



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive – MSC 7982
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7982
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
Telephone: (301) 496-7163

Facsimile: (301) 402-7065

November 2, 2017

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
#A3801-01 [OLAW Case D]

Dr. Mark McLellan
Vice President for Research and
Dean of Graduate Studies
Utah State University
1450 Old Main Hill
Logan, Utah 84322-1450

Dear Dr. McLellan,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your October 30, 2017 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at Utah State University. According to the information provided OLAW understands that two hamsters died in shipment from your institution to USAMRIID when they became entrapped between the wall of the shipping container and the container lid. The animals were prepared for shipment on October 23, 2017 and the container arrived at USAMRIID on October 24, 2017. It is unknown how the animals became entrapped. It is understood that the related activity was PHS funded by a STTR grant.

Corrective actions by the IACUC include updating the written procedures for preparing animals for shipment and training personnel on these procedures. The shipping container manufacturer will be contacted to determine if there have been other similar incidents and other available shipping containers will be reviewed to determine if other versions are available that might prevent entrapment.

The prompt consideration of this matter by Utah State University was consistent with the philosophy of institutional self-regulation. OLAW concurs that the incident warranted reporting. Based on the information provided, OLAW is satisfied that appropriate actions have been taken to investigate this incident and minimize the chance of recurrence. We note that you have reported this incident to the USDA VMO and will report it to USDA Animal Care. We appreciate being informed of this matter and find no cause for further action by this office.

Sincerely,

Brent C. Morse, DVM
Acting Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Contact

Dr. Robert M. Gibbens, Director Western Sector, USDA, APHIS, AC


MEMORANDUM

TO: Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

FROM: Mark R. McLellan, Vice President for Research and
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

DATE: October 30, 2017

SUBJECT: Unexpected Animal Deaths During Shipment

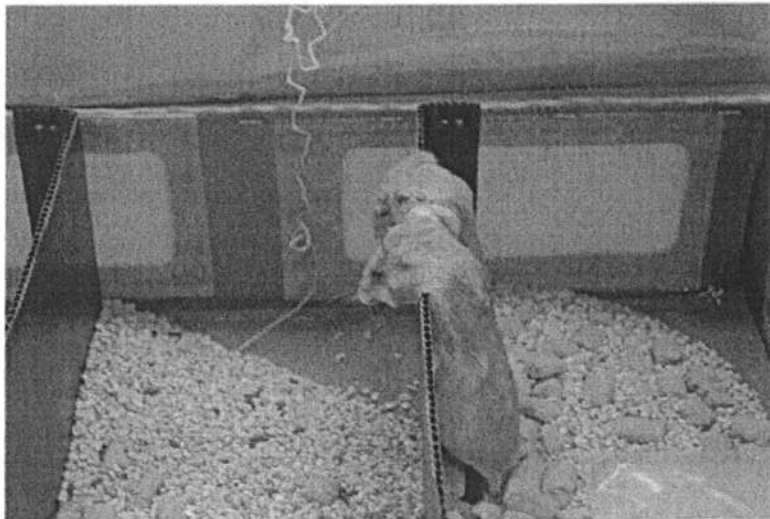
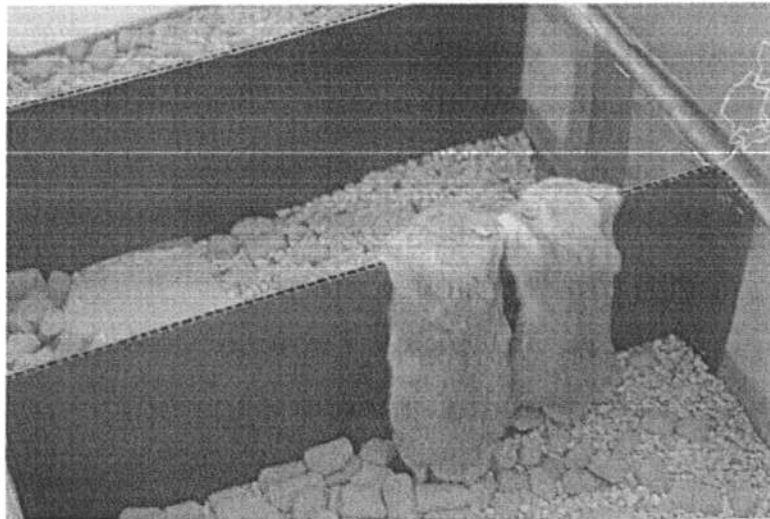


Utah State University is a research institution using animals in Public Health Service funded research, and maintains an Assurance with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare under Assurance number A3801-01.

Utah State University researchers, partially supported by grant STTR: 1R41OD021979-01, have developed several strains of genetically modified hamsters as use in models of human disease. Subsequent to the development of these hamsters, we have routinely shipped animals to collaborators at other institutions in the United States and Canada.

