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UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

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Communicore Update

Over the past few months, Communicore has been experiencing poor air flow due to renovations of the air handler system. Previously during the renovation, temporary cooling and air handlers were used to supply the building. Now that the new air handlers are in place and running we will be attempting to increase the amount of airflow from these new units. This is a complex task that affects not only animal care, but other areas within Communicore as well. As of Aug. 16th, the balancing company W.W. Gay was on site and starting the balancing process. We have seen an increase in airflow throughout the facility and the work on controlling the supply and exhaust to each room is still underway. The whole process can take a few weeks to complete and because only the air handler was replaced and not any of the duct work to the rooms, we are expecting to see some problems and delays.

On another note, Nextel has installed repeaters within the Communicore basement, which means that there is full coverage for all Nextel systems throughout the facility. New contact information is available online at http://acs.ufl.edu/staff.shtml.

Staff Recognitions

During the turbulent weather of recent weeks, ACS staff has shown their mettle in a variety of ways. Their dedication did not go unnoticed, as evidenced in this letter received from an investigator.

> "Good to hear (that the chickens were relocated safely). I am very glad that the hurricane decided to take a miss. Thank you for your help and all of your precautionary measures."

Several unsolicited letters were received commending specific members of staff in the work that they do every day:

> "I am writing to thank you for all the hard work that you and your staff have been doing…I also want to bring to your attention how great a job I feel Leslie Sallen, the animal care technician, is doing. She is working very hard and always has time to stop and answer my questions and help me out when I need it. She also manages to change my cages so that I have clean animals when I take them out for the day for research (something I know she doesn't have to do). It is almost hard to believe she is doing such a great job and is the only one in this SPF hallway."

> "I just thought I would drop you a complimentary email about two of your employees that I have had the privilege of working with. The first is Matt Amick. When I had to do eight-week long metabolic studies with rats he was the most helpful in monitoring them, made sure I had enough powdered rat chow, made sure the metabolic racks were not disturbed, made sure that cages were changed and left extra cages in case I needed them. He is truly an excellent employee with a great smile and a wonderful sense of humor.
> The second employee is loading dock supervisor, Deb Dalziel. I have worked before with others who were very good at their jobs, but Deb is excellent. Always on the ball, knows what is coming in and being shipped out. Is polite and courteous in answering all questions and if she does not know the answer, she finds someone who does and then emails or calls you back with the answer. In this day and age, that is an outstanding quality you just don't find very often. She is truly an exceptional employee."

> "Our lab is very happy with the SPF staff that takes care of our mice. Santhi has done a great job and it is a shame that she is moving on. Warren also does a wonderful job and is very helpful whenever I have questions about supplies or anything having to do with the care of our animals. We are very glad that ACS has obtained good, conscientious, hardworking people to work in the SPF area."

> "We are writing to commend husbandry technicians James Williams and Tawnya Rodriguez…These two individuals are working diligently and are extremely helpful…taking pride in the care they provide to the animals. They pay attention to necessary details and go above and beyond when extra help is needed. We greatly appreciate the effort they put forth."

Great job, everyone! It is great to know that it does not take an emergency for our staff to be the best.

Staff Announcements

- Our most recent AALAS-certified staffmembers are, Luis Zorrilla – RLATG, Kelly Flint – RLAT, and Kevin Chadbourne – RALAT. Congratulations to all of you!

Funding Opportunities

The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) and the Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing (CAAT) have issued a call for proposals for Animal Welfare Enhancement Awards. Up to twelve applicants will receive an award of $6,000 each for studies intended to improve laboratory animal welfare. The focus of these awards is to refine housing, handling and/or experimental situations for laboratory animals. Full details are available on the CAAT web site at http://caat.jhsph.edu/programs/AWE/awards.htm.

Policy on Protocol Review

The veterinarians in the Animal Care Services review Animal Care and Use Protocols (ACUPs) prior to the ACUPs being submitted to the IACUC office for formal review. This process was implemented in the fall of 2001 by the IACUC. Prior to that, the ACS veterinarians did not routinely pre-review ACUPs, nor was there a significant presence of boarded veterinarians to perform the reviews. ACS currently has three veterinarians boarded by the College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, one boarded by the College of Veterinary Pathology, one boarded by the College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and one veterinarian with over five years of clinical experience to support the protocol review process. Prior to 2004, there was only one boarded veterinarian in ACS. Over the last few months, the veterinary expertise has greatly improved and has resulted in significantly enhanced comments on the ACUPs.

