



The University of Mississippi

Health and Safety
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TO : Faculty and Staff Researchers Involved with Living Organisms

FROM : Edward M. Movitz, Health & Safety Officer
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DATE : April 23, 2003

SUBJECT : Research involving species not otherwise designated or listed

The University of Mississippi has a long-standing policy of establishing regulations that protect our staff, our students, the public and the environment from unnecessary risk or harm. As a responsible institution of higher education, the University makes every effort to design and operate its facilities, programs and projects in compliance with the spirit and letter of federal, state and local health and safety regulations.

University regulations and policies change as State and Federal regulations evolve. Recent examples are the regulations governing Diving Safety, Select Agents, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and Hazardous Materials Transportation.

It was never the intent of our regulations to affect either the quality, the quantity or the freedoms normally associated with research or with teaching. Nor was it the intent of our regulations to be rigid or inflexible. Indeed, certain endeavors may require that exemptions to the regulations be made in order to foster scientific undertakings. However, in the absence of adopted regulations or guidelines, it is universally agreed that no research should be undertaken on our campus without a review of the associated hazards and risks.

Therefore, effective immediately, the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) is authorized to oversee and regulate any research involving the use of potentially hazardous and/or nonindigenous species of plants and animals on the campus that are not otherwise regulated. The IBC is authorized to review and regulate research and protocols that have the potential to put the University at risk through the use of any alien, invasive or potentially hazardous species. The IBC is authorized to correspond directly with researchers, to inspect research facilities and to comment and request modifications of protocols. All correspondences from the IBC should include a copy directed to Health and Safety for record keeping.

- An "Alien species" means any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to our area.
- An "Invasive species" is defined as a species that is
 - Non-native (or alien) to our local ecosystem and,
 - Whose introduction may cause, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.
- A "Hazardous Species" may include, but is not limited to Ferns, Flowering plants, Grasses, Vines, Amphibians, Reptiles, Fish, Mammals, Invertebrates, Tunicates, Bryozoans, Sponges, Coelenterates, Annelids, Mollusks and Crustaceans that have the potential to displace native species and are known for their ability to alter ecosystems.

In the event that the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) formally adopts regulations or guidelines governing any of these unregulated species, regulatory responsibility will immediately transfer over to the IACUC. The Office of Research is further authorized to form a separate committee at any time to oversee the administration of research involving any of the hazardous species indicated above.

Please direct any questions about this policy change to the Health and Safety Officer or to the Chair of the Institutional Biosafety Committee.