On Monday, October 23, 2017, 19 hamsters were packed and prepared for shipment at our facility for delivery to the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID). The animals were placed into crates approved by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) for air shipment of hamsters, and were provided with ample food and water gel packets. After sealing the animals in the air shipping crates they were delivered to a courier for transport.

The animal crates were delivered to USAMRIID animal holding facilities as scheduled on October 24th. Upon opening of the shipping crates it was found that two animals within one of the crates had become entrapped between the lid and a cardboard divider, as seen in the photos below. As a result of the entrapment both animals had died. It is unknown at this time when the entrapment occurred. We have conducted multiple shipments of these hamsters over the previous two years, and to our knowledge this is the first incident in which animals have become entrapped and died as a result.



This incident was reported to the Utah State University IACUC in a properly convened meeting that had been previously scheduled for October 26th. Following a vote of the majority of the IACUC the following actions will be taken to minimize the likelihood of similar future:

1. Update and expand written procedures for preparing animal shipments. Direct observation of animals immediately before sealing the lid will be explicitly included in written procedures to minimize the chance of animal entrapment at the time of

- preparation for shipping. These written procedures will be presented to the University IACUC for review and approval at a future convened IACUC meeting.
2. Appropriate training and retraining of animal care staff involved in preparing animals for transport to ensure safe handling for animals and personnel. Retraining of staff happened immediately after receiving notification of this incident. Additional training will be provided based upon updated written procedures.
 3. We will communicate with the shipping crate manufacturer to determine if there are previous reports of animals becoming entrapped during shipment.
 4. We will review available shipping containers to determine if any other versions that would help prevent entrapment are available for air shipment of hamsters.
 5. The incident will be reported to USDA Animal Care. A verbal report to the local USDA Veterinary Medical Officer was made on October 27, 2017.

We believe these actions will help improve animal welfare during the transport process and minimize the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in the future.

Please let us know if you would like any additional information regarding this incident.

Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 11:50 AM
To: Mark McLellan; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Cc: Aaron Olsen; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Response from Utah State University - Unexpected Animal Deaths During Shipment

Thank you for sending this report. We will send an official response soon.

Regards, Brent Morse

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

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From: [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@usu.edu] **On Behalf Of** Mark McLellan
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 5:14 PM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Cc: Mark McLellan <mark.mclellan@usu.edu>; Aaron Olsen <aaron.olsen@usu.edu>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@usu.edu>
Subject: Response from Utah State University - Unexpected Animal Deaths During Shipment

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

Please see the attached memorandum on behalf of Dr. Mark R. McLellan, Vice President for Research and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies at Utah State University.



Mark R. McLellan, PhD | Vice President for Research & Dean of the School of Graduate Studies
Utah State University | 1450 Old Main Hill | Logan, UT 84322-1450
PH [REDACTED] FAX [REDACTED] E-mail: mark.mclellan@usu.edu
ORCID: [0000-0003-4442-5599](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4442-5599) Twitter: McLellanNews

Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2017 8:01 AM
To: Aaron Olsen; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Cc: Secondary Individual
Subject: RE: Unexpected Animal Deaths

Thank you for reporting this Dr. Olsen. Please have the IACUC submit a report to the I.O. for signature and have it forwarded to us. An email attachment is preferable. We will then send an official response back to the University.

Sincerely, Brent Morse

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

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From: Aaron Olsen [mailto:aaron.olsen@usu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2017 4:45 PM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Cc: Secondary Individual@usu.edu
Subject: Unexpected Animal Deaths

Assurance A3801-01 Utah State University
This project is partially supported under STTR: 1R41OD021979-01,

We recently shipped hamsters from our facility to a collaborator at the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID). Upon arrival at USAMRIID on October 24, 2017 it was found that two hamsters in one of the shipping crates had become entrapped between the lid and one of the upright dividers within the crate. This entrapment resulted in the death of the animals.

We use shipping containers consistent with IATA requirements for shipping hamsters. We are not fully certain when the entrapment occurred, but our belief is that it likely occurred when the lid of shipping container was closed and secured at our facility immediately prior to the animals being transferred to the carrier.

We routinely ship animals across North America, and we have not previously had any similar occurrences. We believe this to be a very unlikely occurrence with very low likelihood of recurring. To help minimize the possibility of a repeat occurrence we have conducted discussions and retraining with the technician responsible for packing animals for transport to ensure that shipping container lids are fitted properly and that double check that no animals are entrapped when the lid is applied and fixed in place.

If you would like any additional information or further follow up regarding this incident please let me know.

Thank you,

Aaron L. Olsen, DVM, PhD DACLAM
Director, Laboratory Animal Research Center
Utah State University
5600 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-5600
Phone Number