

National Biosafety Stewardship Month

From the National Institutes of Health *Notice of National Biosafety Stewardship Month and Health and Safety Requirements for NIH Grantees*:

"Recent reports of lapses in biosafety practices involving Federal laboratories have served to remind us of the importance of constant vigilance over our implementation of biosafety standards. These events potentially put individuals at risk, undermine public confidence in the research enterprise, and must be addressed to prevent their reoccurrence. Efforts to strengthen biosafety oversight and practice must be supported and carried out by organizational leadership, biosafety programs, and individual laboratories.

As a measure toward preventing future lapses as well as promoting stewardship of the life sciences and biosafety awareness across Federal entities, Federal laboratories will reinforce their attention to safe practices in biomedical research. In that regard, the NIH and other HHS agencies will be instituting National Biosafety Stewardship Month, and we urge all NIH grantee institutions and/or contractors to do the same at the local level.

In the month of September, NIH laboratories will, and grantee institutions and/or contractors are encouraged to, do the following:

- **Reexamine current policies and procedures for biosafety practices** and oversight to ascertain whether they require modification to optimize their effectiveness;
- **Conduct inventories of infectious agents and toxins** in all laboratories to ensure that the institution has a record of which infectious agents and toxins are being utilized, has documentation that those materials are properly stored under the appropriate containment conditions, and has documentation that cites the party responsible for appropriate stewardship of the materials; and
- **Reinforce biosafety training** of investigators, laboratory staff, and members of IBCs to include
 - Reexamining training materials and practices being utilized by the institution;
 - Updating materials as appropriate; and
 - Ascertaining the appropriate frequency of training and conduct training when the interval between training or other considerations warrant it."

Full NIH Notice available at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-14-127.html>

The Department of Biological Safety at UK currently provides a comprehensive biosafety program to help you ensure that you meet all of your requirements as an NIH grantee and/or contractor. If you need assistance in assessing your lab's compliance with biosafety practices and procedures, training or Institutional Biosafety Committee registration and approval our department is always available to assist you.

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