Effective September 10, 2004, the ACS veterinarian, upon completion of veterinary consultation, will return a copy of the ACUP with comments embedded in the document to the IACUC office for IACUC review. Investigators will be copied on the email sent to the IACUC. The IACUC reviewer will contact the Investigator on all issues, including comments from the veterinarian. It is not necessary for the Investigator to contact the reviewing veterinarian after this time, unless assistance with the protocol is needed during IACUC review. Investigators are to continue submitting protocols to vconsult@grove.ufl.edu.

Protocols are reviewed and comments submitted to the IACUC office within seven days unless extenuating circumstances, such as the presence of complex and /or new research initiatives, or in cases where the ACS veterinarians need to gather more information exist. As the USDA/APHIS and AAALAC, International routinely scrutinize ACUPs, it is imperative that IACUC-approved ACUPs be of a quality to withstand review by these agencies. Investigators are strongly encouraged to meet with ACS veterinarians on ACUPs prior to submitting the protocol for veterinary review. Live consultations will result in priority attention by the veterinarian to that document. These live discussions are especially helpful with new or complex protocols, for which the veterinarian may be of significant aid to the Investigator. If an electronic version is supplied during the consultation, recommended changes can be made to the document at that time, with the revised protocol then being sent directly to IACUC with the Investigator present. This will be especially beneficial to Investigators with protocols that must be reviewed within a specified or accelerated time frame. Our goal is to reduce the protocol review timetable. These consultations should serve to expedite the review process, saving time for both the Investigator and the veterinarian.

Newly-Arrived Animals

According to the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, "newly received animals should be given a period for physiological, psychological, and nutritional stabilization before their use." The time required for this stabilization will vary depending on the species and length/type of transportation. Temporary anorexia after transportation is especially common in rabbits, and one study found that hyperglycemia, neutrophilia, lymphopenia and increased cortisol also occur. Mice also show increased adrenocortical hormones after transportation. To allow time for these effects to resolve, ACS recommends that newly arrived rabbits and rodents be rested for at least 48 hours prior to their entrance into studies.

Rodent Housing at ACS Facilities

The rodent pathogen control program endorsed by the Faculty Advisory Committee requires that all rodents remain Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) to protect valuable research projects. The term “SPF” is frequently used, but often misunderstood. “SPF” is used to reference the health status, based on a list of “specific” pathogens. The Pathogen Exclusion List and Rodent Pathogen Control Policy are both available at http://acs.ufl.edu/. The goal of the program is to prevent pathogens from infecting the animals and if an infection does occur, to limit the spread of that disease so

that it may easily be eradicated. The program incorporates physical barriers and procedures to achieve these goals. Physical barriers include buildings and animal rooms, but modern pathogen control programs often rely primarily on the animal caging system to provide the physical barrier. Animal Care Services provides several variations of rodent housing each with a different level of protection. The most stringent protection is achieved when using the semi-rigid isolator. The least protection is when rodents are housed in open cages. Racks that have individually ventilated cages fall between the isolators and open cages. Investigators must decide the level of protection that would best suit their research needs. At the highest level of protection, the risk of introduction and spread of pathogens is low, while with the least stringent system the risk of introduction and spread of pathogens is high. To prevent further spread, rodents housed in rooms or on racks where sentinel animals are found to have been exposed to the pathogen(s) listed on the Pathogen Exclusion List are removed to the quarantine facilities. It is important to note that use of the ventilated racks or the isolators severely limits the spread of an isolated disease outbreak provided that the procedures appropriate for that housing system are followed.

There are several research projects utilizing rodents where only minimal containment to prevent exposure to pathogens is feasible. For these projects, we recognize that maintaining rodents in ventilated racks or working with them under a laminar flow hood may not be appropriate. ACS, whenever possible, will provide procedure space within the animal facilities to preclude the need for taking animals outside the facility, since when animals are taken out of the facilities, the risk of exposure to rodent pathogens is greatly increased. The Investigator must weigh the level of risk for exposure to rodent pathogens that he/she is willing to accept, and understand the consequences when their rodents become infected.

ACS recommends the use of ventilated racks and laminar flow cabinets for the housing and use of rodents. Isolators are recommended for maintaining foundation stock but are space inefficient for most projects. Both systems not only provides an environment “safe” from pathogens, but also reduce the exposure of the users to rodent allergens, while open caging does neither. ACS will continue to increase the number of ventilated racks for use not only in our “SPF Barriers”, but also for the rooms outside the barriers. In addition to the above advantages, the use of this equipment dramatically reduces the cost of labor which is the most significant cost associated with housing rodents. ACS will continue to work with Investigators to provide the most appropriate housing for their research projects.

