

EHS Fact Sheet

UV Lamps in Biosafety Cabinets

National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Science Foundation/ANSI, and the American Biological Safety Association agree that ultraviolet (UV) lamps are not recommended or necessary for decontamination in biosafety cabinets. Proper use and cleaning of biosafety cabinets (e.g. 10% bleach followed by 70% EtOH) negates any need for the use of UV lamps.

If a UV lamp is used in your BSC:

- Turn lamp off when room is occupied or cabinet is in use, to prevent UV burns to the eyes and skin.
- Check lab tubing (e.g. vacuum lines) for signs of deterioration.

Be aware of the limitations:

- UV is not effective on porous materials that are opaque to the light such as wood or foam.
- UV is not effective if a microbe is protected by dust, dirt, or organic matter.
- UV light is affected by the accumulation of dust and dirt on the bulb surface.
- UV does not work in shadowed areas; penetrate into cracks or through the grill of a BSC.

