

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Art

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
PHOTOGRAPHY DARKROOM AND LAB

ACCESS

1. Lab use is restricted to students currently enrolled in a photography class. Darkroom monitors will have a list of students currently enrolled in photography classes.
2. NEVER LEAVE EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED. You are responsible for the damage, loss, or theft of UNCG equipment while it is checked out to you. If you are returning equipment and the monitor is away you should wait for them to return.
3. Please immediately report damage to any facilities or equipment to the darkroom monitor.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The photographic process is not environmentally friendly. There are ways, however, that we can minimize our environmental impact in the darkroom.

1. NEVER POUR FIX DOWN THE DRAIN. Dead fix is loaded with silver and it is environmentally destructive and illegal to pour down any drain. Place used hypo in the bottles labeled used hypo at the end of the darkroom sink or in the 4 gallon containers by the refrigerator in the film developing room Only developers, stop bath, hypo-clear, and photo flow can go down the drain.
2. DO NOT WASTE WATER. In photography we use a lot of water, but that doesn't mean we have to waste it. Use only recommended wash times. Don't allow water to constantly run in holding baths: turn off the water as soon as you are finished.

GENERAL DARKROOM POLICIES

1. READ AND OBEY ALL SIGNS POSTED IN THE PHOTO LABS. All the signs address issues that have come up many times in the past.
2. NO EATING OR DRINKING IN THE DARKROOM OR WASH LABS. This is strictly enforced because: (1.) Food and drink can damage expensive darkroom equipment. (2.) Food and drink will absorb chemical vapors in the air and you will then ingest them: a serious health hazard.
3. CLEAN UP. Many people use the darkroom every week and it is important that students are aware of how their use of the space affects others. When you are finished working in a darkroom or space, it should be clean and ready for the next

person to use.

PRINT WASH AREA DO'S AND DON'TS:

1. Do not put prints into the communal wash and then leave the area. Use the wash timers and remove your prints promptly when the time is up to conserve water.
2. Never put your prints in the washer if other prints are already there. Once a wash has begun it must be completed and prints removed before more prints can go in. This makes it important that everyone remove prints promptly when the wash time is up.
3. Only thoroughly washed prints may be placed on the drying racks. Prints not properly washed can contaminate the screens and thus destroy every print placed there afterward!
4. Prints should not be left for more than a day on the drying racks.
5. When you are done washing put your trays away! Do not leave your trays in the sink for someone else to deal with.

CHEMISTRY

1. UNCG provides all normal photographic chemistry.
2. The darkroom and film developing room have bottles of hypo-check and instructions for using it so you can test your fix for exhaustion. Getting fresh fix every time you print is PROHIBITED. Only get fresh fix after the old fix has been exhausted. For stop bath you can tell when it is good or bad by looking at it. It's yellow when it's fresh and turns dark purple as it goes bad.
3. When you do need fresh chemistry and the regular containers are empty, tell the darkroom monitors and they will mix new chemicals. Students may not mix dry chemistry.
4. If you bring your own chemicals (i.e. film developer) it must be in its original container or properly labeled brown photo jug. All chemical containers should be labeled with your name, the date, and the containers exact contents. Abandoned, unlabeled chemical containers present a costly waste management dilemma for the University. Do not leave chemical containers anywhere in the photo labs or studios: **they will be discarded.**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Know where the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are located (by the windows in the film developing room). We must have an MSDS for every chemical on the premises. Familiarize yourself with the MSDS for each chemical you will be using. Other MSDSs can be found online at <http://www.uncg.edu/sft> from a campus computer.

If you have to go to the hospital because of chemical exposure you must take the MSDS for that chemical with you. This will let doctors know exactly what they are dealing with.

2. In an emergency, call the UNCG Police first: 334-4444 (4-4444). Be brief and specific: Give your name, your location, and tell them you are calling **POISON CONTROL (800) 441-8080**. Have the MSDS in hand when you call.
3. There is a list of emergency phone numbers and procedures in the MSDS notebook.
4. There is one **eyewash station** in the lab. It is next to the sink in the film developing room.

5. Wearing gloves and aprons is MANDATORY when you are processing film and working in the darkroom. Good, reusable nitrile rubber gloves are available cheaply in local hardware stores: be sure to get thick gloves. Gloves made of rubbers other than nitrile rubber may be permeable.
6. **NEVER PUT YOUR HANDS IN ANY CHEMISTRY. Dry chemistry is to be mixed only by darkroom monitors.**
7. Report any chemical accidents or questions immediately to the darkroom monitor.
8. Fire extinguishers are located on wall mounts near the doorways in each room of the photo lab. In case of a fire alarm exit the building immediately: There are chemicals on the premises that emit toxic gasses when heated.

PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS

The following may result in loss of lab privileges or other penalties:

1. Leaving darkroom equipment unattended in one of the common areas.
2. Eating, drinking, smoking or doing drugs in a darkroom.
3. Leaving a darkroom a mess. Chemicals shall be put away..
4. Habitually getting fresh fix each time you print instead of testing the fix in your darkroom.
5. Failure to report equipment damage. .
6. Practicing unsafe behavior in the darkroom.
7. Displaying a habitual pattern of wasting water and/or chemistry.
8. Using UNCG equipment that you have not been trained to use.
9. Putting prints in one of the communal washers and then “disappearing,” or putting your prints in on top of someone else’s prints that are already being washed.
10. Putting on a drying rack a print that has not been thoroughly washed.
11. Moving tongs from one chemical bath to another in the darkroom.

Accidents happen, especially when you are new to the lab. Most infractions are handled with a verbal warning. However, if there is a pattern of abuse or negligence then penalties will result.

For further reference, see:

<http://www.epa.gov> and <http://www.osha.gov>