Please note that the efficacy of each of the above mentioned caging systems is reliant on the specific procedures that are employed in their use. Procedures can be varied to enhance efficacy, but this often increases the material and labor costs of the system. Thus, the term “SPF” does not adequately describe standards or procedures for housing rodents. In general ACS provides for the majority of our rodent colonies an irradiated diet and water treated with reverse osmosis and delivered using automatic watering or in a sterile water bottle. This in conjunction with the housing systems mentioned above is an integral part of ACS’s recommended standard of rodent care.

Health and Safety Reminder

ACS policies are posted on the ACS website at http://acs.ufl.edu

Investigators and their staff are reminded that it is strictly prohibited for minors (under the age of 18) to be in any animal facility at any time without the specific consent of the Director of ACS. Their presence can endanger both the projects and the animals that they come into contact with, and poses a potential danger to the children themselves.

Eating and drinking is restricted in University animal housing facilities to administrative and authorized staff break areas. Smoking is restricted to authorized smoking areas. These restrictions are in place to protect the health of University employees as well as the research animals and the restrictions must be observed. Placing items in your mouth while in animal housing areas greatly increases the possibility of ingesting microorganisms that may be present and could lead to illness. ACS has recently found a variety of human food wrappers and cups in animal housing area waste containers. If you see someone eating, drinking or smoking within an animal housing area, please remind them of these restrictions. This demonstrates your concern for their health as well as protecting the health of the research animals housed in ACS facilities.

With the warm weather, there has been an increase in research staff wearing shorts and sandals within ACS animal housing areas. When working in an animal housing area, EH&S, as well as ACS, recommends wearing pants that protect your legs and prohibits wearing open-toed shoes. This minimizes the amount of unprotected skin within these areas, which in turn decreases the possibility of acquiring allergies or breaking skin, should you run your shin or foot into a piece of equipment.

Hurricanes, Hurricanes, Hurricanes

In preparation for Hurricane Charlie, Animal Care Services began evacuating the low portions of the Farm prone to flooding. ACS staff worked through the night positioning auxiliary water sources in outlying facilities, moving required caging to evacuation housing areas, fueling vehicles, etc. The remaining animals at the Farm were relocated into buildings, grounds cleared of debris and sand bags placed at the Farm, Progress Park and the Health Science Center (HSC). ACS disaster staff was on site at the Communicore and Alachua facilities to care for the animals. They toured the animal facilities at 3:00 am on the 14th of August, to check for possible tornado damage but fortunately for UF, Charlie destroyed elsewhere. ACS implemented its recovery plan by relocating animals back to their original housing and finished on Monday, the 16th of August. This turned out to be an excellent training exercise for Hurricane Frances.

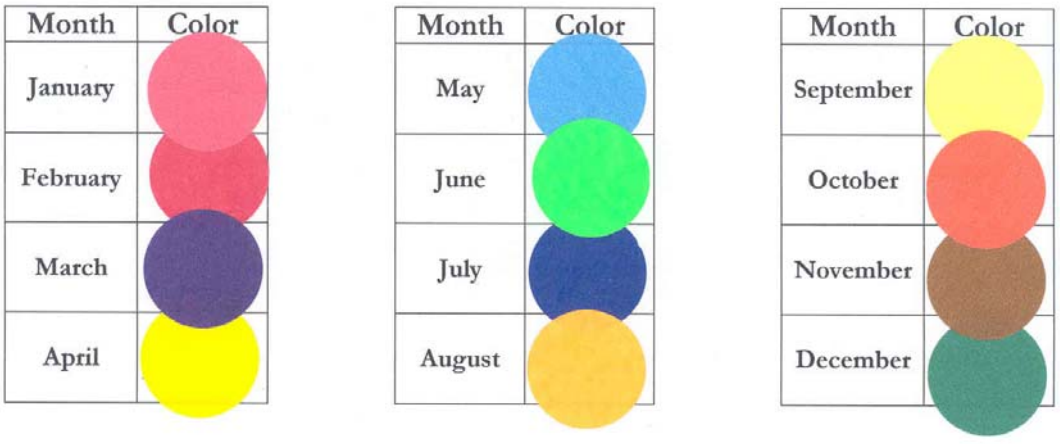
Hurricane Frances arrived in the area three weeks later. ACS again instituted its disaster plan by again evacuating the low portions of the Farm prone to flooding and relocating the remaining animals, clearing the grounds of debris and placing sand bags at the Farm, Progress Park and the Health Science Center (HSC). Critical ACS systems within the Communicore and McKnight Brain Institute were placed on emergency power. A generator was placed at our Alachua campus to provide ventilation for our large animal facility. ACS attended the Alachua County Emergency Operations Center hurricane briefings and relayed the information. For the safety of the animals and research, incoming shipments were delayed. ACS disaster staff was on site at the Communicore, Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Alachua facilities to care for the animals around the clock from September 4-7. Additional ACS staff braved the wind, rain and downed trees to come in to care for UF's research animals. Like the rest of campus, ACS sustained mostly minor damage to its facilities. Recovery actions were completed in time for Hurricane Ivan, a Category 3 storm for which like precautions were taken, and no damage was sustained.

