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Dangerous Goods: What Would You Do?

Wendy Loumeau

Scenario: Your lab is working on a slow growing isolate from a wound culture. While performing your gram stain, you see tiny, gram-negative, coccobacilli. You proceed with additional testing and find the organism is oxidase negative and also has a weak positive catalase reaction. Based on these results, you suspect *Francisella tularensis*. You call the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories (IBL), and they ask you to send the isolate to them on a chocolate agar slant as UN2814, Category A, ambient. How do you fulfill this request?

- ◆ Do you have chocolate agar slants on hand (Figure 1)?



Figure 1. IBL recommends using a Chocolate agar slant when sending *F. tularensis* or other cultures for confirmatory testing.

- ◆ Do you have a Category A, ambient shipping system?
- ◆ Has the shipping system expired (i.e., the date on the package is more than 5 years old)?
- ◆ Does the shipping package have the current Class 6 label (Figure 2)?
- ◆ If not, where will you obtain a current Class 6 label?

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ISLN: Two Way Communication

Wendy Loumeau

Idaho Bureau of Laboratories (IBL) regularly communicates with the Idaho Sentinel Laboratory Network (ISLN) to disseminate information to clinical laboratories throughout the state. This is done through blast messages, which are sent via email and faxed, as requested. For messages with a higher level of importance that may warrant immediate action or return communication to IBL (Figure 1), messages are resent using an alternate mode of communication after 24 hours. Use of the ISLN blast messages ensures that laboratorians are adequately in-

formed of pertinent communications. Although communication is initiated through blast messages, it is not unilateral. Clinical laboratories obtain information from the messages and often respond with testing or additional information.

During the 2014 Ebola outbreak, IBL sent five lab blast messages about this virus (Figure 2). The messages served to disseminate in-

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Figure 2. Effective October 1, 2014, shippers may not use the old Class 6 label. This image is the current label authorized for use.

Dangerous Goods: What Would You Do?

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- ◆ How will you generate a Shipper's Declaration, as required for Category A packages (Figure 3)?
- ◆ Do you have staff available and certified to ship Category A infectious substances (Figure 4)?
 - ◆ Have they been authorized to ship by your lab director?
 - ◆ Are they confident in this shipping process?

Dangerous Goods (DGs) are materials or items with hazardous properties which, if not properly controlled, present a potential hazard to human health and safety. Packaging and shipping DGs, such as in the example above, can be a confusing process. To reduce the confusion, IBL recommends that certified shippers at sentinel laboratories participate in regular exercises requiring them to package and label mock DG samples without physically shipping them. This can be done on a quarterly basis and allow staff to practice packaging and labeling DG Category A and B substances at your facility. Shippers at your facility would evaluate the exercise packages and develop best practices that may include job aids for facility-specific shipping information.

Additionally, IBL is offering a similar exercise to Idaho sentinel laboratories, where the



Figure 3. Shippers must determine how to generate a Shipper's Declaration for Dangerous Goods.

laboratorian will package and ship a Category A infectious substance (e.g., a STEC or *Shigella* culture) to IBL to be evaluated by our certified shippers. This has been a valuable experience for participating laboratories. Past participants have noted that it highlighted strengths and identified areas for process improvement. If your lab is interested in participating in a shipping exercise, contact Michael Stevenson at stevensm@dhw.idaho.gov or 208-334-0569 for more information.

National Laboratory Training Network
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 700, Silver Spring, MD 20910

attended the 8 hour workshop 5/21/15 Boise, ID

Packaging and Shipping Division 6.2 & Dry Ice

Workshop material provided a general awareness of DOT, ICAO, and USPS transportation regulations, function specific training needed to pack, mark, label, and document materials assigned to UN3373, UN2814, UN2900, and UN1845, and emergency response information.
The attendee's knowledge was tested.

I certify that this training and the attendee's performance on the competency exam are acceptable to ensure successful performance of the hazmat duties required in the current job function. Security awareness and additional safety training are documented separately.

Christopher L. Ball
Employer or Supervisor Signature

Trainer:
Patricia L. Payne, PhD, MT(ASCP)
JBM Associates, Inc.
3009 Montavesta Rd.
Lexington, KY 40502
Phone: 859.608.3143

Expiration date – (US DOT 36 months from date of certification, IATA 24 months from date of certification).

Figure 4. Certified shippers must be appropriately trained and authorized by their employer.

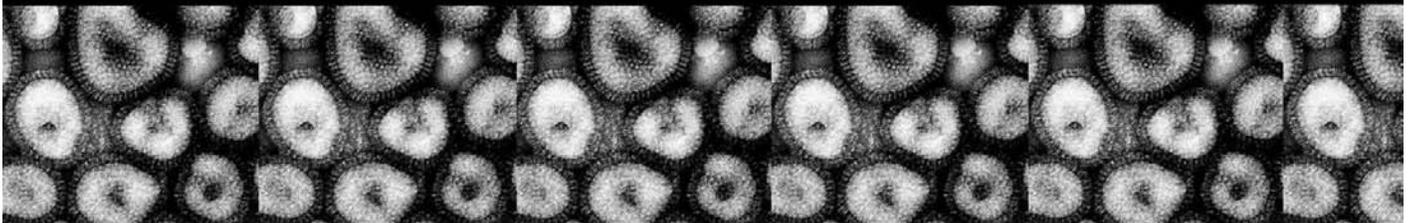
WANTED

INFLUENZA RESPIRATORY SAMPLES



REWARDS

- Partner with the Idaho Bureau of Labs to serve as a WHO influenza collaborating lab
 - Discover the Influenza A subtype or Influenza B lineage
 - Antiviral resistance testing
 - Negative Samples are further tested for other possible viruses
 - Surveillance helps formulate the vaccine



Testing is free of charge. FedEx account number available upon request.
Visit www.statelab.idaho.gov for submittal forms. Questions? 208.334.0594

ISLN: Two Way Communication

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ISLN Message Categories

LAB ALERT

Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants *immediate action* or attention

LAB ADVISORY

Important information for a specific incident or situation; *may not* require immediate attention

LAB UPDATE

Updated information regarding an incident or situation; *unlikely* to require immediate action

Figure 1. Message categories were developed from CDC's Health Alert Network message types to maintain language consistency (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/hantable.asp>).

formation and solicit information from laboratories for Category A shipping capabilities. This method standardized communications and maintained open communication lines between IBL and ISLN labs during a time where many questions arose.

