

Biological Laboratory Inspections

Position on Cardboard Boxes and Absorbing Surfaces in CL2 Laboratories

February 6, 2018

In areas where RG2 pathogens may be handled, the following precautions must be adhered to:

- No items containing absorbing surfaces (cork boards, cardboard boxes, untreated wood, furniture with fabric covering, damaged furniture, damaged walls, cracked floor tiles, etc) are allowed in the immediate work area where Risk Group 2 agents are handled.
- Cardboard boxes should be kept out of the containment zones as much as possible. If cardboard boxes are present in the containment zone, they must be kept away from the immediate work area where biological agents and pathogens are handled (ie. 10 ft away from the immediate work area). In addition, they must be kept off the lab floor.
- Cardboard boxes should not be stored in the work area on the floor or on counters as they could become contaminated and cannot be easily disinfected ; these may be stored in the lab in locations where work activities would not potentially create aerosols or spill onto the absorbing surfaces; please store on higher shelves.
- Cardboard boxes commonly used to dispose of glass and pipets must be placed on non-absorbing blocks elevated from the lab floor to protect them from spilled liquids. It is highly recommended that these cardboard containers are placed away from areas where biological agents and pathogens are handled. **Based on the work activities in the laboratory, the boxes may be kept in the immediate work area if the exterior could be lined with plastic or non-absorbing material.**
- **Another alternative would be to use plastic tubs for storage. These may be placed anywhere in the containment zone as they can be wiped down with disinfectants if required. Please see illustration below.**
- **Containment Zone (including floors) to be kept clean, free from obstructions, and free from materials that are in excess, not required, or that cannot be easily decontaminated. CBS, 2nd edition, section 4.6.35**

