

Sustainable Lab Checklist

1. **Buy Energy Efficient Equipment** – For general commercially-available equipment always choose Energy Star certified products. For more hard to find equipment, ask vendors for energy use data and include this in your final decision on what vendor to use.
2. **Freezers and incubators use a lot of energy but are critical to research.** Follow best practices to make these operate most efficiently. Check Harvard's [Freezer Best Practices](#) Guide and Powers Scientific has a nice [piece](#) on making refrigerators and incubators more efficient.
3. **Power down any equipment which isn't being used.** Although we know many applications are 24/7, look for opportunities to reduce equipment use and save money.
4. **Close fume hood sashes whenever possible.** These are one of the biggest reasons labs use so much more energy than other spaces on campus and can consume as much energy as an average car over the course of a year. Report problems with vent hoods to facilities immediately. For a 'Shut the Sash' sticker contact Office of Sustainability.
5. **Don't assume that you can't recycle something.** Common items such as boxes and containers, rinsed empty bottles and some chemicals are recyclable.
6. **Reduce packaging where possible.** Talk to vendors about reduced packaging options and bundle orders where possible.
7. **Can you use less hazardous chemicals?** There may be options available. Check [MIT's Green Chemical Alternative Wizard](#) to explore alternatives.
8. **Swap and share equipment whenever possible.** Talk with colleagues about setting up shared equipment space. Not only does this cut down on wasteful purchasing, it may lead to combined research initiatives. Consider setting up a swap station. Find a way to list extra or unnecessary equipment or chemicals for use by other labs. This can be a list on a bulletin board or a Department-wide document online.
9. **Take a moment to look around at what our peers are doing.** Check out great resources like:
 - a. Harvard's [Best Practices Guide for Lab Sustainability](#).
 - b. MIT's [Working Green at MIT](#)
 - c. The Green Labs [@ Penn Program](#)
 - d. US EPA and DOE's [Labs21 Program](#)
10. **Start the conversation.** Talk with your colleagues and lab staff. Ask them what they think can be done. If you have ideas but aren't sure where to start, contact the Office of Sustainability and we can give a presentation or do GreenLab research for you. Share your ideas and spread the word!

