



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

June 15, 2022

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3231-01 [OLAW Case 1Z]

Dr. Theresa S. Mayer  
Executive Vice President for Research and Partnerships  
Purdue University  
(b) (4) Purdue Mall  
Hovde Hall  
West Lafayette, IN 47907

Dear Dr. Mayer,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your May 24, 2022, letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at Purdue University. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that nine mice were inappropriately euthanized by a graduate research assistant who failed to assure death by cervical dislocation following carbon dioxide asphyxiation, as approved in the protocol. The nine animals on the PHS-supported protocol were euthanized after being found alive in the freezer.

The corrective actions consisted of the Laboratory Animal Program Training Coordinator retraining the responsible graduate research assistant on appropriate euthanasia methods. This one-on-one retraining must be completed prior to the assistant resuming future work with animals on the approved protocol.

Your prompt and thorough resolution of this matter is commendable and consistent with the PHS philosophy of monitored self-regulation. We appreciate having been informed about this matter and find no cause for further action by this Office.

Sincerely,

Neera V. Gopee

-S

Digitally signed by Neera V.  
Gopee -S  
Date: 2022.06.15 10:02:00  
+04'00'

Neera V. Gopee, DVM, PhD, DACLAM, DABT  
Associate Director, Animal Welfare Policy  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health

cc: IACUC Chair

May 24, 2022

Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
Rockledge 1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

RE: NIH NCI Award Number 5 R01CA069202-26, Structure/Function of Protein Tyrosine Phosphatases

To Whom it May Concern:

Purdue University, Assurance D16-00147, would like to report an incident of non-compliance that occurred on May 11, 2022, on an animal protocol that is supported by the above grant. The protocol number is 1511001324 and entitled, "Structure and function of protein tyrosine phosphatases."

A graduate research assistant on this protocol failed to euthanize mice appropriately and the animals were found alive in a dead animal freezer. The mice were discovered by personnel from another lab who were placing their animals in the freezer. Personnel from that group euthanized 7 mice and then Laboratory Animal Program (LAP) veterinary staff euthanized 2 more when they arrived. This was a total of 9 mice that were not appropriately euthanized. None had been cervically dislocated as it states in the approved protocol would be done. Had cervical dislocation taken place, animals would not have been found alive in the freezer.

The PI on this animal protocol was notified of the non-compliance and he contacted the research assistant involved. The research assistant offered the following explanation: "I had to catch an international flight in Chicago and was running behind schedule. I needed to euthanize several animals before leaving, and due to the volume of home cages involved had to run the CO<sub>2</sub> machine in batches. The first batch of cages was euthanized properly, so I started the second set as quickly as I could. In my hurry to clean up after the first batch, put away cage components and negotiate travel arrangements my mind wandered, and mistakenly thought that the red light on the CO<sub>2</sub> machine meant that the second batch was finished. At a glance the mice were not moving, and I thought they had all properly asphyxiated. Due to the time constraints I was feeling, I neglected to perform secondary euthanasia, and placed them all in the freezer. I know that none of this excuses my actions, I just want to impart to the committee the extraordinary circumstances of the day that lead to me taking these inappropriate shortcuts. I will accept any punishment deemed necessary by the committee, and can only offer my sincerest promise that something like this won't happen again."

The Purdue IACUC met on May 18 to discuss this non-compliance and serious animal welfare issue. While the IACUC appreciated the prompt response from the research assistant, the committee did not feel the explanation was adequate justification for what happened. The committee made the decision that the research assistant MUST contact the LAP Training Coordinator to receive one-on-one re-training in correct methods of euthanasia before he can resume working with mice. As of the writing of this letter, re-training has been scheduled for May 31. If the LAP Training Coordinator signs off on the re-training, the research assistant will be allowed to resume working on the approved protocol.

Purdue University would like to reaffirm its commitment to a strong animal care and use program. It is hoped that the actions being taken in response to this incident will serve to strengthen the program of animal care at Purdue University.

Please feel free to contact me if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Theresa S. Mayer, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for Research & Partnerships  
Institutional Official

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

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 6, 2022 7:09 AM  
**To:** Mayer, Theresa S  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: Reportable non-compliance on an animal protocol

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

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

**From:** Mayer, Theresa S <tsmayer@purdue.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 5, 2022 8:43 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (b) (6)

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Reportable non-compliance on an animal protocol

Dear OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight:

Attached please find a memo describing a recently discovered instance of noncompliance concerning the referenced Purdue University research project.

Please contact me with questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Theresa Mayer

Theresa S. Mayer  
Executive Vice President for Research and Partnerships  
Institutional Official  
Purdue University

**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.