

BioSide Lines

June 2000

The Newsletter of the UW Office of Biological Safety

Staffing Change Announcement

Joe Kanabrocki, Director of the OBS, has accepted an offer to be the Biological Safety Officer for Medical School of Washington University, St. Louis, MO. His departure is effective June 30, 2000. Jan Klein will be the interim director.

Please join us Friday, June 16th for lunch at the Safety Department, 30 North Murray Street, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. to bid Joe farewell.

Update Your Address Books

The following new email addresses for OBS staff have gone into effect.

Jan Klein	jklein@fpm.wisc.edu
Darren Berger	dberger@fpm.wisc.edu
Nancy Schensky	nschensky@fpm.wisc.edu
General Biosafety	biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu

The biosafety website URL has also changed. Please update your bookmarks
www.fpm.wisc.edu/biosafety

There will be a transition period during which the old addresses will automatically be rerouted.

Red Bag Disposal

There seems to be an epidemic of improper disposal of red or orange biohazard bags. Numerous calls have recently come in to OBS from UW Grounds staff and county landfill operators complaining that biohazard bags originating from UW facilities are being discarded inappropriately. The county landfill will only accept biohazard bags that have been decontaminated and have the symbol defaced. Violations may result in fines to the University as well as poor relations with our surrounding community.

The correct way to handle biohazard bags is to deface the biohazard symbol after autoclaving. This can be accomplished simply by placing a bold "X" through the symbol with a heavy-duty permanent marker. It is not acceptable to place an autoclaved biohazard bag inside a black plastic bag or a cardboard box because this practice raises suspicions. While some biohazard bags have heat sensitive lettering that changes upon autoclaving, it is still necessary to deface the symbol.

Defacing the biohazard symbol after it has been autoclaved serves to communicate that the bag now is safe to handle without special precautions.

Biosafety Equipment Available

A recent addition to the biosafety website is a listing of biosafety cabinets available for purchase. You should contact the seller to work out the price and other details.

Submit classified-type notices for your equipment that needs a good home to OBS.

FAQ

Where can I find risk group listings? Risk group listings are lists of pathogens based on the transmissibility, invasiveness, virulence, and lethality. Microbes assigned to Risk Group 1 do not cause significant disease in healthy adults. Risk Group 2 pathogens cause disease that either is not serious or is readily treatable. Risk Group 3 pathogens are associated with serious or lethal human disease for which preventive or therapeutic interventions *may* be available. Assignment to a risk group broadly correlates with biosafety recommendations for appropriate handling and containment.

The risk group listing upon which we rely most heavily is found in the NIH *Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules* Appendix B. The American Biological Safety Association has an excellent compilation of risk group information from NIH and other sources, providing an international perspective. Both of these sources are accessed readily from our website.

Submission Forms Combined

Many of you probably still have a good supply of yellow ("Statement Regarding Use of Biological Materials; OBS-1) and blue ("Biological Materials and Recombinant DNA Registration"; OBS-2) submission forms. With the predominance of electronic transfer, we see fewer colored forms submitted and so have decided to abandon the color-coded tradition. While we will continue to accept the old forms we would prefer that you migrate to the new version. The main reason for the changes is to collect data in a manner that highlights potential biohazards. We have moved away from requesting grant-by-grant submissions to a consolidated view of research conducted in a facility.

The most recent addition to the protocol form is a request for an exposure prophylaxis procedure. We would like researchers to plan for accidental exposures and train their staff to know the steps to follow. Having this information in our files will allow us to respond in a timely fashion should staff turn to us for assistance.

Shipping News

Need to send that sample out right away but you don't have the right box? To facilitate compliance with transportation regulations for infectious substances (Class 6.2 hazardous material), OBS has a *limited* supply of UN-certified shipping containers that accommodate dry ice and infectious substance. These packages are available for \$35.00 (cost).

Other possible subjects:

UV recommendations from ABSA

IBC policy on BSC certification

Role of the IBC; introduce members

Autoclave efficacy monitoring

how and how often

Lab security

Select agent transfer registration extended