Institutional Biosafety Biohazard Policy

BIOHAZARD POLICY

PURPOSE: To ensure safe handling, storage and disposal of potentially biohazardous materials, as defined below, used in Institutional research or instructional projects. Enforcement of this policy by the Institution is meant to provide a safe working atmosphere and a well controlled research environment. The Institutional Biosafety Committee review also provides compliance with federal regulations on the use of recombinant DNA.

POLICY: All Institutional research and instructional activities involving biohazardous materials, as defined below, shall be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) prior to the use of any such reagent. Projects submitted for sponsorship by external agencies should be submitted for IBC review prior to acceptance of funding.

APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to all research and instructional activities, sponsored and unsponsored, conducted under the auspices of this Institution. Institutional projects involving the use of biohazardous materials at other institutions should receive biosafety approval from the cooperating institution. Copies of IBC approvals from cooperating institutions should be forwarded to our own IBC.

RESPONSIBILITY: The Principal Investigator is primarily responsible for biohazard control and for compliance requirements as well as the day-to-day supervision of research in his/her laboratory(ies). The Dean, his/her designate, the Department Head or Director of an Academic Unit is responsible for informing the Principal Investigator of the requirement for compliance and providing requested assistance or direction in maintaining biohazard control, but is not responsible for immediate day-to-day supervision of the biohazard control aspects of research. The IBC is responsible for the specific advisory and approval functions with the help of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, the IBC will review facilities and procedures to determine their adequacy.

DEFINITIONS

Biohazardous Material -- The categories below represent the areas of primary concern with respect to biosafety. Projects involving material(s) included by any of these categories should be submitted for IBC approval.

Chemical Carcinogens used in conjunction with animals.
Toxic/Infectious Agents used in conjunction with animals.
Oncogenic viruses used in conjunction with animals.
Infections Agents requiring handling conditions above Biosafety Level 1; (Biosafety Level determinations are based on the recommendations outlined by the CDC-NIH publication Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories.

Recombinant DNA (unless exempted by National Institutes of Health Guidelines).
Human blood and blood products, human body fluids, and/or human tissues.
Microbial toxins (<1mg of pure toxin, or solutions with concentrations of >1mg/ml pure toxin).
Whenever a contractual agreement or grant proposal requires Institutional Biosafety Committee approval for the safe handling of a biological or chemical product.
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR AND SUPERVISOR: At the Institution, Principal Investigators and Laboratory Supervisors working with biohazardous agents are responsible for the control of these agents. Under the guidance of the Principal Investigator, the Laboratory Supervisor is responsible for training the employees in safe work practices, proper waste disposal techniques, correcting work errors, identifying defective working conditions which could result in injury or property damage, and developing a positive attitude among employees toward accident prevention. The supervisors are responsible for the preparation of a safety plan for research under their direction, as well as familiarizing all of their employees with the safety equipment available in their laboratory or building. This training should include, at a minimum, information on the following:

Facilities: a) chemical fume hood use; b) biological safety cabinet(s); c) location of nearest safety shower and eyewash station; d) location of nearest first aid kit, fire extinguisher and fire alarm pull station; e) chemical spill kits; f) disinfectants commonly used in the lab; g) proper gloves, eye and face protection and lab clothing; h) respiratory protection.
Storage: a) chemicals; b) flammable solvents; c) compressed gal cylinders; d) biohazardous agents and organisms.
Waste Disposal: a) chemical; b) biological; c) radioisotope.
Training: a) Right-to-know; b) biohazard control.
Laboratory Postings
Accident Reporting: The Supervisor should investigate each accident, initiate corrective action, and recommend improvements to the Principal Investigator on what measures will ensure maximum safety.
EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS: The success or failure of any program to control biohazardous agents ultimately rests with each employee or student. Each must comply with all safety rules, regulations, and procedures required for the task assigned. They are responsible for reporting to immediate supervisors all information about accidents which result in personal injury, illness, property damage, and any existing action or condition that could result in such incidents. They are also responsible for conducting themselves and their work in such a manner so as not to place their fellow workers at any undue risk.

The IBC also serves as an advisory committee for Institutional projects that involve possible biohazards that do not appear to fall into one of the eight areas listed above. When it is unclear as to whether a material constitutes a potential biohazard, the IBC should be consulted.