

FactSheet

Recombinant & Synthetic Nucleic Acids and Biohazard Incident Reporting

Personnel who do research with recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids (r/s NA) are required to report significant spills, incidents, potential or accidental exposures, or illnesses associated with r/s NA research and other biohazardous agents when they occur. This is not only a regulatory requirement, but protection for coworkers and the community at large.

If an incident involves recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids (r/sNA), additional reporting to outside agencies is necessary. NIH has specified certain types of incidents for reporting. These include the following:

- Overt exposure to recombinant organisms.
- Injuries or illnesses stemming from a potential biohazard exposure to recombinant organisms.
- Non-injury incidents, spills and exposures while using r/s NA
- Release or escape of any transgenic organisms (e.g. transgenic flies, animals, and plants) from containment.
- Inadvertent or accidental spills of rDNA outside of containment (e.g., spills that require at least two people to remediate).



INJURIES INVOLVING R/S NA

All potential injuries or exposures to biohazardous materials (including r/s NA) must be reported (see the [Lab Emergency/Non-Emergency Reporting](#) website). For instructions on reporting, visit the [Emergency Notification and Incident Reporting](#) web page.

Take care of the injury or exposure to yourself **FIRST**. Whether you were stuck with a needle or a sharp, splashed in the eyes, mouth, or nose, or have experienced an unusual reaction to something you are working with, the area affected must be washed or rinsed first and the incident reported to your supervisor. Medical attention may be necessary.

WHAT I NEED TO KNOW...

- Ensure your lab has Pathogen Safety Data Sheets (PSDS).
- Treat any exposure or injury immediately.
- Report all exposures and injuries when they occur.
- Report all non-injury incidents, spills and exposures while using r/s NA to EH&S Biosafety.
- Post emergency numbers and contacts in the laboratory and review with all personnel.
- Ensure that lab staff are aware of notification/reporting during a minor/major incident ([Emergency Notification and Incident Reporting](#)).

SPILLS/INCIDENTS INVOLVING R/S NA

Spills (even minor ones that may require at least two people to cleanup), accidents, and incidents involving recombinant and synthetic nucleic acids must be reported. If you have questions about reporting a potential exposure, how to clean up a spill, or how to decontaminate a particular biohazard, EH&S and Biosafety personnel are available to help: 323-442-2200 or biosafety@usc.edu.

Call the Department of Public Safety (DPS) at 323-442-1000 (HSC) or 213-740-4321 (UPC) to report an emergency. DPS will assist with additional support from On-Call staff. Serious injuries or illnesses must be reported through the Injury Notification hotline: 323-442-2200, then press 1. Provide detailed information e.g., name of injured party; time of injury; location; witnesses; etc.

Note that a [Manager's Report of Incident](#) must be completed and submitted to Workers Compensation.

For more information, including exposure control plans and rDNA information, go to EH&S' [Biosafety](#) web page.

REFERENCE

[FAQs on Incident Reporting - web page](#)



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