

Instructions for Minimizing Coronavirus Exposure and Infection in the Chemistry Building

Faculty, Staff, and Students working in the Chemistry Building at UWM face the potential of contracting the coronavirus. The link below provides the CDC recommendations aimed at minimizing this risk in the building and at home.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/workplace-school-and-home-guidance.pdf>

It is critically important that all of us read the instructions below and follow them on a daily basis.

Keeping the workplace safe Encourage your employees to...

Practice good hygiene



- Stop handshaking – use other noncontact methods of greeting
- Clean hands at the door and schedule regular hand washing reminders by email
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching their faces and cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning

Be careful with meetings and travel



- Use videoconferencing for meetings when possible
- When not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces
- Consider adjusting or postponing large meetings or gatherings
- Assess the risks of business travel

Handle food carefully



- Limit food sharing
- Strengthen health screening for cafeteria staff and their close contacts
- Ensure cafeteria staff and their close contacts practice strict hygiene

Stay home if...



- They are feeling sick
- They have a sick family member in their home

We emphasize several aspects of these guidelines as they apply to the Chemistry Department. So, be sure to read on.

It is essential that you stay home if you are sick or have a sick person in your home.

- If you have symptoms common to the virus (fever, cough, shortness of breath), be sure to check with your doctor to see whether you should get tested for the virus. The UWM Norris Health Center is able to do this according to the website: <https://uwm.edu/coronavirus/category/faq/coronavirus-health-details/>.
- **Be sure to immediately inform the Department Chair, Dr. Aldstadt, if you think you may have the virus or have been diagnosed with it.**

In the building we are practicing "social distancing", keeping a distance of at least 6 feet from others. In so doing, we limit the possibility that the virus will be transmitted from one person to another by small droplets of water released into the atmosphere during breathing. See: (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fhome%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html).

- The need for social distancing means that meetings such as group and departmental meetings should also adhere to the "6 feet" rule.

Spaces that we inhabit and use (offices, doors, desks, lab benches) should be disinfected with bleach or hydrogen peroxide (see website above) **as soon as possible** to insure that any residual virus that may already be present is inactivated. Subsequently, if others regularly utilize the space as well, **cleaning should be done at least once a day**. If all of us take responsibility for our spaces, there should be little risk of surface exposure to the virus in the building.

Disinfecting surfaces goes along with frequent hand washing with soap (full scrub of hands – palms, backs, fingers, and nails for 20 seconds minimum). Particularly, hand washing should be done after touching surfaces in common areas of the building. According to the CDC, thorough hand washing is a highly effective way to limit exposure to the virus.

Finally, if you have concerns related to protecting yourself from viral exposure in the building, contact the Department Chair, Dr. Aldstadt.