



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

April 13, 2018

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3469-01 [OLAW Case P]

Dr. Michael R. Van Scott  
Interim Vice Chancellor of Research Economic  
Development, Engagement  
East Carolina University  
2200 South Charles Blvd., MS 157  
Greenville, North Carolina 27834

Dear Dr. Van Scott,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your April 9, 2018 letter reporting an adverse event involving mice at East Carolina University. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that a leaking pipe caused water to enter five mouse cages and nine mouse pups died.

The immediate action taken upon discovery consisted of drying and warming the parent mice and changing all affected cages. All animals were removed from the cubicles, the water leak was repaired, and other pipes were inspected. Metal covers were placed over the top shelf of the cage rack to protect cages should another leak occur. The mice were subsequently returned to the room.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been taken to correct and prevent 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.  
Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Chair



Office of Research Policy & Integrity  
Division of Research, Economic Development, & Engagement  
1516 Greenville Centre | 2200 South Charles Boulevard | Mail Stop 157  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353 | [www.ecu.edu/rede](http://www.ecu.edu/rede)  
252-328-9479 office | [vanscottmi@ecu.edu](mailto:vanscottmi@ecu.edu)

9 April 2018

Axel Wolff, MS, DVM, Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
RKL 1, Suite 360 MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7982

Dear Dr. Wolff:

On the morning of February 19, 2018, an animal care technician discovered a ceiling leak inside a cubicle room housing mice. Water had leaked into five mouse static microisolator cages. One cage located on the top shelf was very wet, and nine young mouse pups were found dead. The parent mice were immediately removed, dried, warmed, and recovered uneventfully. The remaining four mouse cages were also immediately changed. No mice in the other cages were affected. Animals were removed from all cubicles in the affected room. Simultaneously, Facility Services was contacted, and a plumber dispatched to identify and correct the water leak.

The attending veterinarian and facility manager subsequently met with the director of Facility Services to further discuss the incident. An aging pipe on the first floor had developed a pinhole leak which drained down into the basement vivarium room located below. Plumbers repaired the leak, examined other pipes in the area, and found no additional problems. As a corrective action, solid metal coverings are now placed on the top shelves of the cage racks. Should a ceiling leak reoccur, the metal covers will protect the cages below from water exposure. Once the problem was corrected and the shelves modified, mice were returned to the housing cubicles.

The incident and corrective actions were reported and discussed at the following convened IACUC meeting on March 12, 2018.

The affected study was funded by NIH RO1 AI126398.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Michael Van Scott, Ph.D.  
Institutional Official  
Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Research

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

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**From:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 13, 2018 7:03 AM  
**To:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** RE: Ceiling leak inside a cubicle room housing mice --- Funded study NIH RO1 AI126398

Thank you for this report. I will send a response shortly.  
Axel Wolff

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**From:** (b) (6)@ecu.edu]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 12, 2018 2:55 PM  
**To:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E] <wolffa@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** (b) (6)  
(b) (6) Van Scott, Michael <VANSOTTMI@ecu.edu>  
**Subject:** Ceiling leak inside a cubicle room housing mice --- Funded study NIH RO1 AI126398

Dear Dr. Wolff –

Please see attached letter as referenced in the subject line.

Should you require additional information, please feel free to contact Dr. Michael Van Scott at (b) (6)  
[vanscottmi@ecu.edu](mailto:vanscottmi@ecu.edu), or (b) (6) at (b) (6), (b) (6)@ecu.edu.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)