



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
Rockledge One, Suite 360  
6705 Rockledge Drive – MSC 7982  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7982  
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
Rockledge One, Suite 360  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
Telephone: (301) 496-7163  
Facsimile: (301) 402-7065

February 12, 2018

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
A3222-01 [OLAW Case N]

Aleister Saunders, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice Provost for Research  
Drexel University  
3180 Chestnut Street, (b) (4)  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Dr. Saunders,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your February 9, 2018 letter reporting a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* at Drexel University. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that some rodent rooms had humidity levels of 20%, which is lower than the parameters outlined in the *Guide*, and several rat pups developed ringtail. Also, temperatures increased to 80 degrees in rodent and chinchilla rooms, which is higher than recommended.

The corrective actions consisted of transferring the rats to static cages to increase humidity and no further cases of ringtail developed. Maintenance staff was contacted about the low room humidity but indicated that central control was not possible in the old facilities. The animals were moved out of the warm rooms to ones with appropriate temperatures. Animals will not be housed in rooms where temperature cannot be controlled. Temperature and humidity levels will be monitored daily and recorded at the room level and centrally, and room humidifiers may be installed.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been or will be implemented to ensure that temperature and humidity levels within animal rooms are maintained within the parameters of the *Guide*. OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the institution to comply with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Please inform this Office about the final decisions made regarding use of room level modifications to ensure environmental compliance.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Chair  
Robert Gibbens, D.V.M., USDA-APHIS-AC



February 9, 2018

Axel Wolff, 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. Wolff:

Drexel University, in accordance with Assurance A-3222-01 (New D16-00138) and PHS Policy IV.F.3., provides this report of noncompliance regarding improper humidity and temperature control in select animal housing rooms at 245 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia Pa

Beginning in November 2017, humidity levels in animal housing rooms (b) (4) were noted to be approximately 20%, 10% lower than the minimum relative humidity required for appropriate rodent housing according to the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Maintenance facilities staff were immediately alerted to the problem. Centrally controlling humidity to recommended levels during winter periods is not possible due to the older facility structure.

Approximately one week after low humidity levels were noted, the University Lab Animal Resources (ULAR) staff discovered rat pups in room (b) (4) which had developed ringtail, possibly caused by the low humidity. The animals noted to have ringtail were examined by the staff veterinarian and transferred from ventilated cages to static cages to help increase the humidity at a local level. The vendor was also contacted to find out if ringtail was a noted problem with the strain. No further clinical cases of ringtail have occurred since that date.

In December 2017, temperatures increased to approximately 80 degrees in rodent and chinchilla housing rooms (b) (4). This deviation is out of the normal range of 70 degrees for rodents and 68 degrees for chinchillas. Maintenance facilities staff were immediately contacted, and animals housed in those rooms were moved to approved animal housing locations with appropriate temperatures.

Animals will no longer be housed in the rooms where temperatures cannot be controlled appropriately. Temperatures and humidity levels continue to be monitored both locally and centrally, and recorded daily for all animal housing locations. The University is currently in the process of researching the feasibility and effectiveness of humidifier installation at the room level.



Drexel University is committed to protecting the welfare of animals used in research and appreciates the guidance and assistance provided by OLAW in this regard. Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Tim Cunningham, PhD, IACUC Chair or Richard Huneke, DVM, attending veterinarian.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Aleister Saunders, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice Provost for Research  
Institutional Official

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Monday, February 12, 2018 7:18 AM  
**To:** 'Iacuc'  
**Subject:** RE: Report of Non-Compliance- Drexel University- D16-00138

Thank you for this report, (b) (6) We will send a response soon.  
Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director, OLAW

**From:** iacuc [mailto:iacuc@drexel.edu]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 09, 2018 4:36 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** Saunders,Aleister <ajs56@drexel.edu>; (b) (6)@drexel.edu; (b) (6)@drexel.edu  
**Subject:** Report of Non-Compliance- Drexel University- D16-00138

Good Afternoon,

Drexel University (Assurance D16-00138) would like to self-report a non-compliance. Please see the attached letter with a description of the incident and the actions taken in response.

Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Thank you,

(b) (6)