

Ramping down work in the lab can help maintain social distancing from one another during crises. There are a number of suggestions for things to do NOW to prepare labs for minimal occupancy and potential temporary shutdown.

Recommendation 1 – Think ahead regarding work that is absolutely essential, i.e. work that cannot be done remotely, but **MUST** be completed. Then, shorten this list as much as possible. If equipment can be shut down completely rather than needing someone present to run or maintain it, this can limit the number of researchers that need to come in to the lab.

Recommendation 2 – Reduce the workforce, and minimize the number of people working in the lab. Follow CDC guidelines, and stay approximately 6 feet (2 meters) away from each other when possible. Make a rotating schedule for lab workers to maintain the safety of the lab and equipment.

Recommendation 3 – Avoid beginning new, or long-term experiments that need in-lab attention. Finish current projects, if possible, and avoid starting new ones. Work on the written portion of experiments, i.e. planning next steps, writing papers/grants, thesis work, etc.

Recommendation 4 – Limit access to avoid all visitors and new workers. In-person trainings on instruments make it very difficult to maintain social distancing. Try to avoid bringing new researchers into the lab, and wait until the crisis is on the downturn.

Recommendation 5 – Tag waste that has been in the lab close to 6 months. Hazardous waste can only be in the lab up to 6 months after the start date. Tag older wastes now to ensure no waste will get over this age in case of a temporary shutdown.