

**STATE OF UTAH
FISH HEALTH POLICY BOARD**

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

1. FHPB emergency response procedures are activated any time a confirmed finding or unconfirmed evidence of an emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen is reported. Events likely to lead to the reporting of pathogens and other fish health emergencies include but are not limited to:
 - a. results of routine inspections and testings at aquatic facilities;
 - b. unexplained kills or clinical signs of disease in aquatic animals;
 - c. potential contamination from another source with a confirmed emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen;
 - d. escapements from facilities with known prohibited or emergency prohibited pathogens;
 - e. evidence of law violations that may affect aquatic animal health (e.g. illegal facility or imports).

2. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) will each maintain a standing emergency response team headed by a fish pathologist. For UDAF, the standing emergency response team will consist of a UDAF fish pathologist, the state veterinarian or that person's designee, a member of the Fish Health Staff and the operator of the affected facility. For UDWR, the standing emergency response team will consist of a UDWR fish pathologist, the Chief of Aquatics or that person's designee, another member of the UDWR fisheries staff and the affected hatchery superintendent or fisheries manager. These emergency response teams may be enlarged at the discretion of the relevant agencies.

3. The UDAF Emergency Response Team is charged with responding to situations involving pathogens at aquaculture facilities, fee fishing facilities, and any out-of-state source. The UDWR Emergency Response Team is charged with responding to situations involving pathogens at public aquaculture facilities, private ponds, and wild populations of aquatic animals in waters of the state.

4. In the event of *unconfirmed evidence* of an emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen, the standing emergency response team from the agency in charge will initiate further testing procedures and will manage and monitor the episode until the pathogen has been confirmed or denied..

5. In the event of a *confirmed finding* of an emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen, the Fish Health Policy Board may become involved in overseeing response procedures. The FHPB may consider enlarging the emergency response team as needed, possibly to include representatives from other government agencies, representatives from various constituent groups, law enforcement personnel, or outside experts.

6. The UDAF and UDWR Emergency Response Teams are responsible for developing and executing action plans to respond to unconfirmed evidence and confirmed findings of an emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen. They will develop plans and initiate actions to address the following issues:
 - a. identify suggested sources of personnel and funds for responding to a particular situation;
 - b. assess the feasibility of various courses of action;
 - c. evaluate the need for, extent and details of a quarantine or other constraining action;
 - d. investigate the history of aquatic animal or water movement to and from the affected site and consider other methods or routes of pathogen transfer;
 - e. evaluate all laboratory findings;
 - f. determine disposition of the affected aquatic animal population;
 - g. establish appropriate sanitation and disinfection of the site, as needed;
 - h. evaluate the need for laboratory survey of all other populations in the quarantine zone and determine disposition;
 - i. recommend when, if, and under what conditions a quarantine may be lifted and if any restrictions remain in effect;
 - j. implement a follow-up inspection plan;
 - k. evaluate the need for involvement of law enforcement personnel.

7. In cases of unconfirmed evidence of an emergency prohibited or prohibited pathogen, the responsible agency emergency response team will submit a report to the other agency once the pathogen has been confirmed or negated. In cases of confirmed findings of a prohibited or emergency prohibited pathogen, the emergency response team will submit a follow-up report to the FHPB after initial response procedures have been completed but before a quarantine is lifted and before a follow-up inspection plan is implemented. The FHPB will report on emergency response procedures and FHPB decisions to the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources.

These procedures were approved by the Fish Health Policy Board and went into effect on September 25, 1998. Final review of this document was made on November 9, 1998.