

Definition of Biologically Hazardous Material

Biological material is defined as organic substances. Not all biological material is hazardous to humans, animals, plants or the environment.

Biologically Hazardous Material is defined by [Safe Work Australia, National Hazard Exposure Surveillance](#) as:

“Biological hazards are organic substances that pose a threat to the health of humans and other living organisms. Biological hazards include pathogenic micro-organisms, viruses, toxins (from biological sources), spores, fungi and bio-active substances. Biological hazards can also be considered to include biological vectors or transmitters of disease.”

Biologically hazardous material can be categorised into seven broad groups. Biologically hazardous material includes, amongst other things:

1. **Human body matter** that may contain viral or bacterial disease: blood, tissues, vomit, urine, faeces, saliva, breast milk, semen, lung aspirates, skin etc.
2. **Microorganisms which are pathogenic, allergenic, toxic or pests** including viruses, zoonoses, bacteria, prions, spores, fungi, moulds, yeast, algae, etc., including those that have been genetically modified.
3. **Living animals** including cattle, sheep, poultry, aquatic animals, invertebrates, wild animals, and their urine, faeces, etc., reproductively active eggs, larvae, etc., including those that have been genetically modified.
4. **Animal products** including raw and cooked meat not fit for human consumption, body fluids and material, milk, eggs and toxins etc.
5. **Laboratory cultures including pathogenic, allergenic, toxic or pest** animal and human tissue, bacterial, viral, cellular, both genetically modified or wild type cultures, etc.
6. **Environmental material** including pest plants, soil, plants which may contain pathogens or act as allergens, organic dusts, toxins from biological sources, rubbish, unaged compost, wastewater, sewerage, food which is not fit for human consumption etc.
7. **Genetic material which produces pathogenic, allergenic, toxic or pests which are biologically active substances or organisms**