Memorandum

Date: March 27, 2008

From: Loren D. Fast, Ph.D.
Chairman, Biohazard and Laboratory Safety Committee

To: Principal Investigators

Subject: Use of UV Lights in Laminar Airflow Hoods

Decontamination of laminar airflow hoods by exposure to ultraviolet light has been used for many years. Recent studies on the effectiveness of this approach have found that in order for this approach to have any effect the tube needs to be cleaned weekly and used without air currents. In addition it was found that ultraviolet lights very rapidly lose production of the level of light that is required to be effective in decontamination. On the other hand these studies also found that individuals could be exposed to dangerous levels of ultraviolet light when standing near a hood with a closed sash and the ultraviolet light on.

Because these findings indicate that the use of ultraviolet lights in hoods results in risk to laboratory personnel without any benefit for decontaminating the hood, the Biohazard and Laboratory Safety Committee is recommending that ultraviolet lights be no longer used in hoods or in rooms and that the ultraviolet light tubes be removed from the hoods. Please contact the Central Research Facilities (CRF) office, 4.5788 for their disposal. CRF will no longer support the purchase or replacement of ultraviolet tubes for the hoods/rooms.

If you feel that you have justification for continued use of the ultraviolet lights in hoods and rooms, you will need to apply to the Biohazard and Laboratory Safety Committee for an exemption. Investigators do not have to apply for exemptions for ultraviolet lights that are installed as an integral part of an instrument with appropriate safeguards to prevent exposure to ultraviolet light

Please contact me if you have any questions at 444-8091or Loren_Fast@brown.edu.