

An inspection by the Memphis Fire Department can be relatively painless for those who are properly prepared. Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) suggests that preparations for an inspection include special attention to the following items:

1. Chemicals with different hazard classes (acids, bases, oxidizers, flammables, etc.) must be stored apart from one another, on sturdy surfaces, and below eye level.
 - Be alert to multiple hazards which would make apparently compatible materials unsuitable for contiguous storage (e.g., acetic acid and nitric acid – one is combustible and the other is an oxidizer).
2. Storage of hazardous chemicals should not clutter the work area.
3. Flammable liquids must not be stored in refrigerators which are not specifically designed for flammables storage, including walk-in coolers and freezers.
4. Flammables and combustible liquids must not be stored in excess of quantities shown in University Policy UM1293.
5. Chemicals that may become hazardous after prolonged storage, such as peroxide formers, must be labeled with the date of receipt and date opened.
 - Peroxide formers should be disposed of by the recommended time in the Peroxide Former List issued by EH&S unless tested for peroxides, shown to be safe, and re-dated. Containers of ethers should never be retained after the manufacturer's expiration date or when rusty. Containers of picric acid must always contain plenty of water. Call EH&S about old ethers or dry picric acid.
6. Rooms containing radioactive materials must be labeled with the radiation symbol and the words "Caution: Radioactive Material" on the door.
7. Compressed gas cylinders must be secured at all times and segregated by hazard class when not in use.
8. Food for human consumption should not be kept in any lab areas or refrigerators used for storage of chemicals or potentially infectious materials.
9. Refrigerators and fume hoods must be properly labeled.
10. All of the following must be clear of obstructions, fully accessible, and functional:
 - Aisles and means of egress
 - Fire extinguishers, alarm pull stations, and notification devices
 - Emergency showers and eyewash stations
 - Doors, their hardware and windows
 - Sprinkler head deflectors (must maintain an 18" clearance)
 - Breaker panel boxes (3 feet in front of, and the width of the equipment or 30", whichever is larger)
11. All fire wall penetrations must be appropriately sealed
12. All exit signs and emergency lights should be functional using both building and backup power modes.
13. Extension cords should not be used in place of hard wiring, receptacles are not to be overloaded, and ground fault circuit interrupters should be installed in all wet locations and within six feet of all sinks.
14. Safety Data Sheets and chemical inventories must be readily accessible, and all safety training is documented and current.

