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 20892-7982
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: June 24, 2022

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

FROM: Director
Division of Compliance Oversight, OLAW

SUBJECT: Animal Welfare Investigation (ORS-DVR #21-22) – Animal Welfare Assurance A4149-01 [Case 16Y]

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your June 9, 2022 memo regarding an incident of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at the Office of Research Services/Division of Veterinary Resources. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that on Monday morning, April 18, 2022, there was a cage of one female mouse with a litter of seven pups that were found dead. This cage along with other cages was included on a Technical Service Request (TSR) for special water to be changed weekly on Mondays. In the TSR, the lab had requested to only provide 250ml of this special water in a 500ml water bottle. It was noted that there was very little water left in the water bottle in the cage where the mice were found dead. The identification of a low water level in the cage where the mice were found dead was missed during cage observations done by the weekend caretaker and the mice may have gone without access to water for a period over the weekend. The finding of the ACUC subcommittee was that the caretaker did not properly check for water availability on the weekend and that the veterinary technician had not proactively noted that breeder cages might need water refills more often than once a week

Corrective and preventive Actions:

- All the cages on this special water in the room were inspected to ensure no other cages were low on water. Others were found with low water, all special water bottles were replaced, all animals appeared normal.
- The weekend caretaker involved, as well as all care staff, were retrained on daily husbandry and daily health observations.
- Discussion took place with research staff on modifying the specifics of the technical service request (TSR) to avoid the water levels getting too low before scheduled weekly water change. The TSR now states to change twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays for all cages on this special water.
- The ACUC was informed that 250 ml bottles are available, and these will be assessed for ability to use in the cages for this group of mice.

The actions taken to resolve the issue and prevent recurrence were appropriate and accepted by OLAW. We appreciate being informed of this matter and find no cause for further action by this office.

Obtained by Rise for Animals.
Uploaded to Animal Research Laboratory Overview (ARLO) on 10/07/2022

Sincerely,

Brent C. Morse -S Digitally signed by Brent C. Morse -S
Date: 2022.06.27 10:27:20 -04'00'

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: Dr. Stephen Denny
Dr. Richard Wyatt
Dr. Joanne Smith, Chair, ORS ACUC

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McCoy, Devora (NIH/OD) [E]

From: McCoy, Devora (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 11:22 AM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Subject: FW: OLAW Case A4149-16Y
Attachments: Gottesman NIH 4149-16Y.pdf

From: McCoy, Devora (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Gottesman, Michael (NIH/OD) [E] <GottesmM@mail.nih.gov>
Cc: Denny, Stephen (NIH/OD) [E] <stephen.denny@nih.gov>; Wyatt, Richard G (NIH/OD) [E] <WyattRG@OD.NIH.GOV>; Smith, Joanne (NIH/OD/ORS) [E] <smitjo@ors.od.nih.gov>
Subject: OLAW Case A4149-16Y

Good morning Dr. Gottesman,

Attached please find the final response to OLAW Case A4149-16Y. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us by phone or by e-mail.

Best,

Devora McCoy, BS, MBA
Program Analyst
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health
301-435-2390

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A4149-164

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

www.nih.gov

June 9, 2022

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 (DVR 21-22)

This correspondence conveys the results of an animal incident investigation by the NIH Office of Research Services Division of Veterinary Resources (DVR) ACUC in accordance with Assurance D16-00602 and PHS Policy IV.F.3. The incident involved the failure of husbandry technicians to ensure mice in a breeding cage had access to water. This failure contributed to the deaths of seven mice.

The event was first reported to the NIH Office of Animal Care and Use by the NICHD ACUC Chairman on April 20, 2022.

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

Richard G. Wyatt -S Digitally signed by Richard G. Wyatt -S Date: 2022.06.13 09:52:29 -04'00'

Michael M. Gottesman, M.D.

Attachment

cc: Dr. Wyatt
Dr. Smith
Dr. Denny

Obtained by Rise for Animals.
Uploaded to Animal Research Laboratory Overview (ARLO) on 10/07/2022

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

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

From: Joanne Smith
Chair, ORS Animal Care and Use Committee

Subject: NIH DVR Animal Incident Report, Mouse & litter on special water

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

Incident Summary:

On Monday morning, April 18, 2022, there was a cage of one female (DOB 10/11/21) with a litter of seven pups (DOB 3/28/22) that were found dead. This cage along with other cages was included on a Technical Service Request (TSR) for special water (NTBC) to be changed weekly on Mondays. In the TSR, the lab has requested to only provide 250ml of this special water in a 500ml water bottle. It was noted that there was very little water left in the water bottle in the cage where the mice were found dead. The veterinary technician notified contract management shortly after discovery which in turn led to a more thorough investigation of the incident by contract management. The facility veterinarian was informed that afternoon and reported the issue to the ACUC on April 19th. Upon discovery of the animals found dead, examination of these dead mice revealed that they had sunken eyes with a general look of dehydration. They were not submitted for necropsy but were assumed by the contract program manager to have died overnight. The identification of a low water level in the cage where the mice were found dead was missed during cage observations done by the weekend caretaker and the mice may have gone without access to water for a period over the weekend.

OACU was informed by the ACUC chair on 4/20 and a subcommittee was tasked with investigating. The Facility Veterinarian, Contract Program Manager, and Weekend Caretaker were interviewed between May 3-4, 2022. Their report was discussed at the May 17, 2022, meeting of the full committee. The committee voted that this was a reportable incident due to "Conditions that jeopardize the health or well-being of animals, including natural disasters, accidents, and mechanical failures, resulting in actual harm or death to animals." The finding was that the caretaker did not properly check for water availability on the weekend and that the veterinary technician had not proactively noted that breeder cages might need water refills more often than once a week

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Corrective Actions Proposed and Timeline for Implementation:

- All the cages on this special water in the room were inspected to ensure no other cages were low on water. Others were found with low water, all special water bottles were replaced, all animals appeared normal.
- The weekend caretaker involved, as well as all care staff were retrained on daily husbandry and daily health observations.
- Discussion took place with research staff on modifying the specifics of the technical service request (TSR) to avoid the water levels getting too low before scheduled weekly water change. A suggestion to fill the water bottles to the 500ml level rather than 250ml level was made. However, due to the particulars with this specific water, the research staff asked to keep the level at 250ml, but instead increase the frequency of water change from weekly to twice weekly. The TSR now states to change twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays for all cages on this special water.
- The ACUC was informed that 250 ml bottles are available, and these will be assessed for ability to use in the cages for this group of mice.

The ORS ACUC feels these actions will prevent the occurrence of a similar incident in the future.

Sincerely,

Joanne M. Smith -S Digitally signed by Joanne M. Smith -S
Date: 2022.06.03 12:47:15 -04'00'

Chair, ORS Animal Care and Use Committee

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Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 6:55 AM
To: Denny, Stephen (NIH/OD) [E]
Cc: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Subject: RE: D16-00602 NIH Animal Incident Report (DVR 21-22))

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

From: Denny, Stephen (NIH/OD) [E] <stephen.denny@nih.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 5:14 PM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Subject: D16-00602 NIH Animal Incident Report (DVR 21-22))

Dear OLAW/DCO,

The attached documents from the NIH Institutional Official and the NIH Office of Research Services Division of Veterinary Resources (DVR) ACUC address an animal incident involving the failure of husbandry technicians to ensure mice in a breeding cage had access to water. The event was first reported to the NIH Office of Animal Care and Use by the DVR ACUC Chair on April 20, 2022.

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*** |

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