TITLE:
GUIDELINES FOR THE CONSUMPTION AND STORAGE OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES IN LABORATORY AREAS

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guideline for the safe storage and consumption of food and beverages in research laboratory areas at Emory University.

1.2 Scope

This program applies to all Emory University faculty, staff and students.

2.0 Policy

Storage and consumption of food or beverage is prohibited in research laboratory areas.

2.1 Approved Areas

- Storage and consumption of food is approved in designated areas such as:
  - break rooms
  - cafeterias
  - offices
  - office areas that are physically separate from the laboratory.
- A room with floor to ceiling walls and a closable door is preferable. However, many laboratory facilities were not designed with separate rooms. As a result, personnel often create separate rooms within, or contiguous with, the laboratory using an assortment of barriers. To meet requirements for Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)/Research Health and Safety Committee (RHSC)/Biosafety Officer (BSO) approval, rooms used for consumption or storage of food and beverage must be physically separate from the laboratory. Laboratory staff must consult with IBC/RHSC/BSO for assistance with interpretation.

The following are guidelines for office areas that are separate from laboratory:

- Walls or barriers may be made of permanent walls, glass or plexiglass, partitions used in cubical design or contiguous furniture, (i.e. bookshelves).
- The barrier height and materials should be such that it will prevent spills, splashes or projection of hazardous materials into the area where food and drink will be stored or consumed.

2.2 Prohibited Areas

The storage or consumption of food and beverages is prohibited in areas used for the storage or use of chemical, radioactive or biological materials. These areas include the following:

- Laboratories and laboratory areas (unless physically separate).
- Animal housing rooms, holding or storage areas.
- Rooms where laboratory instruments or equipment is stored or repaired.
- Chemical storage areas.
- Office areas within laboratories that are not physically separate from the lab.

2.3 Sanitation

- Inappropriate disposal of food, beverages or food containers can compromise integrity of adjacent research space. Hence, good housekeeping practices must be a priority.
- Food or food containers should not be disposed inside the laboratories. They should be disposed in the non-regulated waste stream in designated areas.

3.0 References

- Emory University Chemical Hygiene Plan
- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1450(e)(1)
- Emory University Radiation Safety Manual
- Emory University Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan
    - Restrictions related to eating, drinking and food storage in laboratory and affiliated areas are addressed in OSHA regulations and guidance statements, including 29 CFR 1910.1030(d)(2)(ix-x) and 29 CFR 1910.141 (g)(2),(4).