Based on the advice of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Health & Human Services (HHS) universities and colleges across the U.S. are preparing for a possible flu pandemic this fall. The U may see upwards of a 40% reduction in workforce because of illness, caring for those that are ill and closures of schools and daycare at any given time.

Consider how your lab would function if all of the student researchers were out…
Think of what would need to be done if half of the scientists couldn’t come in…
How would YOUR work be impacted if there isn’t enough staff to run your lab?

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) is collaborating with the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (DEHS) to ensure we are prepared. If hibernation becomes necessary, all labs need to have shut down plans. Research Safety Officers (RSOs) will work with researchers to review and prepare Laboratory Hibernation Plans this summer. Researchers should be aware that if laboratory hibernation is required the following issues must be considered

Chemicals and hazardous materials: All experiments involving chemicals and hazardous materials must be stopped. All non-essential equipment such as water baths, hot plates and other heating equipment must be turned off and unplugged. Chemical containers must be closed and stored properly. Special attention for the prolonged storage of the following materials should be considered:
- Reactive materials requiring inert atmosphere
- Temperature sensitive materials
- Ongoing production activities
Hazardous waste must be handled and/or disposed of as directed by DEHS

Radiological materials: All radioactive materials must be placed in their appropriate storage areas and secured. All radiological waste must be properly labeled and secured.

Biological materials: All biological materials must be placed in their appropriate storage area and secured. Live cultures of pathogenic agents in Petri dishes need to be sealed (with parafilm), legibly labeled and stored in a locked refrigerator or freezer, as appropriate. All non-essential equipment – water baths, incubators, hot plates, and other heating equipment – must be turned off and unplugged. Provisions must be made to replenish liquid nitrogen in refrigeration systems that use that coolant. Biological waste must be disposed of as directed by DEHS.

Animals: Review the Research Animal Resources website at RAR

Electrical: All equipment that is not essential to remain running must be turned off and unplugged.

Security: All materials and equipment must be secured during laboratory hibernation. Special considerations must be given to the following:
- Controlled Substances
- Select Agents

The principles of the University’s planning efforts are:
1. Health, welfare, and safety of faculty, staff, students and others on campus
2. Health, welfare and safety of animals housed on campus
3. Maintenance of essential mission functions of research, teaching and outreach
4. Maintenance of essential campus functions