

Incident Procedures and Reporting

Immediate and Serious Danger from Pathogens, Toxins Or Escape of Genetically Modified Organism, Outside of a Biosafety Cabinet or Animal Holding Room.

If there is an immediate and serious danger of infection, serious harm or escape of a GMO then staff and students in the facility should:

- If people have been injured, contact a First Aid Officer
- If skin injury has occurred from needle, scalpel, broken glass or other sharp contaminated object, wash the site with soap and water
- If infectious or toxic aerosols (potential or actual) have been generated, turn off any equipment which may be generating aerosols and allow 30 minutes for settling of aerosols before decontamination
- If Personal Protective Equipment or clothing is contaminated with infectious or toxic material, remove and place in biohazard bag for later decontamination
- If eyes or face are contaminated, wash in emergency eye wash
- If skin is contaminated, shower in a regular shower. (Do not use the emergency showers if the contaminant is an infectious organism as there is no drain under the emergency showers and water runoff will spread the contamination.)
- Ensure doors to the facility are closed and establish an exclusion zone, until the immediate danger is contained
- Notify people in the immediate area of the incident, to both warn them of potential danger and ask for their assistance. Place a "Do Not Enter" sign on the door
- Notify the Laboratory Coordinator, if possible
- If a GMO has escaped the facility, make attempts to recapture, annihilate or inactivate the GMO
- All personnel should stay out of the area for 30 minutes
- If PPE was contaminated and removed, don clean PPE
- Utilise the spills kit in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.3 and OGTR Guidelines. Wet absorbent material with suitable disinfectant and place over the spill
- Allow at least 10 minutes to effect disinfection
- Remove any sharp objects with tweezers or tongs and discard in sharps bin
- Collect contaminated material and transfer biohazard bags or bins
- Wipe over area with the same disinfectant and allow at least 10 minutes to effect disinfection
- Dispose of waste in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.3 and OGTR Guidelines
- Complete an incident report

Reporting

A key component of an effective incident prevention program is prompt, reliable reporting. Reporting hazards, near misses and injuries provides an opportunity to intervene at the earliest opportunity, to either prevent an incident from occurring or minimise the severity of injury.

The following people should be notified:

- Laboratory Coordinator
- Operations Manager
- Project Leader
- University Biosafety Officer and Executive Officer of the IBC
- Work Health and Safety Representative if involving risks to human health
- Facilities Management Unit
- Head of School/Institute/Centre
- Employees of other institutions, will also need to report the incident to their employer

The people listed above, will be notified automatically through the submission of two reports:

- 1) The UniSA online incident reporting form
- 2) An email notification to biosafety@unisa.edu.au

If personnel involved in the incident are employees of other institutions, such as SA Pathology, then those institutions also need to be notified.

UniSA Online Incident Reporting Form

Project Leaders and Laboratory Coordinators take the primary responsible for reporting hazardous incidents to the Occupational Health and Safety Unit (People, Talent and Culture). Students are not able to lodge an incident report online. It is preferable that reports to UniSA People, Talent and Culture be submitted within 48 hours of the incident.

The University's online reporting system, [Hazard/Incident Reporting and Investigation System](#), is used to report hazards and incidents, record investigation findings and corrective action to prevent a recurrence.

Access is available through the Staff Portal, logging into 'myUniSA' using your username and password.

For further information: <https://i.unisa.edu.au/staff/ptc/safety-and-wellbeing/hazard-reporting>

Reporting to University Biosafety Officer and Executive Officer of the IBC

Institutional Biosafety Committee and the University Biosafety Officer must be notified of hazardous spills (outside of a biosafety cabinet), needle stick and sharps injuries or unintentional release involving:

- Risk Group 2 or above microorganisms,
- Genetically modified organisms,
- Biological hazardous material,
- Pest animals,
- Pest invertebrates,
- Pest aquatic animals or plants

Project Leaders and Laboratory Coordinators take the primary responsible for reporting incidents to the IBC. Reporting can be done by emailing the details to biosafety@unisa.edu.au.

Definition of Unintentional Release

Temporary loss of pathogen, pest or GMO containment does not necessarily constitute a reportable unintentional release. Likewise, a spill is not an unintentional release if the spill or organism is contained within a facility.

Reportable Spill Incident

Small spills contained within a Biosafety Cabinet Level II do not need to be reported to either the UniSA online incident reporting system or UniSA Biosafety Officer.

Genetically Modified Organisms

Escape or unintentional release of a GMO needs to be reported to both the IBC and the Office of Gene Technology Regulator. Reporting to the IBC or the OGTR, is coordinated through the University Biosafety Officer and IBC Executive Officer biosafety@unisa.edu.au.

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

Dependent on the nature of the contaminant, availability of an appropriate vaccination and the immune status of the injured person, prophylactic vaccination may be indicated by a medical professional.

Supervisors should direct injured persons to seek advice from the UniSA Health and Medical Centre, and submit a UniSA FS32 payment form to pay for the consultation fee and any required prophylactic vaccination.

What Happens Next?

Depending on the situation, the Chair of the IBC, University Biosafety Officer and representatives of People, Talent and Culture may:

- Attend the scene
- Interview relevant personnel about all aspects of the incident.
- Identifying any potential breaches of the Gene Technology Regulations.
- If needed, seek expert advice, or ensure that counselling is arranged (under the Employee Assistance Program) for persons affected by the incident.
- Prepare a report for the IBC and, as appropriate, People, Talent and Culture, OGTR, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research & Enterprise (who may notify the Vice Chancellor), Pro Vice Chancellor and Head of School/Institute/Centre