

Information Sheet

Prohibition of Food in Laboratories and Workshops

This information sheet applies to all laboratories and workshops at ETH Zürich. In terms of this information sheet, laboratories are defined as workspaces where chemical, pharmaceutical, radioactive and/or biological substances are handled either in an analytical, preparative or technical way. Workshops are defined as workspaces where different kinds of materials (e.g. wood, metal, gypsum, stones, glass, plastics) are handled and/or equipment is repaired.

Legal Foundations

- Ordinance on the Prevention of Occupational Risks – VUV
- Ordinance on the Law of Labor/Employment, Health Protection – ArGV 3

Principle

It is strictly prohibited to eat, to drink or to chew bubblegum in laboratories and workshops. In addition, food must not be stored in laboratories and workshops. Exempt are hereby food samples that are used in research. Such food samples have to be labeled according to this information sheet.

Food that is meant for consumption has to be stored and consumed in rooms intended for this purpose (e.g. break rooms). Moreover, the filling of chemicals into food containers (e.g. beverage bottles) and the storage of such containers is strictly prohibited.

Reasons for Prohibition

Risk of contamination

Harmful substances in laboratories and workshops (chemicals, dust, etc.) might contaminate food and, thus, by consumption, your health might come to harm. In addition, bubble gum absorbs airborne particles which, by chewing, are then supplied to the body.

Danger of confusion

The filling of chemicals into food containers increases the risk of intoxication because people generally assume that anything stored in food containers is meant for consumption.

Laboratory and Workshop Orders

The prohibition of the consumption and storage of food needs to be part of the specific orders of laboratories and workshops. In addition, the prohibition of filling chemicals into food containers needs to be included as well. Employees and students who work at the said workspaces have to be instructed.

Labeling

of food samples

Food samples that are used in research have to be labeled with the prohibition sign “no food or drinks”.

of entrance doors

Entrance doors of laboratories and workshops need to be labeled with the prohibition sign “no food or drinks” if food samples are used at workspaces.



Fig. 1: Prohibition sign “no food or drinks”

Attachment / Additional Labeling

- Poster: Keep your meal free of contamination!
English translation available via stickers@ethz.ch
- Poster: Do never fill Chemicals into Beverage Bottles!
English translation available via stickers@ethz.ch

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A man in a blue tank top is shown from the side, leaning over a white sink. He is washing his hands under a stream of water from an orange faucet. On a white shelf above the sink, there is an orange container, a tube of toothpaste, and a white pump dispenser. A white paper towel dispenser is mounted on the wall above the shelf. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Keep your meal free of
contamination!**

**Food has to be stored and consumed in rooms
intended for this purpose (e.g. break rooms).
Do not forget to wash your hands before eating.**

**The original German version is authoritative.
Translated by courtesy of Suva.
The English translation is for information purposes only.**

Do never fill Chemicals into Beverage Bottles!

- Pay attention to hazard pictograms.
- Store dangerous chemicals in original packaging.
- Do never fill chemicals into food containers.



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For further information see the Suva publication "Gefährliche Stoffe. Was man darüber wissen muss". The order number of the publication is 11030.d. Please note that the publication is not available in English.

Additional information about the labeling of chemicals can be found on the website www.suva.ch/ghs or on the campaign website www.cheminfo.ch.