IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Environmental Health and Safety
2408 Wanda Daley Drive
Ames, Iowa 50011-3602
Phone: (515) 294-5359
FAX: (515) 294-9357

Glove Use Factsheet

1. When should I wear gloves?

Wear gloves whenever your hands may come into contact with hazardous chemicals, radioactive material or potentially infectious material.

2. Why should I remove my gloves before exiting the lab?

Remove your gloves before exiting the lab to prevent transmitting potentially harmful materials to clean areas like hallways, water fountains, restrooms, offices and elevators.

3. There are no hazardous materials on my gloves; why do I still need to remove them?

When people see you wearing gloves outside the lab, their perception is that your gloves are contaminated with something harmful and that you are contaminating areas that they need to touch with their bare hands. They may feel that you are putting them at risk.

4. I need to move hazardous materials to a lab across the hall. Can I do that without gloves?

You could use a clean transport container or cart to move the hazardous materials. For example, you could put the materials into a tub, a safety carrier or a box, or place them on a cart. This way, you touch only the clean container or cart, and you don't need to wear gloves.

If you use a cart, make sure it's sturdy and free from contamination. A cart with a lip around the top is preferable, to catch any spills that might occur.

5. Using a transport container doesn't work for me. I need to wear gloves. What should I do?

Use the "one-glove method". Wear a glove on one hand to carry your materials. Keep your second hand un-gloved to touch door handles. Or, ask for help. Someone else could open doors with their un-gloved hands and you could carry the items with your gloved hands.

6. I'm not sure what type of gloves I should be wearing. Where can I find help?

EH&S has links to several glove-selection guides. These guides provide specific recommendations based on the chemical you select. Take a look here! If you're still unsure, contact EH&S.

Reviewed 5/2015