

Fire Science Laboratory

Instructions for Placing Purchase Orders

The goal of these instructions is to provide an easy way for tracking purchase orders.

1. Determine if the lab already has the item you need. Look in the storage drawers, instrument cabinets and storage closet. Ask the lab staff if the lab has it.
2. If the lab does not already have the item you need, find a supplier with a reasonable cost. Start with WPI Preferred Venders. Look in the catalogs in the lab office, ask others and check the web. The Thomas Register is a good place to start if you need to do some web searching. Insure it is what you really need so you don't have to return it.
3. Call supplier. Ask for sales department. State that you want to get cost and availability. Make sure to ask about an educational discount. **DO NOT USE THE CATALOG PRICES !**
4. Fill out yellow Purchase Order Request Form, found in the lab office desk drawer. Include account number to charge to. The professor responsible for the account to be charged must give his signed approval for the purchase. The Faculty Coordinator is responsible for the lab equipment, lab supplies and service to industry accounts. Make a copy and give original to Admin to obtain PO number.
5. Once Admin provides you with a yellow copy of the official Purchase Order and a PO number, order the product by the following steps:
 - a) Call supplier. Ask for sales department. State that you want to place an order.
 - b) Identify yourself as from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Center for Firesafety Studies, Higgins Labs, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609.
 - c) They will determine if we have an account with them and will accept PO number.
 - d) If they will not accept a PO, ask lab staff to set up an account with that company.
 - e) Give the order and have them read it back to you to insure it is correct. Confirm prices!
 - f) Since different departments have accounts, **INSURE THEY HAVE THE RIGHT ACCOUNT AND SHIPPING ADDRESS !!!**
 - g) Get a confirmation number and an expected delivery date.
 - h) Write down on the order form that it was ordered, what date, by whom, the confirmation number and expected delivery date.
 - i) Put the Purchase Order Request Form and the yellow Purchase Order copy stapled together in the "PO's awaiting arrival" folder in the front of the desk drawer in lab office.
6. When item arrives, using the yellow Purchase Order in the drawer, confirm that all items arrived undamaged. Check off each item, sign that you received it and place shipping receipt in Admin's "in box.". If any item is not correct, call supplier Make note of any mistakes and the course of action taken.

Returning Orders That Were Received

1. If you determine that an item that was ordered *and received* is what you ordered but not what you really wanted and you want to return it, call the supplier and get a Return Authorization Number and a "ship to" address.
2. If you are going to order another item from the SAME company, you can use the same PO number. Write on the yellow Purchase Order and in PO Book that the original item was returned, by whom, the Return Authorization Number and item that replaced it and it's new confirmation number. Remember to include the new cost. If you are NOT ordering another item, just include that the original item was returned, by whom and the Return Authorization Number.
3. Fill out Purchase Return Form. Make a copy and attach it to the yellow Purchase Order in folder. Put Purchase Return Form in envelope and include in package. Be sure to package the item properly and include label with address.
4. Bring to Admin to get a postage work order.
5. Bring packaged item (which includes Purchase Return Form) to mail room.

Cancelling or Adjusting Orders Placed But Not Yet Received

1. If you determine that an item that was ordered *and not received* is not really what you want and you want to cancel or adjust it, call the supplier and state that you want to cancel (or adjust) an order that was placed. Use the order confirmation number that is on the original Order Form to insure you are canceling the right order and not someone else's !!
2. They may say that it was already shipped at which point, you need to wait for it to arrive and follow the above steps for Returning Orders That Were Received.
3. Write on the yellow Purchase Order that the original item was canceled or adjusted, by whom and it's new confirmation number, if there is one. Remember to include the new cost. If you are NOT adjusting the order, then just include that the original item was canceled and by whom and the confirmation number.
4. Fill out Purchase Return Form. Make a copy and attach to yellow Order Form in folder and give copy to Admin.