



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

July 3, 2019

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
#A3262-01 (OLAW Case 3N)

Dr. Judith Neubauer
Institutional Official
Rutgers, State University of New Jersey
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Dr. Neubauer,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your June 28, 2019 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at Rutgers University. Your letter supplements the information in the initial report by phone on April 29, 2019 followed by an email report on April 30th. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that on Friday April 12, 2019 unannounced fire alarm testing was conducted. Exhaust dampers in one animal housing unit were closed by the building management system (BMS) as expected but did not reset once the test was done. This resulted in room temperatures increasing overnight. The BMS failed to send an alarm concerning the high temperatures and 30 rats were found dead the next morning. Remedial measures were taken to mitigate the room temperatures and veterinary medical treatment provided. Although no further rats were lost, the surviving animals were no longer appropriate for use on the behavior study and 812 rats were euthanized. It was stated that these animals were not supported by PHS funds.

Corrective and preventive actions included resetting the exhaust system and the facility returned to normal temperature by 9 p.m. No further issues with the system have occurred. Temperature alarms have been reset and the notification system now sends continuous alarms to CMR, facilities and Emergency Management. A web interface now allows remote monitoring of the vivarium HVAC system. The IACUC agreed to send a letter of support to senior leadership for additional resources for addressing HVAC issues in the future.

The consideration of this unfortunate matter by Rutgers University was consistent with the philosophy of institutional self-regulation. Similarly, the actions taken to resolve the issue and prevent reoccurrence were appropriate. We appreciate being informed of this issue and find no cause for further action by this office.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

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

cc: IACUC Contact
Laszlo M. Szabo, Esq., Dir. Office of Regulatory Affairs

June 28, 2019

Final Report of HVAC outage in Rutgers Newark (Unit # 000534):

Dear Dr. Morse,

By way of this memo we would like to submit a final report to OLAW on the details of the HVAC outage and the corrective actions that has been taken.

Incident: On 04/12/2019 Rutgers Emergency Management Services did an unannounced fire alarm testing. The building management system shut down the exhaust dampeners to prevent the fire. Unfortunately, after the testing was done the control panel in the vivarium level did not reset and this went undetected. The BMS system sent notifications only at the start of the testing period and did not send notifications to facilities management on the temperature increases. Due to the exhaust being shut off temperatures started to go up from late at night to early morning on Saturday till it was detected by our staff. 30 rats were found dead due to heat exhaustion. Animals were immediately moved to static housing; fans were deployed to reduce the heat and hydration therapy was provided to the animals by the veterinary staff. No further animals were lost that day and seemed to have normal clinical signs. A neuroscience researcher euthanized a few animals that were part of his long-term study and found that all the animals he sampled (n=5) had some micro-hemorrhages in the brain. Since this pathology would affect his behavior readouts and compromise the study, the PI chose to euthanize the rest of the animals in the cohort (total 812 rats). According to the PI the animals were not part of federally funded research.

Corrective Actions:

The building exhaust issue was corrected on the same day and the facility was returned to normal temperature and humidity by 9 p.m. (04/13/2019). Since then we have had no further issues. The notification system has been replaced with active notification system that sends continuous alarms to CMR, facilities and Emergency Management. Temperature alarms have been set to alert people when there is more than 2-4-degree change in set points. Vivarium staff have been provided with the ability to remotely monitor the HVAC in the vivarium through a web interface. In addition, this was discussed at the May 14 IACUC full committee meeting and IACUC agreed to send a letter of support to senior leadership for additional resources for addressing HVAC issues in the future.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact (b) (6) at (b) (6)

Sincerely,
 (b) (6)

Judith A. Neubauer, Ph.D.
 Institutional Official
 Associate Vice President for Research Regulatory Affairs

Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Monday, July 01, 2019 8:28 AM
To: Sumanth Kumar Putta; (b) (6)
Cc: Judith Neubauer; Laszlo Szabo; (b) (6)
Subject: RE: HVAC incident at Rutgers University Unit (b) (4)

Thank you for providing this final report Dr. Putta. We will send an official response soon.