Hurricane Jeanne arrived on the heels of Hurricane Ivan, as the fourth hurricane to pummel the state in less than six weeks. The disaster plan's storm precautions to evaluate potential problem areas and relocations of animals in vulnerable areas were completed prior to the storm hitting Gainesville, and although some flooding occurred, damage to facilities was mostly minor.

Animal Care Staff was present at all three major facilities and provided care to all animals at all facilities during the storms. Vets, vet techs and husbandry staff were on site at all times during these storms, and it is through the dedication of our staff that no animal's health or welfare was even compromised in the course of these storms.

Drug Expiration Coding

The color-coded dots below indicate the month a compound expires. The two-digit number written inside the color-coded dot indicates the year a compound expires.



ACS has begun color-coding all compounds purchased for the ACS Pharmacy, in order to facilitate the identification of expired compounds.

Website Update

Animal Care Services is proud to announce its new and improved website, located at www.acs.ufl.edu. The ACS site is a portal for a great deal of information about animal laboratory facilities, clinical care and bioresearch resources. In addition, we are pleased to introduce *myACS*, which will provide information to investigators, lab managers and fiscal contacts, at any time of day or night, of announcements, emergency information, animal orders, clinical data, protocol information and other special reports.

Investigators will be informed when *myACS* goes live, as your GatorLink login and password will be required for you to access the *myACS* portal. In the meantime, please take a look at the site and let us know what you think.

Animal Care Services: Per Diem

The investigator per diem charges at the University of Florida (UF) cover routine husbandry and veterinary care for a given species. Animals developing conditions following their arrival and quarantine release are the UF investigator's responsibility, except in cases where the quarantine is an integral part of husbandry and veterinary care (ex. - animals from unapproved vendors, quarantine related treatments, etc.). These quarantine-related husbandry and veterinary care charges, as with any other charges, are available to investigators at a minimal fee (consisting of time and materials) and exclude the non-routine diagnostic and treatment modalities during the quarantine period. Individuals are reminded that the Animal Care Services (ACS) veterinary staff is solely responsible for veterinary care with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), the United Stated Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC, International); as such the ACS veterinary staff is to be aware of the diagnosis and treatment of UF animals.

An Investigator's animals experiencing maladies will be evaluated by the veterinary staff, and the following options given to the research staff, investigator-provided animal treatment, ACS-managed animal treatment or euthanasia. In a few short words it is impossible to outline every included and excluded item. In general, charges would center on the treatment and supportive care that cannot be reasonably provided by qualified investigator staff; appropriately documented investigator-provided care should expect *not* to be charged.

Some species have a veterinary care element incorporated into their per diem as a standard. These items include vaccinations, periodic physical examinations and other associated species-specific tests as part of the UF veterinary care program. Once again, the resulting physical exam and test findings may necessitate treatment or additional testing, possibly at the investigator's expense.

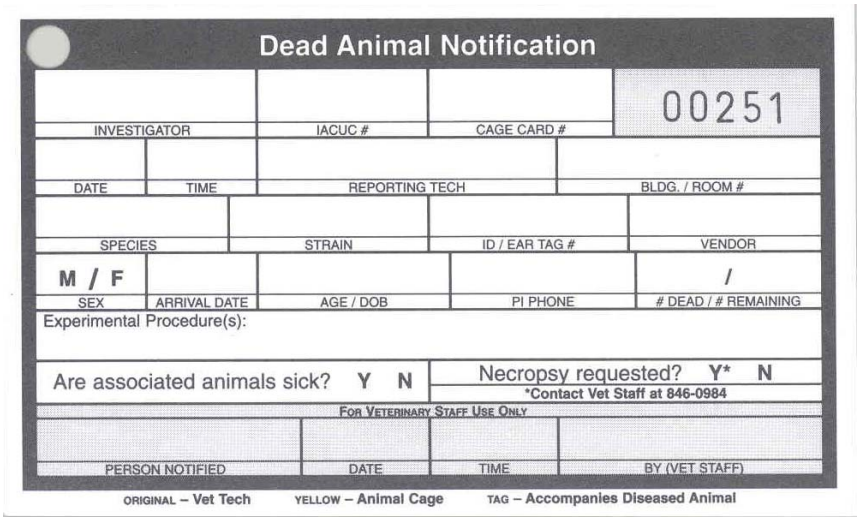
Due to a research project's relationship with known and unknown variables (ex. - geriatric, immunocompromised, or genetically unknown animals), it is impossible for per diem rates to include all clinical possibilities. The ACS veterinary staff is to be incorporated into the process of identifying and diagnosing sick animals and prior to initiating any treatment. A single animal's illness or death may appear inconsequential, but may hallmark a larger loss down the road unless a course of action is taken. In the past several months, ACS has worked with several investigators who have identified a health problem that was diagnosed and treated without any additional direct cost to the investigator.

