Appendix C – Transporting and Shipping Biohazardous Agents (including Laboratory Specimens)

Contents

A. TRANSPORTING BIOHAZARDOUS AGENTS AND LABORATORY SPECIMENS

This section outlines the proper procedures for transporting biohazardous agents and laboratory specimens within buildings and between buildings. For procedures on transporting biohazardous waste, including recDNA waste, refer to Section 4.F.4 of this manual. Biohazardous agents must be packaged so that PPE is not needed during transport. PPE should not be worn in public corridors.

1. Within Building

When packing biohazardous agents for transportation within the same building but through public areas, the following guidelines apply. UW Medical Center and Harborview Medical Center have specific requirements for transporting materials in their facilities. These requirements are found in each hospital's infection control manual.

a. Biohazardous agents including specimens of blood or other potentially infectious materials must be placed in a primary container that prevents leakage during transportation. A test tube, for example, is a primary container.

b. The primary container must be closed prior to being transported. The test tube, for example, must have a tight fitting cap or the cap must be taped in place or otherwise secured.

c. Label the container with name of the PI and the room number.

d. The primary container must be placed in a leak-proof secondary container. The test tube, in this example, is placed in a sealable plastic bag.

2. Between Buildings

When biohazardous agents are transported between buildings, the following guidelines apply.

a. If using a motor vehicle for transport between buildings, it must be a UW owned and operated vehicle (e.g., Fleet Services, UCAR).

b. Biohazardous agents, including specimens of blood or other potentially infectious materials, must be placed in a primary container that prevents leakage during transportation. A test tube, for example, is a primary container.

c. The primary container must be closed prior to being transported. The test tube, for example, must have a tight fitting cap or the cap must be taped in place or otherwise secured.

d. Label the container with name of the PI and the room number.

e. The primary container is placed within a leak-proof secondary container. The test tube, in this example, is placed in a sealable plastic bag. It is good practice to place absorbent material between the bag and tube to cushion the tube and absorb leakage from improperly sealed tubes. It is mandatory that absorbent material be used for items transported in a motor vehicle (UW owned and operated vehicle such as Fleet Services or UCAR for transport between buildings).

f. The packages are then placed in an outer transport container labeled with the biohazard label. This container can be a cardboard box with a styrofoam liner, a cooler, or other sturdy transport container.

g. If the material is not transported by the original packager (i.e., by courier or UW owned and operated vehicle) the outer transport container must show the following information in addition to the biohazard label:

   1) Identification of the material being transported - for example: human blood, animal blood, cultures, etc.
   2) The name, department, building, box number, and phone number of the receiving party
   3) The name and phone number of the sender
   4) The date sent

B. SHIPPING BIOHAZARDOUS MATERIALS

For shipping biohazardous materials, including infectious substances, contact EH&S Environmental Programs at 206-616-5835.

Anyone involved in packaging, shipping or preparing paperwork for the shipment of biohazardous materials, including infectious substances, must have task specific training:

1) Prior to beginning this assignment, and

1) Be re-trained every two years.