



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

August 25, 2021

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
#A3187-01 [OLAW Case 9N]

Dr. Bill Yates
Interim Vice Chancellor for Research Protections
University of Pittsburgh
(b) (4) Hieber Building
3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Dear Dr. Yates,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your August 23, 2021 letter reporting a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* at the University of Pittsburgh. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that three of four mice died due to lack of water. The cage had been provided with a full water bottle, the mice drank the water, but the animal care staff failed to notice that it had become empty.

The immediate action taken upon discovery consisted of providing hydrogel to the surviving mouse, which subsequently recovered. The corrective actions consisted of retraining the animal caretakers on providing food/water and on conducting daily health checks appropriately. A letter of reprimand was sent to the Division of Laboratory Animal Resources Director and their supervisor.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that corrective actions were taken in this situation. While OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the institution, this Office is concerned that the initial as well as the redundant health checks failed. Ongoing vigilance is imperative to prevent animals from dying due to preventable incidents of lack of food/water. Please continue to aggressively enforce the provision of food/water as well as vigilance by all staff to ensure animal welfare.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

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

cc: IACUC Chair



University of
Pittsburgh

Office of
Research Protections

A3187-9N

*Bill J. Yates, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Research Protections
Professor of Otolaryngology & Neuroscience &
Clinical and Translational Science*

(b) (4) Hieber Building
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Pittsburgh, PA 15213
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Email: vc corp@pitt.edu

August 23, 2021

Brent Morse, DVM, DACLAM
NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive – MSC 7982
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

Dear Dr. Morse:

As the Institutional Official responsible for the University of Pittsburgh's Animal Care and Use Program (Assurance number D16-00118), I am writing to advise your office of a reportable incident¹.

On June 28, 2021, one box containing four adult mice was found in the animal facility without access to water. Three of these mice were deceased upon discovery. The surviving mouse was provided with hydrogel and monitored for twenty-four hours, during which no further issues were evident. The box was changed on June 23 and, given that one mouse survived, a filled water bottle was likely provided at that time and the water was subsequently consumed by the mice over the next few days. As there was no evidence that the water bottle leaked after being provided, there was a period during which the emptied water bottle was not noticed by animal care staff during daily health checks.

The corrective actions taken in these cases consisted of the following item:

- Animal care staff were retrained on how to properly perform food, water and health checks.

The IACUC levied the following sanctions:

- A letter of reprimand was sent to the DLAR Director and his supervisors regarding this event. This letter has been placed in our files.

¹ PHS Policy IV.C.1.d

Brent Morse, DVM, DACLAM
August 20, 2021
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Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



Bill J. Yates, PhD

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:04 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Subject: RE: University of Pittsburgh

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

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

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2021 7:50 AM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Subject: University of Pittsburgh

Please review the attached correspondence forwarded on behalf of Bill J. Yates, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Research Protections. Thank you.

