



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 29, 2022

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3292-01 [OLAW Case 2A]

Dr. Mark B. Taubman, M.D.  
Senior University VP for Health Sciences,  
CEO of Medical Center and Strong Hospital  
University of Rochester  
601 Elmwood Avenue, Box 706  
Rochester, NY 14642

Dear Dr. Taubman,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your May 18, 2022 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals within the animal care and use program at the University of Rochester. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that the water main supplying a frog housing area was inadvertently turned off during an ongoing construction project at the medical center. Once the mistake was noticed, the water was turned back on, but sediment from the pipes was flushed into the water reservoir. The sediment affected the water quality of housing tanks and led to stress in several frogs and the death of 17 frogs. The stressed frogs recovered after veterinary treatment. The frogs involved in this incident were supported by PHS funds.

Preventive measures were described in action plans submitted by the construction group and the principal investigator (PI). The construction and facilities group will notify Animal Resources of any work that may affect the university's vivaria. Animal Resources always notifies PIs and their labs of any utility outages. The PI is working with their dean and administration to update the frog husbandry system to state-of-the-art habitats that are not dependent on a flow-through system.

OLAW appreciates the consideration of this matter by the University of Rochester, 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 this incident and prevent recurrence. We appreciate being informed of this matter and find no cause for further action by this office.

Sincerely,

Robyn M. Engel -S

Digitally signed by Robyn M.  
Engel -S  
Date: 2022.06.29 14:03:20 -04'00'

Robyn M. Engel, DVM  
Animal Welfare Program Specialist  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC contact

Mark B. Taubman, MD  
 CEO, University of Rochester Medical Center and UR Medicine  
 Dean, School of Medicine and Dentistry  
 Senior Vice President for Health Sciences



MEDICINE of THE HIGHEST ORDER

May 18, 2022

Brent Morse, DVM  
 Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
 Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
 National Institutes of Health  
 Rockledge 1, Suite 360  
 6705 Rockledge Drive  
 Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Morse:

The University of Rochester in accordance with Assurance (D16-00188/A3292-01) is reporting an incident where there was a failure of a water supply in an animal housing room that resulted in the death of 17 frogs that were part of a protocol that receives NIH grant funding.

On February 26, 2022, the university veterinarians and a research lab member using frogs for their research received a facilities utility alert of low water pressure in a frog housing room. Upon inspection by the lab and veterinarians, it was noted that the water supply to room was off. Apparently, the water main supplying this area of the building was inadvertently turned off during an ongoing construction project at the medical center. Once the mistake was noticed the water was turned back on, but sediment from the pipes was flushed into the water reservoir. The sediment ultimately made its way into the housing tanks and the lower quality water led to stress of several frogs and the ultimate death of 17 frogs that died, some frogs were euthanized by the lab under veterinary recommendation and several tanks were also treated under veterinary supervision. The remaining frogs recovered after treatment for the symptoms of stress.

After investigating the event by our IACUC, the action plans were requested and received by the construction group and the investigator to help ensure prevent future events like this from occurring again.

The construction and facilities group will proactively notify the Animal Resource of any work that may affect the utilities of the university's vivaria. The Animal Resource always notifies Investigators and their labs of any utility outages so that Animal Resource and lab staff can be on the lookout for any complications to the rooms where animals are housed or frequent. The principal investigator is also working with their dean and administration on updating the frog husbandry system to state-of-the-art habitats that are not dependent on a flow-through

system.

Our IACUC, the University Committee on Animal Resources (UCAR) reviewed and voted to approve the action plans. Further, the UCAR voted to report the incident to the IO and to OLAW, since there were a number of animals that were unexpectedly stressed or died as a result of this mistake.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our IACUC chair, Dr. Chris Stodgell ([chris\\_stodgell@urmc.rochester.edu](mailto:chris_stodgell@urmc.rochester.edu)) / (b) (6)

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Mark Taubman, MD  
Institutional Official  
CEO, University of Rochester Medical Center  
Dean, School of Medicine & Dentistry  
Senior Vice President for Health Sciences

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

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2022 9:53 AM  
**To:** (b) (6)  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: URMIC Report of Non-Compliance -

Thank you for this report. We will send a response soon.

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

**From:** (b) (6)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2022 9:24 AM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] URMIC Report of Non-Compliance -

Hello:

Attached please find a report of non-compliance from the University of Rochester Medical Center. If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact me at your convenience.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and are confident the content is safe.