



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 24, 2019

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3854-01 [OLAW Case J]

Dr. Gary K. Ostrander  
Vice President for Research  
Florida State University  
3012 Westcott North – PO Box 3061330  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-1330

Dear Dr. Ostrander,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your June 19, 2019 letter reporting an adverse event affecting research rats at Florida State University, following up on an initial report on March 18, 2019. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that 10 of 14 rats drowned after their cages became flooded by a malfunctioning fire sprinkler head.

The immediate action taken upon discovery consisted of providing supportive care to the remaining four animals, which recovered. Animal room information was provided to the campus police as well as contact information for animal care staff who are to be notified for all vivarium alarms. Cards showing animal housing and use spaces have been posted near all fire alarm panels in the vivarium. The campus police and fire department have conducted training exercises on water flow alarm response.

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 Chair

A 3854-J



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

June 19, 2019

Neera V. Gopee, DVM, PhD, DACLAM, DABT  
Veterinary Medical Officer  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institute of Health  
Rockledge 1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7882

Dear Dr. Gopee:

Florida State University (FSU) [D16-00491, A3854-01] provides final notification of remediation measures to address the incident initially reported to OLAW on March 18, 2019.

Specifically, on Friday, March 15, 2019, 10 of 14 rats housed in a single animal room were found dead subsequent to flooding triggered by defective actuation of a fire sprinkler head. Animals were housed in open top cages and deaths were likely attributable to cage level flooding. The four remaining animals received supportive care and recovered. This reportable event was related to activities supported by NIH award 1R01NS097802.

In response to this incident, the following remediation measures were taken.

- Laboratory Animal Resources (LAR) provided FSU Police Department (PD) a room-level detail of animal housing and use spaces and written emergency call-down procedures. From this day forward, FSU PD will utilize call-down procedures to notify LAR personnel of all alarms in LAR-maintained animal housing areas
- Laminated cards detailing animal housing and use spaces have been prominently posted near all vivaria fire alarm panels
- FSU Fire Safety and FSU PD conducted eight joint training sessions on water flow alarm response.

Florida State University takes very seriously our commitment to animal care. We trust our decisive response to this matter will eliminate future similar occurrences.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Gary K. Ostrander, PhD  
Vice President for Research and  
Institutional Official

**Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]**

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2019 6:24 AM  
**To:** William Hill; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD); Gopee, Neera (NIH/OD) [E]  
**Cc:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** RE: Florida State University (D16-00491, A3854-01) reportable incident notifications

Thank you for these reports, Dr. Hill. We will send responses soon.

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

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**From:** William Hill <wahill@fsu.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2019 3:03 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>; Gopee, Neera (NIH/OD) [E] <neera.gopee@nih.gov>  
**Cc:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** Florida State University (D16-00491, A3854-01) reportable incident notifications

Dr. Gopee,

Good afternoon. Please see attached. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me directly. Thank you.

William Allen Hill, DVM, MPH, DACLAM, CPIA  
Director, Laboratory Animal Resources and  
Attending Veterinarian  
Florida State University  
107 Chieftan Way  
(b) (4) Biomedical Research Facility  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-4341  
(b) (6) (office)  
(b) (6) (fax)

*Laboratory Animal Resources is dedicated to advancing the teaching and research missions of the University by maintaining exemplary standards of animal care and providing exceptional support in the use of laboratory animals.*

A3854-J



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

March 18, 2019

Neera V. Gopee, DVM, PhD, DACLAM, DABT  
Veterinary Medical Officer  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institute of Health  
Rockledge 1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7882

Dear Dr. Gopee:

Florida State University (FSU) [D16-00491, A3854-01] provides initial notification of a reportable event in accordance with Policy, IV.F.3.

On Friday, March 15, 2019, 10 of 14 rats housed in a single animal room were found dead subsequent to flooding triggered by defective actuation of a fire sprinkler head. Animals were housed in open top cages and deaths were likely attributable to cage level flooding. The four remaining animals received supportive care and recovered. This reportable event is related to activities supported by NIH award 1R01NS097802.

Laboratory Animal Resources, along with the FSU Facilities Department, the FSU Police Department, and FSU Environmental Health and Safety will debrief and evaluate procedures to prevent future similar occurrences. FSU will promptly notify OLAW of all remediation measures.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Gary K. Ostrander, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Research and  
Institutional Official

## Gopee, Neera (NIH/OD) [E]

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**From:** Gopee, Neera (NIH/OD) [E]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2019 2:35 PM  
**To:** 'William Hill'  
**Cc:** (b) (6) Gary Ostrander; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: for Gary's review and signature

Thank you for this preliminary report, Dr. Hill. We will start a new case file and look forward to receiving the final report from the IO after the IACUC has completed its investigation.

Best Regards,  
Neera

Neera V. Gopee, DVM, PhD, DACLAM, DABT  
Veterinary Medical Officer  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health

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**From:** William Hill <wahill@fsu.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2019 2:01 PM  
**To:** Gopee, Neera (NIH/OD) [E] <neera.gopee@nih.gov>  
**Cc:** (b) (6) Gary Ostrander <Gary@fsu.edu>  
**Subject:** FW: for Gary's review and signature

Dr. Gopee,

Good afternoon. Please find attached initial notification from Florida State University regarding a reportable event. Please contact me directly if you have questions or require additional information. Thank you.

William Allen Hill, DVM, MPH, DACLAM, CPIA  
Director, Laboratory Animal Resources and  
Attending Veterinarian  
Florida State University  
107 Chieftan Way  
(b) (4) Biomedical Research Facility  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-4341  
(b) (6) (office)  
(b) (6) (fax)

*The most dangerous phrase in the language is, "We've always done it this way." Admiral Grace Hopper*