



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) 402-7065

June 6, 2019

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

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 May 24, 2019 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Your letter supplemented the information contained in an initial telephone report to this office on April 24, 2019. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that on March 16, 2019 laboratory personnel discovered that the drainpipe of a frog tank had clogged and four frogs were found dead. Three other frogs were found alive and responsive but weak. They were given supportive care by the laboratory personnel and the condition of two of the frogs improved over the course of the day. The third frog was not in good condition. It was found dead the next day when examined by the CLAMC veterinarian and aquatics technician. The other two frogs fully recovered. The involved animal activity was funded by the PHS.

The corrective actions were to clear the clogged drainpipe. Also, the laboratory personnel were advised to euthanize any frogs in the future that appear to be distressed and would not be expected to survive the night.

OLAW appreciates the consideration of this matter by the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, which was consistent with the philosophy of institutional self-regulation. Based on the information provided, OLAW is satisfied that appropriate actions have been taken to investigate and correct the issue. We appreciate being informed of this matter and find no cause for further action by this office.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Brent C. Morse, DVM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
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

May 24, 2019

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 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) provides this report of a mechanical failure resulting in clinical consequences and 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 April 24, 2019.

On April 19, 2019, the Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) received a report of an equipment mechanical failure resulting in clinical consequences and the death of five frogs. Specifically, the drainpipe of a single commercial life support system tank clogged resulting in overflow of the tank. Consequently, four frogs were found dead from suffocation and three other frogs, two wild type and one inbred, were found behind the system weak but responsive. This incident was discovered by laboratory personnel on March 16, 2019, when checking on their frogs. The two wild type frogs were placed into isolation tubs by laboratory personnel and their condition improved over the course of the day. The inbred frog was not in good condition and was placed into an isolation tank in an inch of water and covered in wet towel with the frog's mouth and nose left above the water line to allow easy access to air. After draining the water from the overflowed tank, the laboratory personnel cleared the clog from the drainpipe.

On March 17, 2019, the frogs were checked by the Center for Laboratory Animal Medicine and Care (CLAMC) veterinarian and aquatics technician and they noted that the wild type frogs were normal and active and were allowed to further recover in the isolation tubs. The wild type frogs fully recovered, and were returned to their tank on March 18, 2019. Unfortunately, the inbred frog was found dead on March 17, 2019.

Laboratory personnel have been advised to euthanize any frogs in the future that appear to be distressed that would not expect to survive the night. Laboratory personnel and CLAMC have

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

Brent Morse, D.V.M., DACLAM
Re: Assurance A3413-01; RCR-19-007
May 24, 2019
Page 2 of 2.

decided not to make any modifications, such as adding drain holes towards the top of the tanks, to the existing tanks or life support systems. Such modifications may interfere with the normal functioning of the life support systems leading to additional problems. This incident was an isolated incident as the tanks and life support systems have been in use since 2013. Laboratory and CLAMC personnel and have been monitoring the tanks for adequate water level and flow and no problems have been noted since this incident.

The animals involved in the deviation were supported by NIH funding (1 R03DK11877-01). 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. Diane Bick, IACUC Chair

(b) (6)

Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2019 12:29 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD); Blackburn, Michael R; Bick, Diane L; (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Assurance A3413-01

Thank you for sending these final reports. We will send official responses soon.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2019 12:16 PM
To: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>; Blackburn, Michael R <Michael.R.Blackburn@uth.tmc.edu>; Bick, Diane L <Diane.L.Bick@uth.tmc.edu>; (b) (6)
Subject: Assurance A3413-01
Importance: High

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

Dear Dr. Morse,

Please find the attached four (4) PDFs with regard to the above-referenced.

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

Thanks and regards,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 7:37 AM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Open OLAW cases

Thank you (b) (6) Yes, that will be fine. We appreciate the effort this takes for you and your institution.

Sincerely, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2019 4:28 PM
To: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>
Subject: RE: Open OLAW cases

Hello Dr. Morse,

All three cases have been resolved. However, I have not submitted a final report for each case. I will begin drafting the final reports tomorrow and once complete obtain Dr. Blackburn's signature so that I can email them to you. I anticipate having these final reports for you by the end of the week. Is this acceptable? Thank you.

Best Regards,
(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2019 2:51 PM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Open OLAW cases

Importance: High

Hello (b) (6)

Your institution currently has three open compliance cases with OLAW including one you called-in around April 25th concerning frogs and another around February 26th concerning Watanabe rabbits not being fed for a day at a new satellite location. The third case was called-in around November 16, 2018 regarding mandibular bone plates not being applied in rabbits. Has this case been resolved? Is there a final report available? Please let me know and thank you for your attention to this.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health

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Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: *mgm*Date: *4/25/19*Time: *Voicemail*

Name of Person reporting: (b) (6)

Telephone #: (b) (6)

Fax #:

Email:

Name of Institution: *U. Texas HSC - Houston*Assurance number: *A3413*Did incident involve PHS funded activity? *Yes*

Funding component: _____

Was funding component contacted (if necessary): _____

What happened? *Tank drain pipe clogged. 4 frogs found dead in tank. 3 others found behind tank + were given supportive care. Fully recovered.*

Species involved:

Personnel involved:

Dates and times: *3/16/19*

Animal deaths:

Yes, 5 total

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

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case # _____