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Q-FEVER SUMMARY FOR RESEARCH PERSONNEL

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In 1979, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) issued UCSF *Special Orders* as the minimal precautionary measures to control *Coxiella Burnetii,* the causative agent of Q-fever, associated with sheep experimentation on the Parnassus Campus. The UCSF Biological Safety Committee and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) are responsible for ensuring compliance with the *Special Orders*.

This update summarizes the Cal-OSHA *Special Orders* as they pertain to research personnel who are involved with sheep experimentation within the Sheep Containment Facility (SCF), located on the 4th and 5th floors of Medical Research Building I, and inside the research laboratory. The full text of the Cal-OSHA *Special Orders* is posted in the SCF, and is also available at EH&S, call 476-1300.

- All personnel entering the SCF must be informed of the Q-fever hazard by their supervisors, trained in safe work practices, and wear personal protective equipment. Contact EH&S at 476-1300 for training.
- Respiratory protection, satisfactory to Cal-OSHA, must be worn by all personnel entering the SCF, unless an individual is sero positive for *C. Burnetii.* Employees must enroll in the EH&S Respiratory Protection Program, call 476-1300 for respirator fit-testing.
- Personnel who have had or *may* have potential exposure to *C. Burnetii* must be receive an annual medical examination which includes serological testing. Contact Employee Health at 476-1214 to make an appointment for a medical examination.
- “High risk biological samples" such as fluid and tissue specimens from sheep uterus and placenta cannot be removed from the SCF.
- **Highly infected** specimens, such as fetal skin and digestive tract, are considered "high risk biological samples" by the UCSF Biological Safety Committee and, therefore, cannot be removed from the SCF.
- Other specimens that have not been made inactive for the Q-fever rickettsia and not highly infected are considered "biological samples."
- If it is necessary to transport biological samples out of the SCF, the

specimens must be carried in non-contaminated, sealed, airtight, and unbreakable containers that are labeled to indicate the Q-fever hazard.

- The UCSF Biological Safety Committee may require the use of additional secondary and tertiary containers for transporting certain biological samples out of the SCF.

- Procedures which may generate airborne Q-fever rickettsia, such as homogenization, blending, zonal centrifugation, etc., **must** be performed inside a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtered biological safety cabinet.

- Keep the number of personnel who handle sheep specimens active for *C. Burnetii* to a minimum. These individuals should be proficient in aseptic microbiological techniques to minimize spreading Q-fever contamination into other areas.

- Areas, floors, surfaces, and equipment involved in sheep specimen handling must be disinfected and/or sterilized by effective methods such as a Q-fever germicide (10% bleach + ALL® detergent, Unicide-128®) or ethylene oxide.