

Violations of Federal Animal Welfare Guidelines and Regulations in the Laboratories of the University of Washington

Using the Freedom of Information Act, PETA obtained federal records documenting chronic and egregious violations of federal animal welfare guidelines and regulations in the laboratories of the University of Washington. Brief summaries of the incidents are provided below.

- **November 17, 2017: Zebrafish** were subjected to surgeries performed by a staff member “who had not completed the surgical training requirements and was not certified.”
- **December 5, 2017:** Cages in which **monkeys** were held were not cleaned for two days.
- **December 5, 2017:** Four **mice died of dehydration** when a staff member didn’t properly dock their cage for water.
- **December 5, 2017:** A female **mouse** died when the veterinary resident failed to notice that she was sick and “had a **uterine infection** with two retained fetuses.”
- **January 19, 2018:** A **mouse** was **left to die in pain** when a staff member ignored for several hours an instruction to euthanize the animal.
- **January 19, 2018:** Several **mice**, held in nine cages, **spent 19.5 hours in packing boxes** before they were shipped.
- **January 19, 2018:** A 2-year-old male **pigtail macaque** was **not fed** proper meals on weekdays for six weeks. The monkey was being fed by the experimenter’s staff while he was being used in a study, but when the study ended, the experimenter failed to notify husbandry staff that they should start feeding the monkey.
- **January 19, 2018:** A 4-month-old **mouse died of dehydration** when no one noticed that his or her “headcap” (covering instrumentation implanted into the mouse’s brain) had become caught in the metal wire top of the cage, leaving the animal **unable to access water**.
- **January 19, 2018:** Ten **mice** died and 12 more had to be euthanized when an experimenter failed to ensure that the correct doses of cancer chemotherapy drugs were administered. The animals received a higher dose that was not adjusted for their bodyweight.
- **January 19, 2018:** Four **primates** were subjected to biopsy procedures five days earlier than they should have been when experimenters failed to adhere to the approved protocol.
- **February 15, 2018:** A **juvenile frog** was **subjected to a survival axotomy surgery** that wasn’t in the protocol that had been approved by the oversight body.
- **February 15, 2018:** A **primate** had 28 mL of blood drawn when staff members failed to remember that the animal had blood drawn only 10 days before and had failed to log this information in their tracking document.
- **March 16, 2018:** A rat was found dead 10 days after experimenters performed a surgery in which a mini pump was placed in the animal’s abdomen. The experimenters failed to follow the approved protocol and **failed to provide the rat with adequate pain relief** required for an abdominal surgery.
- **March 27, 2018:** Experimenters **cut off the ends of the tails of 15 mice** who were over 28 days old, which is out of compliance with standard operating procedures. The experimenters also **failed to provide the animals with pain relief**, and all 15 mice had to be euthanized.
- **March 27, 2018:** Three **pigs** received higher doses of the drug amiodarone than those described in the approved protocol. This occurred on several days because experimenters failed to identify the approved doses for the protocol that these animals were assigned to.

- **April 23, 2018:** Two **neonatal mice were found alive in a freezer** intended for dead mice. The mice had been gassed with carbon dioxide—even though mice under 10 days old (as these mice were) are resistant to carbon dioxide hypoxia.
- **May 1, 2018:** Three **mice** over 28 days old had the **ends of their tails cut off**, which is out of compliance with standard operating protocols. One of them had to be euthanized because his or her **spine was exposed**.
- **May 1, 2018:** Two **monkeys** were administered an extra dose of immunosuppressant rapamycin when staff members failed to follow instructions.
- **May 1, 2018:** A **monkey** spent an indeterminate number of hours (perhaps 12) **without access to water** when staff members failed to connect the water line to the cage.
- **May 1, 2018:** A **pigtail macaque died by asphyxiation** when a staff member failed to install an enrichment device properly—the monkey was able to pull the chain attached to the device into the cage and around his or her head and jaw.
- **May 18, 2018:** Three **mice** were **left without food** and one of them **died of starvation** after experimenters failed to put food in their cage and laboratory employees failed to notice.
- **May 18, 2018:** Two **mice** were **left without water** and one of them had to be euthanized after a laboratory employee failed to notice that the water bottle in the animals' cage had flipped.
- **May 18, 2018:** **Zebrafish** were subjected to **unapproved surgeries** performed by a group of experimenters who failed to follow the approved protocol, failed to log post-surgical information or logged inaccurate information, failed to account for fish after survival surgery, and failed to use only authorized laboratory space. In 2017, the same group performed an unapproved surgery.
- **June 11, 2018:** A **mouse** suffering from a **testicular hernia** was found dead “between the food hopper and” the “lid of the cage.” The animal might have been left unchecked for at least four days.
- **August 16, 2018:** Two **mice** had to be euthanized after experimenters failed to follow the approved protocol and injected them with a high dose of DMSO, which caused swelling in their faces and feet.
- **August 16, 2018:** A 3-month-old **mouse whose right arm was caught in the metal wire** top of the cage died (likely from dehydration/starvation)—and staff members failed to notice the situation in time to help.
- **August 17, 2018:** A **zebra finch died after becoming trapped behind the cage pan** and staff members failed to notice, “since the cage was high on top of a rack.”
- **August 17, 2018:** Three **frogs died** after a staff member failed to place a baffle in their tank, which allowed them to escape.
- **November 26, 2018:** A **mouse** was **found alive in a freezer** intended for dead animals. The experimenter had gassed the mouse with carbon dioxide but failed to ensure that he or she had died. The recovered mouse was killed.
- **November 26, 2018:** A **rat** was killed with expired euthanasia solution after staff members failed “to label the vial as expired and dispose of it properly.”
- **December 27, 2018:** Thirty-three **sablefish** and 60 **coho salmon** died because of a failure in the main breaker panel that resulted in a power outage, which in turn led to the **fish having no oxygen** supplied to their tank.

