

OGTR Findings - Inspection 2024

<WHS-INFO-015>

This information sheet is intended to communicate findings from the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator inspection of JCU physical containment facilities (PC1-PC2)

Furniture Sealed Surfaces

Instances of laboratory chairs that had damage exposing the internal wood/absorbent material were observed.

If any laboratory furniture is damaged and is no longer sealed the item is to be decontaminated and removed from the laboratory.

Facility Sealed Surfaces

Damage and wear and tear to facility surfaces were identified during the inspections.

Please submit a MEX as soon as items are identified so they can be repaired/fixed.

This would include paint missing, penetration into walls, instances with floor coverings splitting or coming away from walls/floor.

Ethanol/Disinfectant

Ethanol used for decontamination is to be prepared at 80% volume/volume concentration.

Decanted solutions must have an expiration date, which must be earlier than the expiration date on the original packaging.

If the original product packaging does not have an expiration date, solutions are to be marked with an expiration date of 4 weeks after decanting.

The bottle/container will require a GHS compliant label for the solution listing the concentration, and expiration date.

Chlorhexidine Hand Wash

Instances of expired chlorhexidine hand wash solution were identified.

Hand wash solutions are to be replaced when the expiration date has been reached.

Refillable bottles must display the expiration date of the stock bottle.

Used PPE

Used gloves were noted on benches.

Gloves are to be immediately disposed of in the appropriate waste stream.

Laboratory Gowns

Used laboratory gowns were observed to be hanging on chairs in several facilities.

Gowns are to be returned to hooks within the facility. If there is insufficient hanging space, arrangements are to be made to add additional hooks.

Electronic Devices

A laboratory user was observed to be handling a mobile phone while wearing gloves and touching screen device's screen inside a PC laboratory.

Personal devices such as mobile phones shall not be used whilst wearing gloves or stored in locations where they could be contaminated. This includes personal earphones and earplugs.

Phones can be placed inside a sealable bag, and the outer layer disposed of before the phone is taken from the facility.

Autoclave

Autoclaves used for the disposal of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) are to be maintained and calibrated at least every 12 months. The autoclave should have a service sticker attached to indicate when the last calibration occurred and when the next calibration is due.

The effectiveness of decontamination by the autoclave must be monitored at least once per month by the use of:

- a) thermocouples or resistance thermometers, to ensure that the required temperature has been achieved; or
- b) chemical indicators which use a combination of moisture, heat and time and which progressively change color with the time exposed at the specified temperature; or
- c) biological indicators such as spore strips; or
- d) enzyme indicators.

The results of the monitoring tests conducted each month must be retained for the preceding 12 months and provided to the regulator upon request.

GMO Waste

GMO waste (PC1, PC2) is required to be labelled and kept secure until the material is either deactivated (autoclave, chemical) or collected by a registered waste company, in accordance with the OGTR Guidelines for the Transport, Storage and Disposal of GMOs

This can be achieved by locking the bin lid, or keeping the bin in a location that is secure.

Pest Control

A pest control strategy is required to be in place in physical containment facilities. This can be achieved by a contractor or the facility staff. The evidence of the pest control strategy could include a floorplan of the facility with location of bait stations marked. The appropriate baits are to be replaced as per the manufacturer/pest controller recommendation.

Facility Doors

The doors to a physical containment facility are required to be shut and secure. This is to ensure security of the facility, provide containment in the case of a spill and allow the building air handling systems to function.

Further information:

Work, Health and Safety Unit:

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