



Biological Agent Inventory Guidance

rev. 2017.0601

Objective

To provide helpful information to laboratories conducting inventories of biological agents.

Definitions and Acronyms

Biological Agents: This may include, but is not limited to, agents which may be infectious to humans, plants or animals, recombinant and/or synthetic nucleic acid molecules or modified organisms, human cell lines and specimens, or other potentially infectious material.

Information

Department of Biological Safety staff will inquire about inventory practices in your lab during initial and annual audits. Below is some helpful information. If you have questions regarding inventory practices and procedures you may contact our office at any time.

When performing inventories, consider the following:

- **Materials from other researchers.** Work with others who are sharing storage areas to perform an inventory at the same time to verify that all materials have someone responsible for them. Inherited materials should be inventoried upon receipt by your lab as you are no responsible for them.
- **Abandoned materials.** If you find that materials were abandoned by someone that is no longer at the university, please contact the Department of Biological Safety to determine the proper disposal method for the material.
- **Registration with Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC).** Performing an inventory is a good time to verify that all biohazardous materials are registered properly with the IBC. If materials are found that are not currently registered an amendment should be made to the PI's IBC registration to include those materials.
- **Clearly labeled containers.** Easily identifiable containers allow laboratory personnel to find what they are looking for in a timely manner. Clearly labeled containers are also very helpful during the re-inventory process.
- **Select agents and toxins.** Be aware of biohazards designated as [select agents and toxins](#) as these materials have special reporting and inventory requirements. If these materials are found during an audit contact the Biosafety Officer/Responsible Official immediately.
- **Clean, frequently defrosted freezers.** A routine defrosting and cleaning is an opportunity to create some space and organization in the freezer.
- **Is the freezer working properly?** Freezers fail. Get into the habit of checking your freezer regularly; it is the best way to ensure that it is working properly.