

December 8, 2006

IMPORTANT MESSAGE – PLEASE READ! Your laboratory access privileges depend on your compliance with the information below.

It has come to my attention that keys to laboratories are being shared, in clear violation of BNC policies. This practice must stop immediately! Severe sanctions will be imposed on both individuals and groups where this practice is being perpetrated.

The control method within the Birck Nanotechnology Center to ensure that only trained individuals may have access to laboratories is through the issuing of keys. **THIS IS A CRITICAL SAFETY ISSUE WITHIN THE FACILITY.** The person issued the key is responsible for retaining possession of that key, and must remain with any laboratory visitor who is let into the laboratory with that key. Allowing another individual to use the key will result in a two-week suspension from the laboratory. A person using someone else's key to enter a laboratory will also receive a two-week suspension from all laboratories.

If the misuse of laboratory keys is endemic to a particular group, the offending group will be locked out until an irreversible corrective action is developed to ensure that the practice cannot continue. The BNC cannot and will not operate without our critical safety protocols in place.

In addition to the obvious safety implications of this practice, sharing of keys also has a financial impact on all researchers in the building. Since people sharing keys are essentially stealing time in the laboratory, the laboratory fees must be increased to bring us to the break-even point at which we operate. This means that those who operate in the laboratories with integrity will be paying for those who do not. This is blatantly unfair to the honest members of our community.

I would like to appeal to all faculty, students, and post-docs in the facility to cease this practice immediately and return to the stated policies of our facility – one key for one person when that person has received the requisite training. Only when we comply with our policies and practices can we ensure that we are able to perform top-quality research in a safe manner.

To those who are operating within the BNC policies, I would like to thank you for your continued support of our community and to assure you that I will do all in my power to ensure that you only pay your fair share of our operating expenses.

Please note that this memo has been reviewed by and is endorsed by the BNC Policy and Procedures Committee and the Director of the Birck Nanotechnology Center.

Sincerely,

John Weaver

John R. Weaver
Facility Manager
Birck Nanotechnology Center