Lab Coat Cleaning and Disposal

Lab coats are often worn to protect the worker from accidental exposure to potentially harmful agents. As a general principle, it is prudent that lab coats (and other protective clothing) **worn for this purpose** not be removed from (or worn outside) the laboratory. This will minimize exposure of other workers to these same harmful agents.

I. Lab Coat Selection Guide

Please visit the [Lab Coat Selection Guide](#) for more information.

II. Lab Coat Laundry Services at NC State University

NC State does not provide a central laundry service for the university. Currently, departments and divisions are individually contracting with third party vendors. Contact EHS at 515-6858 to help determine your options. There may already be a group in your area with an existing contract. If you have a successful existing contract or have recently modified your contract, please contact EHS at 515-6858 with your information so that we can make others aware of successful approaches to lab coat management.

Some commercial vendors currently used by departments and divisions on campus for rental, sale, and laundry of lab coats are**:

- Alsco Uniform Services: 919-828-7491
- Aramark: 800-785-2299; aramark-uniform.com
- Cintas Uniform Services: 919-9179412
- Unifirst: 919-957-7610; unifirst-uniform.com

When using a commercial laundry service, it is the responsibility of the lab coat owner or the person arranging laundry service to contact the commercial service directly. Overtly contaminated garments may need to be bagged and labeled.

**EH&S is providing this for informational purposes only and does not endorse any particular vendor.

III. Alternatives to Laundry Services

Contracting with a laundry service for lab coats may not be practical for some applications. While considering the impact of issues such as the
source and availability of funds, the volume of use, and the level of protection needed, alternatives to a commercial laundry service contract can be considered, such as:

A. End-of-use decontamination and disposal

If hygiene and cross-contamination are not a concern, a laundry contract may not be necessary. Without a laundry contract, disposal of the lab coat is the responsibility of the owner.

Lab coats (and other protective clothing) that are contaminated with toxic chemicals, radioactive materials, or biological hazards should be disposed of as hazardous waste. Refer to the Hazardous Waste Management website for more information on hazardous waste disposal.

B. Disposable Lab Coats

Disposable or “single use” lab coats are available for purchase from vendors on the MarketPlace. They are often used where contamination is routine. Some manufacturers claim that their disposable lab coat can withstand wear up to 5 or 10 times. Disposable lab coats shall provide adequate protection required for tasks (see the Lab Coat Selection Guide).

Disposable lab coats (and other protective clothing) that are contaminated with toxic chemicals, radioactive materials, or biological hazards should be disposed of as hazardous waste. Refer to the Hazardous Waste Management website for more information on hazardous waste disposal.

IV. For technical questions regarding lab coat selection, use, and storage please contact:
   Darren Treml, Biological hazards: 513-6858
   Amy Orders, Radioactive hazards: 515-5208
   Mahdi Fahim, Chemical hazards: 513-1282
   Scott Mabry, Physical hazards (e.g., machine, electrical): 513-0988