

Members of the Columbia University Research Community,

The National Weather Service has issued a Blizzard Warning for New York City and surrounding areas beginning at 1pm Monday, January 26, 2015. Heavy, blowing snow, frigid temperatures and dangerous winds are expected. It is important that Principal Investigators and laboratory personnel take actions on Monday to protect their research and operations, and secure hazardous materials in advance of the forecast weather impacts.

It is the laboratory's responsibility to prepare their lab(s) and equipment. EH&S strongly urges laboratories to take the following steps to ensure the safety and security of their research operations:

Ensure all windows are closed.

Secure all hazardous materials (biological, chemical, radioactive and compressed gases) including waste containers. Store all chemicals in cabinets, closets, or secure areas; provide secondary containment as necessary. All containers must be closed prior to leaving the laboratory.

Shut down unattended research-related operations; emergency response capabilities in the event of a spill or leak are likely to be extremely limited due to travel impairments

Verify and update, as necessary, Emergency Contact information outside of your lab and on any critical equipment. There is no guarantee that the University will be able to contact researchers in the event of critical equipment failure.

Please turn off computers, lights and other non-critical equipment that does not require emergency power before leaving on Monday, 1/26/15. Researchers with labs and experiments dependent upon electrical power should ensure equipment is plugged into the outlets that are backed up by the building generators.

Backing-up and securing critical data is strongly recommended.

Refresh dry ice and other specific backup materials (e.g. CO2 cylinders, nitrogen) as needed in sufficient quantity. If possible, top-off liquid nitrogen dewars and storage containers.

Fume hoods should be clear of chemicals and all volatile materials, due to the possibility of power outages.

Conclude all experiments planned for the coming days and DO NOT begin or run experiments as the weather may impact access to the campus.

Walk-through the lab before leaving. Ensure all items are secured, cabinets and doors are locked, and that all other preparations have been completed.

Please discuss contingency plans with your laboratory personnel in case there are interruptions to transportation or other conditions that may impact one's ability to keep a normal work schedule.

If you have any questions while you are preparing your lab, please contact EH&S or reach out directly to your Research Safety Specialist:

- Medical Center – (212) 305-6780
  - <http://www.ehs.columbia.edu/LabAssignmentMC.html>
- Morningside, Lamont, Nevis, Barnard College – (212) 854-8749
  - <http://www.ehs.columbia.edu/LabAssignment.html>

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