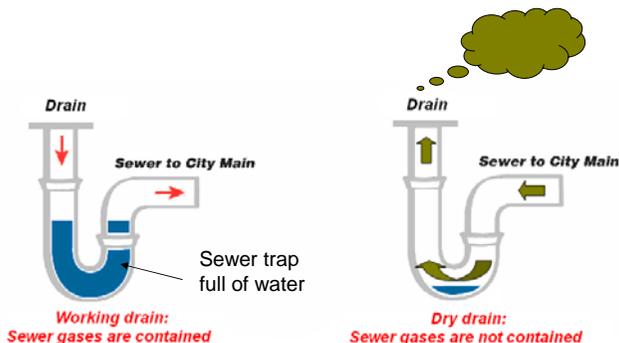


Out-of-place odor problems?

Do you have an unexplained out-of-place odor in a room, hall, floor or other localized building area? Maybe it smells like [sewer](#), [decay](#), [dead animal](#), [solvents](#), or [indescribable odor](#).

It may be coming from the sewer through a dry sink or floor drain trap.

Before you call Risk Management and Safety to voice your concern, here are a few tips that may help you to prevent this kind of unpleasant smell.



In most cases, the cause of these odors is due to [dry sewer traps](#).

However, if you suspect [natural gas](#), call Risk Management and Safety (621-1790), and [evacuate the room](#).

As you can see on these figures, when the pipe is full of water, sewer odors cannot come back in the room.

On the contrary, when it is dry, there is nothing to stop odors from coming into the room.

As laboratories are usually negative in pressure, odors can come into the room very easily.



Sink frequently used
No odor problems here



Pipe not connected to the sink



Floor drain hidden by furniture



Sink hidden by laboratory chemicals and gloves



Floor drain



First, you have to look for all [sinks](#), [cup sinks](#) or [floor drains](#) in you office, lab, bathroom, nearby rooms and halls.

They can be long forgotten and hidden by [computers](#), [furniture](#) or [lab equipment](#) - particularly when sinks are not used often.

You should count them and note their locations. Place colored tape on faucets above cup sinks to find them easily.

Then you have to pour in about a [liter of water](#) to fill the sewer trap. Assign the task to make sure it's done.

You can add [mineral](#) or [vegetable oil](#) (about 25mL) to prevent water from evaporating too quickly from sewer traps that are used rarely.



Finally, you have to repeat this [every couple of weeks](#) to prevent odors from coming back.

Note the date you filled the drains and plan the next time.

If the odor does not dissipate and go away, [contact Risk Management & Safety \(621-1790\)](#) for assistance.

Remember:

- 1) Locate and count all sinks and floor drains in your area
- 2) Add water every two weeks
- 3) Add a little mineral oil to extend time between watering