Relocation and room modifications

Information sheet: Laboratory General RhL070

Deze tekst "Verhuizing en technische wijzigingen" is ook beschikbaar in het Nederlands.

Information for employees and students working at the Faculty of Science (W&N)
This AMD information sheet describes the way in which modifications to rooms and relocations should be applied for, with the aim of prior assessment of safety and health aspects.

1 Modifications in a research environment

Research is a dynamic process. That is why it may be necessary from time to time to modify provisions in a room to be able to continue performing effective and safe research. Sometimes, however, relocation to a more suitable room is preferable. Such a change will most of the times involve concurring safety, health, and environmental aspects too. In the past we have only found during, for example, a laboratory inspection or from a risk assessment and evaluation, that health and safety aspects had been overlooked in the design phase. To remedy issues, such as "insufficient temporary storage room for chemical waste", afterwards is often organizationally difficult or entails high costs. On the other hand, in a proper risk assessment, extra provisions sometimes are found to be unnecessary and a waste of money.

1.1. Managing modifications

Modifications of office environments may involve OHS aspects as well, therefore, this MoC procedure does not only apply to laboratories!

This is why, as of 2012, the Faculty of Science uses an application form for technical modifications and relocations, to steer relocations or technical modifications of rooms in the right direction. This form is also referred to as an MoC form, in which MoC stands for 'Management-of-Change'.
Modifications should be applied for at the faculty's Building and Technical Services ("Gebouwen en Techniek", G&T). By following this link you will also be able to download the MoC form. After you send in the form, G&T will judge if the application is possible technically, and G&T will also update the technical documentation. Furthermore, using a decision matrix, a decision is made if the Safety Department (AMD) needs to be involved in the application, in an advisory role. On the basis of the AMD advice the application may be approved (sometimes under certain conditions), applied for in modified form, or rejected.

De AMD will check, among other things:

- the necessity and advisability of the application. Sometimes another solution is better, and certain options may be impossible due to permit requirements.
- the required (order of) measures. This concerns the proper application of the hierarchy of hazard controls (see RhL010 Research risk assessment).
- the presence of the proper permits and compliance to (internal) rules and regulations.
- uniformity within the faculty regarding the (safety) provisions applied in similar cases, to prevent working with a lower protection level than would have been advisable or possible.

- if an adaptation of the operational methods of the emergency response organization is required.

2 Filling in the MoC form

2.1 Requested data

The application requires a number of data, including the SAP number to charge the realization costs made to. Please also indicate the desired commencing date. Apply timely for modifications, especially when it concerns complex matters, or when permits need to be applied for. Please also remember that it is wiser to first perform the MoC application, and only then purchase certain equipment (see also RhL040 *OHS when purchasing*). In that case, the Building and Technical Services (G&T) department may advise.

2.2 Type of room

Please indicate what type of room it concerns. Is it an office, general purpose, or technical room, or a classified laboratory? Based on that an assessment of the complexity of the application may be made. There are many rules that apply to classified rooms, and, therefore, not all plans can be realized.

2.3 Types of changes

Modifications are considered to include permanent or temporary:

- modifications of rooms:
  - relocations and allocations: an assessment is required determining if all provisions are present and suffice for the number of people
  - modifications and renovations, for example, conversion from lab to office room
  - constructional modifications, such as creating an extra room within a larger room
  - new constructions or demolitions
  - decommissioning a lab in the line of reorganizing and modification of permits
- modifications to rooms:
  - changed access to the room, such as the installation of electronic locks, regarding the accessibility in emergency situations, or the locking of a door within the building, regarding available routes of escape
- modifications of room provisions, such as water, electricity network, ventilation:
  - installation/connection of equipment to an existing power point, for example, the connection of an ultracentrifuge to three-phase current, connection of a mountable fumehood to an existing ventilation duct, connection of a chemicals cabinet, regarding the exhaust capacity of the system
  - adding a new connection point to an existing provision, such as adding wall sockets
  - installation of a provision in a room
  - disconnecting a provision, such as natural gas

Decommissioning a lab requires a special release statement, just as for equipment that needs to be repaired. Radiation and GMO labs also need to be decommissioned officially, as well as removed from the permit register!

- Maintenance:
    - Repair/mending equipment or a provision using different methods (for example using other materials) than the original
      Replacing a glass plate by a wooden plate in case of glass breakage in a fumehood presents a risk, because the wooden plate may absorb chemicals and be rougher, which may affect the flow profile.
    - Replacement/renewal of a provision using another type. For example, not all materials have the same chemical resistance

2.4 Open questions
In addition, the form contains some open questions that are needed for a proper assessment of the application. Please fill these in with as much detail as possible. This will prevent delays in the application process.

Description of the requested modification (Please add any documentation that might be necessary.)
The answer to this question should give us an idea of what needs to be realized. Support your answer with drawings, and please try to think of any modifications that would additionally be needed, such as connections to the ventilation system/water/power.

Cause/necessity of the modification
Why is this modification necessary? For example: *we need a fumehood, because we do more and more work with corrosive chemicals in the physics lab, and there are hardly any fumehoods in our building.*

What are the foreseen consequences of this modification?
This way we do not have to cross the hallways with chemicals again and again from our lab to the lab with the fumehood. The risk of spillage of chemicals in the hallways will decrease, and it will save time. The other fumehood is in use most of the times.

What alternatives did you check out already?
This question is meant to see if the hierarchy of controls (RhL010) was applied in the correct manner. *We did look at another substance, but this was no option, the results were disappointing. Installing a fumehood seems to be the only option to us.*

3 Performing modifications

It may be that for the actual execution of the modification movers or workers need to enter the lab room. Building and Technical Services (G&T) will make a planning and an appointment for this. After that, the person responsible for the lab has the task to inform all users of the lab and make sure that the workers can start their work safely. With this safety we mean that any undesired interaction between lab activities and technical work has to be prevented. Please read AMD information sheet RhL080 *Third party activities* on this subject.