



Memorandum

To: Principal Investigators
Date: May 15, 2009
From: Angela Hildyard Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity, Paul Young Vice-President, Research

Re: Biosafety and Radiation Safety Requirements

The University of Toronto must follow all provincial and federal regulations in the area of health and safety. **University faculty and staff are required to sign an annual accountability statement validating health and safety compliance.**

Both faculty and university administration have an important role in ensuring compliance with federal and provincial laws and regulations. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety together with the specialized safety committees representing the research community have the role to develop procedures for compliance adapted to the university culture/environment.

Following the introduction of the new laws and regulations combined with the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Toronto and the Federal Granting agencies, effective January 2009, the University was required to identify all biological agents¹ in its possession for research and teaching. Knowledge of these agents (and the research or teaching associated with them) is required in order to perform appropriate risk assessments. **If you use or possess any such agents for your research, teaching, or any other reason, you must have a valid Biosafety Permit by August 10, 2009.**

A valid permit is also required for possession of any radioactive material, x-ray machine and class 3B and class 4 lasers.

Prior to commencing study/work, all persons handling/using biological materials, radioisotopes, x-ray machines or class 3B and class 4 lasers are legally required to receive appropriate information, instruction and training in order to carry out their work safely. The training for radioisotopes, x-ray machines and laser users will continue to be offered to all University of Toronto faculty, students and staff. **To ensure that researchers are aware of their obligations with regard to biosafety, we ask that all new and existing lab personnel working with biological agents complete a course on Biosafety by August 10, 2009.** Principal Investigators must also demonstrate their knowledge of biosafety and may elect to either attend a course as a refresher, or to write an exam without attending the course.

It is very important that we all do our part to ensure that research involving radiation and biological agents can continue in our university.

Further information may be obtained from the EHS website: <http://www.ehs.utoronto.ca/>

Angela Hildyard
Vice-President
Human Resources and Equity

May 27, 2009

Paul Young
Vice-President
Research

May 27, 2009

¹ The definition of "biological agents" is: any bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, prions, natural and/or recombinant DNA and RNA; pathogens of plants or animals; tissues, cells, blood and/or body fluids from humans or animals and proteins or toxins produced by, or derived from, a micro-organism and able to cause disease in a human; any synthetic form of the human pathogen or toxin.