

Shut the Sash: A Laboratory Energy Challenge

Our goal: Reduce Energy Consumption

Lowering energy consumption is a win for sustainability, and if there are easy ways to do so, why not do them?

Since lab buildings are the most energy intensive buildings at U of I, they are often the first target of a conservation campaign. While fume hoods are the culprits behind much of that energy consumption, they are also essential pieces of lab safety equipment that cannot be turned off when not in use.

Fortunately, fume hoods also have the capability to excel at reducing consumption with some simple changes in how they are used. As an important piece of equipment that cannot be turned off, they instead have sashes that can be lowered or even closed for energy savings. Sashes, designed to keep you and the rest of your lab safe from chemical fumes, splashes, fires, and explosions, can cut energy use by up to 80% when used properly.

Your challenge: Shut the Sash

Yes, it's that simple! Just shut the sash to save energy and stay safe; fume hood sashes should only be opened to set up or modify an experiment.

Fume hoods are designed to draw in sufficient air, even with the sash closed or lowered, to maintain a proper flow rate. Always keeping the sash as low as possible improves safety and ventilation, but did you know that it can also improve the reliability and validity of your experiment and research? Who doesn't want that?

Want to do even more?

Pretty easy, right? Here are some more simple ways you can help improve the efficiency of your hood and lower costs.

- Emergency Purge buttons are there for emergencies. While you should never hesitate to use it in an actual emergency, avoid this button unless it's necessary; running a fume hood at maximum capacity is extremely energy intensive.
- Remove any oversized equipment inside a fume hood; it interferes with the hood's ability to draw air away from you and makes it work harder to keep you safe.
- Do not store chemicals or hazardous waste in a fume hood. Like equipment, the presence of such containers can interfere with the air flow and affect the integrity of your experiment.
- Report malfunctioning fume hoods to EHS (safety@uidaho.edu or 208-885-6524) and Facilities (facilities@uidaho.edu or 208-885-6246) as soon as possible.

For more information on proper fume hood use, please lower/shut the sash and then check out the EHS [Fume Hood Guidance](#) document.



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