

Chemical Fume Hood (CFH) FAQs

Q1: What do I do when my flow monitor is alarming or flashing red or yellow?

A: Stop using the CFH and immediately report the problem to EHS or the appropriate FM service desk for repair (telephone numbers are located on the hood certification sticker). If the alarm is muted, be sure to place a sign on the hood indicating that it is unsafe to use. The flow monitor may be out of calibration or air flow may be inadequate to contain harmful contaminants inside the chemical fume hood. Recalibration of a monitor is easily fixed and free of charge, however if the monitor is removed or damaged, it may be costly to the lab to have it reinstalled.

See below for an example of one type of flow monitor installed on fume hoods at UVA and a hood certification sticker with FM service desk telephone numbers



EHS CHEMICAL FUME HOOD CERTIFICATION	
Date of Survey:	_____/_____/2021
Next Survey Due:	_____/_____/2022
Certified by:	_____
AVERAGE FACE VELOCITY FEET PER MINUTE WITH SASH AT 18 INCH VERTICAL OPENING OR MECHANICAL STOP: _____ FPM	
<input type="checkbox"/>	HOOD PERFORMANCE IS SATISFACTORY ***ALWAYS USE WITH SASH BELOW BREATHING ZONE
<input type="checkbox"/>	HOOD PERFORMANCE IS UNSATISFACTORY ***DO NOT USE
<input type="checkbox"/>	FLOW MONITOR NEEDS CALIBRATION OR REPAIR
COMMENTS:	_____ _____ _____
FOR REPAIRS CALL YOUR SERVICE DESK: HEALTH SYSTEM PHYSICAL PLANT (924-2267) ACADEMIC DIV (924-1777) Questions or concerns about chemical fume hood use or safety? Call Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) at 434-982-4911	

Q2: My fume hood has no airflow! What do I do?

A: Close all chemical containers, close the sash and submit a work order to UVA Facilities Management for repair (call the number on the hood sticker).

Q3: Who do I contact to get my fume hood certified or evaluated?

A: Contact EHS and provide your location and contact information.

Q4: Can I start using perchloric acid, heating acid or conducting acid digestions, using radionuclides, or biological agents in my chemical fume hood?

A: Not if you value your health! Special or separate equipment may be required to effectively mitigate hazards related to perchloric acid, radionuclides, or biological agents. Contact EHS to explore options.

Q5: I have a CFH with a horizontal sliding sash (sash moves left to right). What is considered best practice around use of this style of sash?

A: A sash, no matter the style, should always be used as a barrier between you and your experiment. It is best practice to move the sash to create a barrier, keeping the opening as small as possible. For a left to right sliding sash, move the sash in front of your experiment and if the sash panels are narrow enough, they allow you to have a barrier in front of you while reaching around that barrier to work on your experiment. EHS can provide training to help users better understand how to work safely within and around their hoods.

Q6: Does closing the sash on my chemical fume hood really save energy in addition to being safer?

A: It sure does! In most buildings on grounds, a closed sash means less air flow when the sash is closed. Less exhaust air, means the demand for conditioned supply air decreases, which saves energy.

Q7: There is a sign on my CFH stating "VENTING ONLY, ANIMAL USE ONLY, and WASTE STORAGE ONLY". What does this mean?

A: The current configuration of the CFH blocks airflow or creates too much turbulence for adequate containment performance that is necessary to protect the user during routine chemical work. Accordingly, CFH use should be limited to the uses described.

Q8: Do I have a Chemical Fume Hood (CFH) or a Biosafety Cabinet (BSC)?

A: Generally, a CFH is designed for controlling exposure to volatile chemicals and a BSC is designed for the containment of biological agents. To learn more see: [Biological Safety Cabinets](#).

Q10: Can I remove the side panels of my CFH to access utilities such as water or vacuum?

A: Yes, but panels must be replaced or the CFH will not be certified. It is often easy to remove them but very difficult to put them back.

Q11: My hood has a Do Not Use sticker on it. What do I do?

A: Your hood was failed for either inadequate air flow or physical damage and it is unsafe to use. Contact EHS for recertification.

Q12: I want a new CFH. How do I do that?

A: To ensure you obtain the appropriate type of CFH for the proposed activities, work with EHS specialists who can assist you in that evaluation. There are many options and EHS can pare them down to the best match for your specific use. Refer to [Selection, Installation & Testing Guidelines for New & Modified Chemical Fume Hoods](#).