Biosafety Inspection Protocol

Overview:
In accordance with best practices and National Institutes of Health (NIH) guidelines section IV-B-3-c-(1), periodic inspections and re-inspections by the University Biosafety Officer (BSO) and/or designate(s) are required at SFU to ensure that biological safety guidelines are being followed. These biosafety inspections are in addition to the monthly lab safety inspections.

The predominant criteria used in the inspections are those found in the PHAC (Public Health Agency Canada) and CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency) guidelines. Other guidelines may be imposed; and labs or rooms with multiple projects at different containment levels will be assessed at the higher level. Inspection criteria will be made available to the Principal Investigator (PI) or lab staff prior to an inspection.

Frequency:
PIs responsible for level 1 labs are expected to self-inspect their labs on an annual basis and to report their findings to the BSO. The BSO and/or designate will inspect one third of all containment level 1 labs per calendar year. All containment level 2 and 3 labs will be inspected at least once per calendar year by the BSO and/or designate.

Scheduling the Inspection:
An inspection or re-inspection may result from any of the following:
1. A PI may request an inspection;
2. An inspection may be pre-arranged between the PI / lab staff and the BSO/designate;
3. An inspection may be required as a condition of importing pathogens into Canada;
4. An inspection may be unannounced.

Inspections that are pre-arranged between the PI/lab staff and the BSO/designate will be scheduled in the month that the PI’s biosafety permit was issued. The PI will be contacted to arrange a time that is convenient for them and their lab staff. If the PI does not respond to the BSO’s request for an inspection, the BSO will proceed with an inspection unannounced.

Inspection Procedures:
During the inspection, the BSO/designate will identify items requiring attention and a written summary of these items will be made available to the PI. The BSO will arrange a meeting with the PI to discuss the inspection report and how compliance/conformance can be attained. A reasonable time frame will be given to the PI to remedy the items requiring attention. A follow-up inspection will be scheduled to determine whether the items requiring rectification were addressed in a timely fashion.

If the lab remains in non-compliance, the inspection results will be forwarded to the Biosafety Committee (committee) for review. The committee will engage in communication with the PI until such time as the committee deems that a third inspection or alternate action (such as permit suspension) is appropriate. If the permit is suspended, the committee will notify the Vice President, Research and the granting agencies.