Best regards, Brent Morse

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

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From: Sumanth Kumar Putta [mailto:sp1806@ored.rutgers.edu]
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2019 12:45 PM
To: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>; (b) (6)
Cc: Judith Neubauer <neubauer@rwjms.rutgers.edu>; Laszlo Szabo <lszabo@ored.rutgers.edu>; (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: HVAC incident at Rutgers University Unit (b) (4)

Hi Dr. Morse,

Please see attached the final written report for the HVAC incident for unit (b) (4). Please contact if you have further questions.

Sincerely,
Sumanth

Dr. Sumanth Kumar Putta BVSc, MS, PhD, DACLAM, CPIA
Director of Veterinary Services
Comparative Medicine Resources (CMR)
Rutgers, The State University of NJ
(b) (4) Child Health Institute
89 French Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Email: sp1806@ored.rutgers.edu
Work Cell: (b) (6)
CHI Office: (b) (6)

From: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:39 AM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Sumanth Kumar Putta <sp1806@ored.rutgers.edu>; Judith Neubauer <neubauer@rwjms.rutgers.edu>; Laszlo Szabo <lszabo@ored.rutgers.edu>

Subject: RE: HVAC incident at Rutgers University Unit (b) (4)

Thank you for providing this written preliminary report (b) (6). I will add it to the case file and await the final report.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM

Director

Division of Compliance Oversight

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

National Institutes of Health

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From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 10:32 PM

To: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>

Cc: Sumanth Kumar Putta <sp1806@ored.rutgers.edu>; Judith Neubauer <neubauer@rwjms.rutgers.edu>; Laszlo Szabo <lszabo@ored.rutgers.edu>

Subject: HVAC incident at Rutgers University Unit (b) (4)

Dear Dr. Morse

Thank you for taking the time to discuss our response to the unfortunate HVAC issue we had in our facility. To summarize our conversation

- On 04/12/2019 we had a catastrophic failure of our HVAC air handlers due to a fire alarm signal generated in the control panel when there was no actual fire. Due to this issue the dampers shut down to prevent fire from spreading. Due to the control panel not functioning properly no notifications were sent to building maintenance or to the vivarium staff about the vivarium exhaust getting shut down. Temperatures started to go up from late at night to early morning on sat till it was detected by our staff. By then we had lost 30 rats due to heat exhaustion. Animals were immediately moved to static housing, fans were deployed to reduce the heat and hydration was provided to the animals by the veterinary staff. No further animals were lost that day and seemed to have normal clinical signs. The building exhaust issue was corrected and the facility was returned back to normal temperature and humidity by 9 p.m on Sat (04/13/2019). Since then we have had no further issues. The notification system has been changed and tested to ensure that proper notifications are being sent to the relevant parties. We have decided to overhaul the fire alarm system in the entire building and has been sent out to bid.
- A neuroscience researcher euthanized a few animals that were part of his long term study and found that all of the animals he sampled (n=5) had some micro-hemorrhages in the brain. Since this pathology would affect his behavior readouts and compromise the study, the PI chose to euthanize the rest of the animals in the cohort (total 812 rats). We will be reporting this to the appropriate funding authorities.
- A formal report would be submitted to OLAW once the corrective actions are completed and the funding agencies have been notified.

Please let us know if I missed anything from our discussion.

Sincerely

(b) (6)





Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: ngmDate: 4/29/19Time: 1:00Name of Person reporting (b) (6)

Telephone #:

Fax #:

Email:

Name of Institution: Rutgers Univ. - Newark CampusAssurance number: A3262Did incident involve PHS funded activity? Yes

Funding component: _____

Was funding component contacted (if necessary): Will beWhat happened? Control panel failure → 82°F in rat room. 30 rats dead. 5 more sampled → brain hemorrhages. Not suitable for study. 812 rats to be euthanized.Species involved: RatPersonnel involved: NoneDates and times: 4/12/19Animal deaths: 30 dead, 5 more euthanized later → 812 to be euthanized

Projected plan and schedule for correction/prevention (if known): _____

Replacing building monitoring system.

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official:

< 60d.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case # _____