V. Biohazard Signs and Tags

The United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations (29 CFR 1910.145, Specifications for accident prevention signs and tags) require that warning signs and/or symbols be used to warn personnel and visitors of the potential hazards in the workplace. Specifically, with regard to biohazards, the universal biohazard sign must be used to “...signify the actual or potential presence of a biohazard and to identify equipment, containers, rooms, materials, experimental animals or combinations thereof, which contain or are contaminated with, viable hazardous agents.” OSHA recommends that biohazard signs be fluorescent orange or orange-red with the lettering and symbols a contrasting color. An example of a sign (not the correct color) is given at the end of this section.

- The University requires that the universal biohazard symbol be used to designate the presence of materials defined as biohazard (see Chapter I of this document);
- All laboratories must display room signs signifying the biohazards present, an emergency contact and phone number, and the necessary precautions to be taken when entering or working in the area (room signs [Fig 5.1] may be requested through EHS by using the “Room Sign Request Form” found on the OEHS website);
- **PIs are responsible for ensuring that hazard signs are posted and are current and accurate;**
- When using experimental animals cared for by University Laboratory Animal Resources (ULAR) staff, the PI must give a minimum of three days’ notice via the e-Protocol online system, to the animal vivarium supervisor before exposing or treating the animals with biohazardous agents or hazardous chemicals so that ULAR staff can prepare for appropriate animal husbandry. A working day is defined as a “day” during which University offices are open and excludes weekends and holidays. The PI or laboratory staff should confirm the appropriate signage is posted at the animal room level as indicated on the OSU Animal Hazard Safety Protocols (AHSP) prior to initiating hazardous work. The AHSP is provided to the PI and ULAR supervisors have access to the signage.
research protocol for the use of the particular agent as prepared by the PI must be submitted to the IBC and the research protocol must receive IBC approval before the research can begin.