



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6910
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
Telephone: (301) 496-7163
Facsimile: (301) 480-3387

January 24, 2020

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
A3413-01 [OLAW Case 2N]

Michael R. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President and
Chief Academic Officer
University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston
7000 Fannin St., UCT-1732
Houston, TX 77030

Dear Dr. Blackburn,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your January 22, 2020 letter reporting an adverse event affecting research fish at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, following up on an initial telephone report on December 23, 2019. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that nine goldfish died due to negatively affected water quality caused by excess reverse osmosis water flowing into the tank after the float valve broke off the lever. The float and lever were approximately ten years old.

The corrective actions consisted of installing a new float and lever, checking the water quality, and proactively replacing floats and levers every five years.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been implemented to correct and reduce the likelihood of a recurrence of this problem. OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the institution to comply with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.
Deputy Director
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Contact



**Office of the Executive Vice President
and Chief Academic Officer**

Michael R. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President, Chief Academic Officer

January 22, 2020

Brent Morse, D.V.M., DACLAM
Director, Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360, MSC 7982
6705 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

Re: Assurance A3413-01

Dear Dr. Morse,

The Animal Welfare Committee (AWC), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) provides this report of a mechanical failure resulting in death to animals. In accordance with Assurance A3413-01 and PHS Policy IV.F.3.a., a preliminary report was made by the (b) (6) to you on December 20, 2019.

On December 13, 2019, the AWC received a report of a mechanical failure resulting in the death of nine goldfish. During the daily room check on December 13, it was discovered that nine goldfish in a single tank had died overnight. It was noted that the float on the float valve had broken off at the point of attachment to the float lever that opens and closes the valve to the reverse osmosis water line. Consequently, the valve remained open during the overnight hours causing a large amount of reverse osmosis water to flow into the tank leading to a significant drop in conductivity resulting in the death of the nine goldfish. At the time of the incident, the float and lever were approximately ten years old.

A new float and lever have been installed on the single tank system to allow for normal opening and closing of the valve. The conductivity has been verified and is now at an acceptable level. All floats and lever components will be replaced proactively every five years.

The animals involved in this incident were supported by NIH funding (02-25620000-50032-13-0011494). No significant costs associated with this event were identified. Funds will be returned if associated costs are identified.

The AWC Protocol Deviation Subcommittee has investigated the incident, evaluated the corrective action plan, and feels that the incident has been successfully resolved.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Michael R. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

MRB/tsl

cc: Dr. Christophe Ribelayga, IACUC Chair

(b) (6)

AWC Office

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

7000 Fannin St., UCT-1732
Houston, TX 77030

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 7:19 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Subject: RE: OLAW Final Reports - Assurance A3413-01

Thank you for these reports, (b) (6) We will send replies soon.

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.
Deputy Director, OLAW

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 6:48 PM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Cc: Blackburn, Michael R <Michael.R.Blackburn@uth.tmc.edu>; Ribelayga, Christophe P <Christophe.P.Ribelayga@uth.tmc.edu>; (b) (6) Animal Welfare Committee, GM <awc@uth.tmc.edu>
Subject: OLAW Final Reports - Assurance A3413-01
Importance: High

*Sent on behalf of Michael R. Blackburn, Ph.D.,
EVP & Chief Academic Officer/Institutional Official, UTHealth—*

Good Evening, Dr. Morse –

Please find attached four (4) PDFs concerning the following:

- RCR-19-023;
- RCR-19-025;
- RCR-19-026; and
- RCR-19-027.

Please advise if you should have any issues with receiving the attachments.

Thanks and regards,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: *mgm*Date: *12/23/19*Time: *Voicemail*Name of Person reporting: (b) (6)Telephone #: (b) (6)Fax #: (b) (6)Email: (b) (6)Name of Institution: *U. Texas - Health*Assurance number: *A3413*Did incident involve PHS funded activity? ☐

Funding component: _____

Was funding component contacted (if necessary): _____

What happened? *3 fish dead when float broke + RO water flowed continually into tank.*

Species involved: *Goldfish*

Personnel involved: _____

Dates and times: _____

Animal deaths: *Yes, 3 fish*

Projected plan and schedule for correction/prevention (if known): _____

Floats to be replaced ea. 5 yrs.

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case # _____