu

Contacts by regulators and/or inspectors should be referred to:  
Christopher M. Meyer,  
Director, Environmental Health & Safety Department  
(845-2132, or [c-m-meyer@tamu.edu](mailto:c-m-meyer@tamu.edu))

If you have general questions, you may contact:  
Michael W. Buckley,  
Director of Compliance and Administration  
845-8585, or [mwbuckley@tamu.edu](mailto:mwbuckley@tamu.edu)

## ATTACHMENT A

### UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FACILITIES AND LABORATORIES SECURITY PLAN

Research facilities and laboratories where hazardous chemicals, radioactive materials, biological agents or toxins are present must be kept secured at all times. At a minimum, this involves limiting access to the facility and laboratory and locking the door when no facility and laboratory personnel are present.

1. First, facilities and laboratories need to take immediate steps to prevent unauthorized entry into a facility or laboratory, to prevent unauthorized removal of hazardous materials from a facility or laboratory.
2. Approach any visitors that appear to be wandering in facility or laboratory areas and ask if you can help direct them. Report suspicious or unexplained behavior to the University Police Department (emergency 9-911; non-emergency 845-2345).
3. Lock all equipment (e.g., freezers, cabinets, incubators, and scintillation counters) that contains hazardous materials. Equipment located in hallways or areas outside of facilities or laboratories must always be locked and secured.
4. Keep facility and laboratory doors closed at all times.
5. Lock facility and laboratory doors when no one is present.
6. Put **emergency contact signs** on facility and laboratory doors, including a 24-hour contact number.
7. Program speed dial of emergency contacts (e.g., 9-911, facility or laboratory director, etc.) on the phones in the facility or laboratory, if possible. Post procedures for summoning emergency services o your location.

## ATTACHMENT B

### **FACILITY AND LABORATORY SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

1. Facility and laboratory directors should review security procedures regularly to ensure that they are adequate for current conditions and consistent with other facility and laboratory wide policies and procedures. Facility and laboratory supervisors should ensure that all facility and laboratory personnel and visitors understand security requirements and are trained and equipped to follow established procedures.
2. Control access to areas where hazardous materials are used and stored. The facility or laboratory and animal housing areas should be locked at all times. Only workers or students required to perform a job should be allowed in a facility or laboratory and housing areas, and workers should be allowed only in areas and at hours required to perform their particular job.
  - Access during non-routine work hours should be limited to authorized personnel.
  - Access for routine cleaning, maintenance, and repairs should be limited to hours when facility and laboratory employees are present.
  - Freezers, refrigerators, cabinets, and other containers where stocks of biological agents, hazardous chemicals, or radioactive materials are stored should be locked when they are not in direct view of workers (e.g., when located in unattended storage areas).
3. Facility and laboratory personnel should know all new employees.
  - Depending on the hazardous materials involved and the type of work being done, a background check and/or security clearance may be appropriate before new employees are assigned the facility and laboratory areas. Guests must be escorted or cleared for entry using the same procedures as for regular workers.
4. It is best to use the "buddy system" when using hazardous materials in a facility or laboratory. However, if it is necessary to work in the facility or laboratory alone during non-routine hours, let someone know where you will be and how long you expect to be in the facility or laboratory. Arrange for someone to check on you at least hourly.
5. Know what materials are being brought into the facility and laboratory areas. All packages should be screened before being brought into the facility or laboratory area. If a suspicious or unexpected package is delivered to the facility or laboratory, do not open it. Contact the University Police Department (emergency 9-911; non-emergency 845-2345).
6. Know what materials are being removed from the facility and laboratory areas. Hazardous materials must be packaged and labeled in conformance with all applicable local, federal, and international shipping regulations. The recipient should be known the sender, and the sender should make an effort to ensure that materials are shipped to a facility or laboratory equipped to handle those materials safely. Contaminated or possibly contaminated materials should be decontaminated before they leave the facility or laboratory areas.

7. Control of access to facility and laboratory areas can make an emergency response more difficult. This must be considered when emergency plans are developed. Police, fire, and other emergency responders should be informed as to the types of hazardous materials in use in the facility or laboratory areas and special access control devices that are in use (e.g., electronic card-key, transponder card, etc.)
  - All facilities & buildings MUST be on the master key system, to facilitate emergency response and crisis management
8. Facility and laboratory emergency planning should be coordinated with facility and laboratory wide plans. Bomb threats, severe weather, power outages, and other natural (or unnatural) disasters should be considered when developing facility and laboratory emergency plans, site-specific safety plans, chemical hygiene plans, evacuation plans, crisis management plans, etc.
9. Facility managers, building proctors, and laboratory directors, in cooperation with the University Police Department, should have procedures in place for reporting incidents, such as unauthorized persons in the building, missing chemicals or other hazardous materials, and unusual or threatening phone calls.