



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
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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

DATE: September 28, 2021

TO: Michael M. Gottesman, M.D.
Deputy Director for Intramural Research, NIH

FROM: Animal Welfare Program Specialist, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

SUBJECT: Animal Welfare Investigation (NIDCD #23-21) - Animal Welfare Assurance
A4149-01 [Case 15S]

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your September 20, 2021 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at the NIH Intramural Research Program. This letter had not been preceded by a preliminary report to OLAW.

According to the information provided, this Office understands that the NIDCD Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) determined that instances of noncompliance occurred with respect to: failure to turn on water flow to a row of tanks housing zebrafish. The final report states water flow was turned off on one row of tanks housing zebrafish in a NIDCD satellite facility. As a result, 7 juvenile zebrafish died. It is stated a member of the Aquatics Project Contract Staff turned off a water valve when working in the room the day before and failed to identify the issue prior to leaving for the day. As a result, water temperature decreased, and water quality declined, likely causing the death of seven fish. It is understood the contractor accepted responsibility for the error and the technician would be retrained as corrective action.

At the convened ACUC meeting on August 12, 2021, the committee determined the matter was reportable. The Aquatics Contract Manager confirmed the staff member responsible for the incident was retrained and the ACUC required no further action.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that the NIH Intramural Research Program has implemented appropriate measures to correct and prevent recurrences of these problems and is now compliant with provisions of the PHS Policy.

We appreciate being informed of these matters and find no cause for further action by this Office.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn T. Tubbs -S

Digitally signed by
Jacquelyn T. Tubbs -S
Date: 2021.09.28
14:20:33 -04'00'

Jacquelyn Tubbs, DVM, DACLAM
Animal Welfare Program Specialist
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: Dr. Stephen Denny
Dr. Marsha Merrill
Dr. Richard Wyatt



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

www.nih.gov

September 20, 2021

TO: Brent C. Morse, D.V.M.
Director, Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

FROM: Deputy Director for Intramural Research, NIH

SUBJECT: Animal Welfare Investigations - Assurance D16-00602 (NIDCD 23-21)

This correspondence conveys the results of an animal incident investigation by the NIH National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) ACUC in accordance with Assurance D16-00602 and PHS Policy IV.F.3. The animal incident involved failure of a technician to ensure water flow to a row of fish tanks was re-established prior to leaving for the day. The subsequent deterioration in water quality likely contributed to the death of seven fish.

The event was first reported to the NIH Office of Animal Care and Use by the NIDCD ACUC Chair on August 12, 2021.

Please contact me or Dr. Stephen Denny, Director, Office of Animal Care and Use, if additional information or clarifications are required.

Michael M.
Gottesman -S

Digitally signed by
Michael M. Gottesman -S
Date: 2021.09.20
16:08:45 -04'00'

Michael M. Gottesman, M.D.

Attachment

cc: Dr. Wyatt
Dr. Merrill
Dr. Denny



National Institutes of Health
National Institute of Neurological
Disorders and Stroke
Bldg. 35A, Convent Dr.
Bethesda, MD 20892

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Date: Sept. 14, 2021

To: Michael M. Gottesman, M.D., Deputy Director for Intramural Research

From: Chair, NINDS/NIDCD/NCCIH ACUC

Subject: Animal Incident Report

In accordance with Assurance D16-00602 and PHS Policy IV.F.3., the NINDS/NIDCD/NCCIH ACUC provides this report of an incident that occurred involving the care and use of animals in biomedical research.

Summary of the Incident:

On June 28, 2021, a clinical veterinarian informed me of an incident in which water flow was turned off to one row of tanks housing zebrafish in an NIDCD Satellite Facility, resulting in the death of seven juvenile fish. The Aquatics Project Contract Staff determined that a member of their team had accidentally turned off a water valve while working in the room the day before and failed to identify the issue prior to leaving for the day. Consequently, one row of tanks did not receive water flow for over 20 hours. This caused a drop in water temperature and a deterioration of water quality in that one row of tanks, which conditions likely contributed to the death of the seven fish. In addition, the remaining tanks in the room experienced a slight compensatory increase in water temperature although no additional fish were harmed as a result. The Assistant Aquatic Project Manager conveyed that the Contractor accepted responsibility for the incident and that the responsible technician would be retrained.

The incident was initially discussed on July 8, 2021 during a convened ACUC meeting at which an OACU observer was present. Additional discussion occurred at a convened ACUC meeting on August 12, 2021, at which time the ACUC concluded that this was a reportable incident involving conditions that jeopardize the well-being of animals.

Corrective Actions:

The ACUC Chair confirmed with an Aquatics Contract Manager that the staff member responsible for the error was retrained in the proper manipulation of the valves and plumbing servicing the fish tanks.

The NINDS/NIDCD/NCCIH ACUC concluded this action is sufficient to prevent a similar incident from happening in the future.

(b) (6)

Marsha Merrill, Ph.D.

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Denny, Stephen (NIH/OD) [E]
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Subject: RE: D16-00602 NIH Animal Incident Report (NIDCD 23-21)

Thank you for this report, Dr. Denny. We will send a response soon.
Axel Wolff

From: Denny, Stephen (NIH/OD) [E] <stephen.denny@nih.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 7:06 PM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Subject: D16-00602 NIH Animal Incident Report (NIDCD 23-21)

Dear OLAW/DCO,

The attached reports from the NIH Institutional Official and the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) ACUC address the failure of a technician to re-establish water flow to a row of fish tanks at the end of the day. The incident may have contributed to the death of seven zebrafish.

The event was first reported to the NIH Office of Animal Care and Use by the NIDCD ACUC Chair on August 12, 2021.

If you have any questions please contact me via email or at the phone number listed below. Thank you, Steve

STEPHEN DENNY, DVM, MS, DACLAM, DACVPM | Director, Office of Animal Care and Use | NIH Bethesda Campus, Building 31/Room B1C37 |
Phone: (301) 435-2188 | **NIH . . . Turning Discovery Into Health** |