Experimental Food and Water

Investigators providing experimental food or water are reminded to coordinate these items through ACS. Of special importance are animals maintained on ventilated racks with automatic watering systems. To ensure that research animals are receiving only experimental water, arrangements must be made through ACS to ensure that the automatic watering systems are properly adjusted, the experimental water being the sole water source available to the research animals. Consequently, investigators are reminded of the importance of daily animal observation (including weekends and holidays), in part to ensure that adequate experimental food and water is available to the animals. Failure to provide this most basic of care can result in the resumption of 'standard' food and water for the animals.

New Cage Cards

ACS has designed a cage card, which will help us notify the vet staff, as well as the research community, of dead animals that are found. The new cage card is in a triplicate format, to allow for all parties involved to be properly notified and keep records.



Dead Animal Notification

INVESTIGATOR	IACUC #	CAGE CARD #	00251
DATE	TIME	REPORTING TECH	BLDG. / ROOM #
SPECIES	STRAIN	ID / EAR TAG #	VENDOR
M / F	ARRIVAL DATE	AGE / DOB	PI PHONE	/
SEX				# DEAD / # REMAINING

Experimental Procedure(s):

Are associated animals sick? Y N

Necropsy requested? Y* N

*Contact Vet Staff at 846-0984

FOR VETERINARY STAFF USE ONLY

PERSON NOTIFIED	DATE	TIME	BY (VET STAFF)

ORIGINAL – Vet Tech YELLOW – Animal Cage TAG – Accompanies Diseased Animal

Vendor-Provided Surgical Procedures

Investigators are reminded of the availability and benefits of vendor-provided surgical procedures. Surgical procedures include various vascular and organ cannulations, neurologic procedures and device implants. Although many vendors provide this service for a fee, the benefit is that postoperative animals are received in a time frame where postoperative complications are unlikely and should they occur, replacement animals could be available at no additional charge. Most vendors, including Charles River and Harlan, provide this service, permitting investigators to order and receive the animal numbers required for a given experiment versus trying to account for potential postoperative complications. Should you need additional information about this vendor-based service, please contact ACS or visit your vendor's website for more details.

Transfer of Animals from Department of Pathology Rodent Colonies

Investigators wanting to transfer animals from the Department of Pathology Mouse Colony must fill out an Animal Order Form and send it to ACSORDER-L@lists.ufl.edu. No other forms will be accepted. All rules for animal orders apply. For more information visit: http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/forms/orderfrm.htm. Once the transfer is approved, the person delivering the animals should contact the front office to provide the date of delivery. On the day of the transfer, the animals should be delivered in SPF containers to CB-057. Please do not take the animals to the assigned rooms. ACS staff will place the animals in their assigned rooms.

Surgery and Anesthesia Notes

ACS is required by regulations to keep all anesthesia machines up to date and tested for accurate delivery of inhalant anesthesia. We have been working closely with a vendor to achieve yearly compliance. The vendor we currently use is SurgiVet. The sales representative from this company has visited ACS more than once and assisted us in the care and maintenance of our machines. The rep's name is Gary Wold, and he can be reached by cell phone at 704-576-8206, and is more than happy to assist any investigators interested in maintaining their equipment. This vendor accepts credit card or Pcard payment. If you need assistance please give him a call. SurgiVet also services the UF Veterinary School and the VA Hospital.

If you have further questions, please contact the ACS Surgical Manager, Whitney Hartz at 352-392-9948 or via whartz@ufl.edu

Animal Care Services (ACS) publishes this newsletter to communicate with those who use or provide support to the animal care program at the University of Florida. This newsletter contains various items of importance to animal users. We use e-mail as our primary method of distributing the newsletter, but also have copies available in the animal facilities. Please print this newsletter and distribute it to members of your department. If you did not receive this newsletter by email and would like to be added to the email list, please send an email message to cwasner@vpha.health.ufl.edu with "Add to ACS Newsletter" as the subject. This and all past issues of the newsletter can be accessed at http://acs.ufl.edu/newsletter.shtml.