

## HITS Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- What is HITS?
  - o HITS is the acronym for USF's Hazardous Inventory Tracking System. The system was collaboratively developed by USF's Chemistry Department, Environmental Health and Safety Office, Information Technologies, Physical Plant, Public Safety, Office of Research Compliance, and faculty advisors from Arts and Sciences, Engineering, the College of Medicine, and the College of Public Health. The first phase of HITS will track laboratory chemicals that are used at USF from "cradle-to-grave." Later phases will incorporate industrial-use chemicals, radionuclides, and biological agents.
  
- Why are we using HITS?
  - o After 9/11, President Genshaft charged the University Task Force on Campus Safety and Security to identify areas where USF needed to focus its resources to maintain safety and security. The Task Force recommended the implementation of a University-wide hazardous material database integrating all hazardous materials present on our campus. The intent of this recommendation was to provide information to emergency responders in the event of an incident.
  
- What items will be inventoried in the HITS system?
  - o Original stock bottles containing:
    - Flammable/combustible liquids and solids
    - Solid and liquid oxidizers
    - Organic peroxides
    - Corrosives
    - Toxic liquids and solids
    - Compressed gases and liquefied gases
    - Biological toxins
    - Tax-free ethanol
    - Any of the above items that have been completely transferred to new containers.
  
- What items will not be inventoried in the HITS system?
  - Retail products available for household use (ie. household bleach, WD-40)
  - Working chemical solutions
  - Sample preparations/kits
  - Synthesized products
  - Growth media/agar
  - Prescription pharmaceuticals
  - Calibration standards
  - Buffer solutions

- Dyes/stains
- Dessicants (ie. Dri-Rite®)
- Radionuclides\*
- Biological agents\*

(Radionuclides and biological agents will be included in subsequent phases of the HITS inventory implementation.)

- How will my inventory be entered into the system?
  - The responsibility for inventorying and maintaining the chemical inventory and tracking system rests with Environmental Health and Safety. OPS students are being hired, trained, and closely supervised by EHS Laboratory Safety Coordinators for the purpose of inventorying chemicals currently in the laboratories. The logistics will be closely coordinated with PIs and designees to ensure minimal disruption to teaching and research.
  - Several inventory sites are being set up on campus, either at receiving or distribution locations, to ensure chemicals are inventoried prior to distribution to the labs. This function will be staffed by an additional person to ensure delays are not created. While we recognize this will not ensure a 100% inventory of chemicals on campus, it provides a baseline for emergency response and future improvement of business practices.
- Will I be notified before the inventory team visits my laboratory?
  - All laboratories will be contacted prior to collection of their current inventory information, and times will be coordinated to minimize the impact on any research or class that is being conducted.
- How will my chemical receiving process be affected by HITS?
  - The goal of the HITS project is to impact the current method of chemical receiving as little as possible and to provide just-in-time delivery. In most instances the laboratory worker will not know that their chemical receiving process has been altered. However, if there are delays such as a vacant lab at the time of delivery, the package will be returned to the HITS receiving area and a note will be placed on the laboratory door. Please contact your HITS receiving area at the number listed on the note to set up a delivery time. All packages that require refrigeration will be temporarily stored in a refrigerator in the receiving area.
- Will I have to account for every daily use of chemicals in my laboratory?
  - HITS is designed to keep an inventory of the chemicals that are entering and exiting the University and their various locations on campus in the interim. Only original manufacturers' containers will be entered into the system. Day-to-day transactions, e.g., mixtures created in the laboratories, will not be tracked. For the sake of simplicity, and to provide a conservative estimate to emergency responders, all containers in the HITS system are assumed to be full while in the lab.

- Who will be included in HITS?
  - o All USF Principal Investigators who own laboratories where hazardous chemicals are used or stored will be included in HITS. In the future, other hazardous chemical storage areas will be added, including Physical Plant and the College of Visual and Performing Arts.
  
- Who else will be able to view my inventory?
  - o Chemical inventory information will be viewable by both the University Police Department and Environmental Health and Safety for the purpose of emergency response. The systems will also allow PIs to designate individuals, including laboratory workers and other PIs, with whom they would like to share their inventory information.
  
- What security features are in place to keep the information in HITS private?
  - o The application contains multiple levels of security to maintain the privacy of the stored information. The HITS database is located behind firewalls on a secure USF server. In order to log in to the system, users must enter their valid USF email address and network password from an on-campus computer or from off-campus using a virtual private network (VPN) connection. Additionally, each user has specific functionality based on his or her defined role.
  
- How can I add a new user or designee to my laboratory?
  - o Initially, names and email addresses of lab users and designees will be collected by the inventory team. After the initial inventory has taken place, please submit new user information to EH&S for entry into HITS. Your request will be processed within approximately three business days.
  
- What are my HITS responsibilities as a USF researcher?
  - o Notifying the HITS receiver by way of email, of a partial or complete transfer of chemicals to another researcher. The receiver will be responsible for updating the inventory.
  - o Indicating on-line that a chemical has been completely utilized or is ready for disposal by EHS.
  
- When will I receive my user name and password?
  - o User names and passwords will be the same as your USF network email address and your network login password. Your HITS account will be activated as your laboratory is initially inventoried and training is provided.
  
- Whom can I contact with questions pertaining to the HITS program?
  - o **David Smith**  
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  - o **Aisha Turnbull**

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- **Sandy Cooper**  
Interim Director, Environmental Health and Safety  
(813) 974-0868  
[scooper@admin.usf.edu](mailto:scooper@admin.usf.edu)
  
- Whom can I contact if I am experiencing technical difficulties with the HITS program?
  - **USF Information Technologies Help Desk**  
(813) 974-9000  
[helpdesk@admin.usf.edu](mailto:helpdesk@admin.usf.edu)