

## Biological Materials Transport on UW Campus Guidance

UW is exempt from the US Dept. of Transportation Hazardous Materials transport regulations (CFR49) when moving materials on campus or in a campus vehicle on roadways. However, we must still adhere to some safety guidelines when moving the materials.

### Transport On Campus Not in a Vehicle:

*Applies to transport within a building (e.g. in stairwells, elevators, through lobbies, office space, public or non-lab spaces) and between laboratory buildings within a short distance (e.g. across street, down sidewalk, across parking lot). Transport by bicycle or scooter is discouraged.*

### Specimen/Inner container packing and labeling

- Use leak-proof specimen containers with secure closures or place specimen within a secure closing container (such as zip bag or screw-cap canister).
- Place specimen or bundle multiple specimens into a secondary container
  - May use zip bags, screw-cap canisters, large conical tubes, small bins with lids
  - Use cushioning material to keep specimens padded & separated during transport (e.g. paper towels, bubble wrap, vial sleeves, microtube boxes, tube racks for example).
- Clean the exterior of the secondary container(s) using an appropriate disinfectant for the specimens or for your laboratory
  - Container(s) should be safe to handle without PPE in the event handling is needed during transport
- For human specimens, a biohazard label must be affixed to the specimen container or to the secondary container bundle. This is optional but recommended for any biological specimen of any source.
- Recommended to briefly label specimen or secondary container(s) as to the contents or include a brief list of contents with the transport container.

### Outer container packing and labeling

- Use a container with a secure closure, preferably a rigid container with lid (e.g. plastic bin, cardboard box).
  - Must be clean enough to handle without gloves or PPE during transport.
- Pack secondary containers within the outer container using padding material to prevent shifting during transport.
- Label exterior container with:
  - Contact information for responsible person/lab:
    - Name, phone, lab name/location.
    - If moving between buildings, include lab or building address.

- Brief description of materials and handling information *applicable to your materials*
  - Should be informational without causing undue alarm to non-lab individuals during transport. Examples for labeling:

Biological Research Samples	Research Samples, Non-Infectious
Animal Specimens for Research	Diagnostic Specimens -Do Not Open
Non-Hazardous Biologicals	PPE Needed to Handle Inner Contents

- Labels must be legible and durable (water resistant is recommended)
- Disinfect exterior of container prior to transport, if necessary, to remove any contamination acquired during packing in the lab.

## Handling

- Avoid moving large or fragile materials by hand if a cart is available for transport between laboratories, building floors or between buildings
- Take care when moving materials through public spaces or high traffic walkways
- Do not leave the package unattended, do not bring the package into food or bathroom areas.

## Safety

- Be prepared to clean a spill immediately, if necessary, during transport
- Portable spill kits can be assembled easily: gloves, eyewear, disinfectant, absorbent material, hand sanitizer, waste disposal bag
- Have a means to contact someone for assistance or emergency services in the event of an incident

## **Transport using a campus vehicle:**

Applies to transport on roads by campus or fleet vehicles.

Personal vehicle transport of laboratory biologicals of any kind or dry ice for UW-Madison purposes is discouraged.

- Transport of infectious materials, pathogens, biohazards/hazardous laboratory materials or specimens in preservatives by personal vehicle *is not allowed and may violate federal regulations*.
- Bus or taxi use is discouraged. Drivers may not allow you to bring packages onto the vehicle at their own discretion. Contact UW Transportation Services, bus or taxi managing authority for policies in advance of transport. Transport by bicycle or scooter is discouraged.

- Unsure if you can transport your biologicals? Contact us [biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu)

## Packaging and Labeling

### Inner & Secondary Containers

- Use leak-proof specimen containers with secure closures or place specimen within a secure closing container (such as zip bag or screw-cap canister).
  - For specimens suspended in formalin, alcohol, ethanol or other chemicals, contact us before transport! [biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu)
- Place specimen or bundle multiple specimens into a secondary container
  - May use zip bags, screw-cap canisters, large conical tubes, small bins with lids
  - Use cushioning material to keep specimens padded & separated during transport (e.g. paper towels, bubble wrap, vial sleeves, microtube boxes, tube racks for example).
- Clean the exterior of the secondary container(s) using an appropriate disinfectant for the specimens or for your laboratory
  - Container(s) should be safe to handle without PPE in the event handling is needed during transport
- For human specimens, a biohazard label must be affixed to the specimen container or to the secondary container bundle. This is optional but recommended for any biological specimen of any source.
- Recommended to briefly label the specimens or secondary container(s) as to the contents.
- Use multiple leak-proof containment layers to house your specimen

### Outer container

- Use a container with a secure lidded closure, preferably a rigid container (e.g. plastic bin, cardboard box)
- Pack secondary containers within the outer container using padding material to prevent shifting during transport
- Include a list of contents with the container, describing the specimens within and any known infectious materials or pathogens.
- Label exterior container with:
  - Contact information: Name, phone, lab name/location
  - Origin and Destination locations/addresses
  - Brief content description and handling information applicable to your materials
    - Should be informational without causing undue alarm to non-lab individuals during transport. Examples:

Biological Research Samples	Research Samples, Non-Infectious
Animal Specimens for Research	Diagnostic Specimens -Do Not Open

- Labels must be legible and durable (water resistant is recommended)
- Outer container must be clean to handle without PPE – disinfect if necessary, to remove any lab contamination acquired during packing.

## Handling

- Place package/container in a secure location within the vehicle to avoid tipping or shifting.
- If possible, place in an inconspicuous location within the vehicle (reduces risk of theft).
- Avoid moving materials by hand if a cart is available for transport to and from the vehicle. Take care when moving materials through public spaces or high traffic walkways

## Safety

- Carry a spill kit in order to be prepared to clean up a spill quickly during transport.
- Carry a spill cleanup procedure.
- Spill kits can be assembled easily: gloves, lab coat, eyewear, disinfectant, absorbent material, waste bag.
- Do not leave the package unattended. Do not bring package into food or bathroom locations.
- Be sure to have a means to contact emergency services in the event of an incident.

## **In the event of an emergency or incident on the roadway**

- Be aware that a roadway incident, however unlikely, could be severe and plan accordingly for the most unlikely of events to ensure maximum safety.
- Bundling multiple small specimens has an advantage in the event the outer container spills – it is easier to clean up and contain 1 or 2 bagged specimen bundles rather than 20 small bagged specimens.
- In an accident, you may not be able to communicate with first responders or bystanders about your materials; be sure the list of contents with the package and labels do the communication for you
  - Responders should know what risks are present from the list of contents
  - Responders should know who to contact about the materials
  - Have a spill cleanup procedure and kit readily available
  - Bystanders viewing the materials should see enough labeling to know the materials may not be safe to handle.

Questions about these procedures? Not sure if you should transport in your own vehicle?

Contact Us!! [biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:biosafety@fpm.wisc.edu)

Need to transport chemicals? Contact EH&S Chemical Safety first!!  
<https://ehs.wisc.edu/labs-research/hazmat-shipping-and-transportation/>