11-12-2021

Web Capture: Research Compliance Safety Management

Office of Research Compliance, University of Maine

Safety Management

UMS Safety Management (SM), in partnership with the UMaine Office of Research Compliance, works with researchers to encourage and support the safety of employees throughout the state and beyond. Safety Management supports the research community in a multitude of ways including; working with UMaine and UMS Human Resources, UMS Risk Management, and the UMaine researcher's chain of command.

Some more detailed examples include: examining job descriptions with Human Resources (HR), assisting supervisors with the evaluation of the health and safety checklists, conducting site visits for Principal Investigators, performing client observations for the Office of Research Compliance, reviewing Fieldwork Hazard Assessments and Safety Plans, answering specialized or unique occupational safety training questions for personnel, and monitoring chemical purchases behind the scenes. SM supports the UMaine chain of command by remaining active on organized committees (e.g., UMaine Radiation Safety Committee, Institutional Biosafety Committee, and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) which help link the compliance structure between the campus and the system.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, SM also receives Proposal Approval Routing System (PARS) notifications surrounding specialized or unique concerns that UMaine research has chosen to address directly. Some examples are:

- The use of radioactive isotopes (e.g. benchtop or field work), equipment containing radioactive materials (sealed sources), or ionizing radiation-producing equipment (e.g. electron microscopes, x-ray equipment)
- The use of Class 3b or 4 lasers
- Activities which require medical evaluations for potential exposure to Particularly Hazardous Substances defined in the UMS chemical hygiene plan template, specific OSHA regulated substances (e.g. lead, asbestos), and pesticides (e.g. acute toxicity single exposure category 1 and 2)
- Any project activities involve human underwater activities (scuba diving, hookah diving, or breath-hold/free diving)
- Activities where respiratory protection (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, elastomeric or filtering face piece respirators) are necessary due to health exposures or lack of engineering controls (chemical fume hoods) in place
- Activities which have excessive noise in excess of 85db (e.g. having to shout or raise your voice when within 6' of another person)
- Activities which require interaction with human blood, tuberculosis, wild animals, possible exposure to zoonotic diseases and infectious material
- Activities which require special SM training requirements
- Activities which generate hazardous waste paid for through indirect cost recovery

SM may reach out by way of automatic emails through PARS or directly from Safety Management. The guidance and suggestions provided in those communications are only as good as the information you provide as an input to PARS. If you are working with the concerns above, and have had no contact with SM post 3 weeks from submitting your research proposal, contact safety management at sem@maine.edu. **It is especially important to verify that the SM recommendations have been completed prior to grant award to prevent interruptions or postponements to your research.** If you are working with the noted concerns above, and not involved with PARS, you should also be proactively communicating with your chain of command and UMS Safety Management.

For more information (such as Policies/Guidance/Programs, training information, and SM Staff) please visit the Safety Management webpage.

Biosafety

IBC Overview
Policy
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Institutional Biosafety Commitee (IBC)

Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) registration is required prior to use of 'biohazards' in research. Under UMaine policy, 'biohazard' includes recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules (including plants), biological materials/biospecimens (human and animal blood, bodily fluids, and/or tissues), infectious agents* or select agents/toxins. (*The University of Maine has defined "infectious agents" as all bacterial, parasitic, fungal, viral, and prion, included within Class 2 or higher classes; See Appendix B of NIH Guidelines.)

For guidance on whether your biohazards work requires IBC or other approvals, view the IBC Protocol Submission Decision Tree.

Questions regarding the IBC may be directed to umric@maine.edu.

May 15, 2020 Update from the NIH Office of Science Policy: The NIH Office of Science Policy has issued Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding interim biosafety guidance for research with SARS-CoV-2 and relevant Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) requirements under the *NIH Guidelines*. Appendix B of the *NIH Guidelines* provides the basis for the classification of biohazardous agents by Risk Group (RG). At the present time, SARS-CoV-2 best meets the definition of a RG3 agent and IBCs should consider the agent to be RG3 as a starting point in their risk assessments when reviewing research subject to the *NIH Guidelines*. The RG classification may change over time as additional information about the virus, such as potential treatments or the development of an effective vaccine, becomes available.

Additional interim biosafety guidance for research with SARS-CoV-2 and IBC requirements under the *NIH Guidelines*

Up next: Policy

Contact for IBC Questions

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