In May 2015, IBL sent a *Lab Advisory* message after *Yersinia pestis* was confirmed in ground squirrel carcasses in Southwestern Idaho (see Figure 3 for DHW blog post). IBL recommended that clinical laboratories be on high alert for clinical samples that may contain *Y. pestis* and reminded labs of key indicators and biological safety concerns pertaining to this organism. Two clinical samples suspected of *Y. pestis* were subsequently sent to IBL for testing (both tested negative).

ISLN Messages Sent, 2014-Present



Figure 2. Twelve ISLN messages have been sent since January 2014. This includes five pertaining to Ebola.

Posted on May 22, 2015

Treasure Valley ground squirrel tests positive for plague

Figure 3. May 2015 DHW blog post about ground squirrel positive for *Y. pestis* (www.dhwblog.com).

A ground squirrel (whistle pig) found south of Boise has tested positive for plague. Idaho public health officials and Idaho Fish and Game are asking people to take precautions as outdoor summer activities shift into high gear over the long Memorial Day weekend.



squirrels in Idaho are not known to carry plague.

Plague is a bacterial disease of rodents that can cause serious illness to people and pets if not treated quickly. Plague is generally transmitted to humans and animals through the bites of infected fleas. It also can be transmitted by direct contact with infected animals, including rodents, rabbits and pets. Common rodents that can become infected include ground squirrels, rats and mice. Tree

More recently, IBL sent a *Lab Update* encouraging submission of cultures or primary specimens for selected diseases of public health importance to maintain surveillance. This message allowed IBL to seamlessly communicate issues of public health concern to Idaho sentinel labs.

This network would not be effective without the participation of Idaho's sentinel labs. IBL would like to thank you for your rapid response to these notifications and for your updates to the contact list with personnel changes. For questions or feedback about ISLN messages, contact Wendy Loumeau at loumeauw@dhw.idaho.gov or 208-334-0558.

Clinically Puzzling: What's Wrong With This Picture?



From the silly to the subtle, there are 10 safety and security issues highlighted in this picture. List as many as you can below and check your answers on page 6.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Cassie Dayan, Health and Safety Specialist

Cassie Dayan joined Idaho Bureau of Laboratories (IBL) in September as the Health and Safety Specialist where she will assist with the development of training materials for IBL and the Idaho Sentinel Laboratory Network (ISLN). Cassie holds a B.Sc. in Microbiology from Boise State, B.Sc. in Laboratory Science, Masters of Public Health from Idaho State University, and holds an ASCP certification in Laboratory Science. Cassie has worked for the past nine years as a laboratory scientist at St. Alphonsus specializing in hematology, coagulation, and body fluids; she also has previous research experience in microbiology.

Cassie lives in Kuna with her husband Asaf and three kids, Daniel (9), Mickayla (6), and Shirel (4). She runs the family Grade A goat dairy (Cassie milks, Asaf makes the cheese) and cheese processing plant for Eden Creamery. The farm raises about 30 Oberhasli dairy goats. In her spare time, Cassie enjoys reading, gardening, research, and going on road trips and fishing with her family.



Answers to *What's Wrong With This Picture?*

1. LARGE VOLUME OF CHEMICAL ON THE CABINET
2. PLANT IN THE LAB
3. CLOTH CHAIR
4. SODA IN THE LAB
5. SAFETY GLASSES NOT COVERING EYES
6. GLOVED HANDS HOLDING PHONE
7. PIPETTE IN MOUTH
8. OPEN LAB COAT
9. ID CARD NOT VISIBLE
10. OPEN-TOED SHOES IN THE LAB

Upcoming Webinars

October 27, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “2015 Influenza Update”

October 29, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “Quality Management for the Medical Microbiology Laboratory”

November 4, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “Next Generation Sequencing in Clinical Microbiology and Public Health Laboratories: Opportunities and Challenges”

November 17, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “The Updated Scoop on Poop—Culture Independent Diagnostic Tests”

November 19, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “CRE: The Evolving Conundrum of Effective Lab Detection and Reporting”

December 1, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “What’s New in the Antibiotics Arena?”

December 8, 2015; 11:00 am Mountain Time
 “Best Practices in Clinical Laboratory Safety”

Contact Wendy Loumeau at loumeauw@dhw.idaho.gov to register.
 View the [State Lab Website Training page](#) for more information.

Elizabeth Parent, Clinical Laboratory Inspector



Liz began as the Clinical Laboratory Inspector for the State of Idaho in August. Here, she will be inspecting, monitoring, and providing consultation to clinical laboratories to ensure licensure and certification requirements are met as well as ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations.

Liz has a B.S. in Molecular and Cell Biology with a minor in Chemistry from Boise State University. She also holds ASCP Medical Laboratory Scientist and Cytogenetic certifications. Liz brings 14 years of hospital, research, and reference laboratory testing experience to the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories. Liz is a native Boise Idahoan and spends her free time with family and good friends, camping, boating, hiking, snowboarding, and enjoying downtown Boise.