- **December 27, 2018:** An adult mouse and “several litters” of baby **mice drowned** after a vendor engineer performed an unauthorized procedure in the water supply system and staff members failed to notice it.
- **February 4, 2019:** A female **monkey** had to be euthanized when her **right arm was fractured** after getting stuck in the metal mesh of her cage and the treatment provided failed to restore mobility to the arm and fingers.
- **February 4, 2019:** Wild-caught **crows** were **deprived of food**, even though the protocol did not specify such food restriction.
- **February 4, 2019:** Sixty **mice** were **left without water for 12 to 15 hours** and several of them died of dehydration after staff members failed to notice that the water line was disconnected.
- **February 4, 2019:** One **mouse died of dehydration** and another had to be euthanized after staff members failed to notice that the water bottle in their cage had flipped, leaving them without access to water.
- **March 5, 2019:** Four pregnant **bats** were trapped by an experimenter who failed to follow the approved protocol for pregnant individuals.
- **April 8, 2019:** Six **mice died** or had to be euthanized after an experimenter administered a medication in a manner that didn’t comply with the approved protocol.
- **May 29, 2019:** A **primate** received a “less than optimum dosing of” fentanyl after it was determined that some of the controlled substance had been diverted and what remained of the opioid was diluted.
- **May 29, 2019:** A **mouse** was subjected to an unapproved “head plate placement procedure” performed by an experimenter who failed to follow the approved protocol, didn’t administer a local analgesic, didn’t administer “systemic analgesia” at the correct time, didn’t administer antibiotics, and used an unapproved glue to secure the plate.
- **May 29, 2019:** Two hundred and seventy-four **zebrafish died of asphyxiation** when a staff member failed to use the right size of carbon particles for the filters.
- **June 20, 2019:** A **primate** died after experimenters failed to ensure that the animal had appropriately fasted before undergoing surgery. The monkey “**aspirated ingesta** during recovery.”
- **June 20, 2019:** Seventeen adult and seven baby **mice died of dehydration** after a vendor failed to set the pressure correctly in the water system “making it harder for mice to get water from their lixits.”
- **July 17, 2019:** Three **mice died of dehydration** after a staff member failed to connect the water line to their cage.
- **July 17, 2019:** **Mice** confined to nine cages were left with no food and three of them **died of starvation** after experimenters and laboratory staff failed to communicate clearly regarding who was responsible for feeding the animals.
- **July 17, 2019:** Three **mice** died of an anesthetic overdose and one more had to be euthanized after experimenters failed to adjust the doses of ketamine and xylazine for the animals’ weight.
- **August 21, 2019:** A 9-year-old female **monkey bled to death** after the veterinarian hit her femoral artery during a blood draw. “It appears that this animal continued to slowly bleed overnight possibly due to a clotting issue or perhaps having fragile vessels as a result of being a hybrid rhesus.”

- **September 23, 2019:** Eighteen **young rats** were **scalded to death** when they were left on a cart with laboratory equipment that went through steam sterilization.
- **September 23, 2019:** Twelve **baby mice** were euthanized after experimenters and laboratory staff failed to follow the weaning protocol, failed to inform the veterinarian about the death of the mother, and failed to find a foster mother.
- **September 23, 2019:** Seven **mice** died and three more had to be euthanized after an experimenter improperly prepared experimental solutions that were injected into the animals.
- **October 23, 2019:** Ten **young ferrets** were **exposed to successive impacts to their skulls** that used a higher force than that specified in the approved protocol. One of the ferrets had to be euthanized “due to prolonged anesthesia recovery after the third exposure.”
- **October 23, 2019:** **Fish** were captured “via beach seine netting” by an “instructor” and his students without having the required permit issued by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- **November 26, 2019:** Three **mice** died and two more had to be euthanized after an experimenter **failed to add food** to their cage and the laboratory staff failed to notice.
- **November 26, 2019:** Two adult **mice** died of dehydration after staff members failed to notice that they **didn’t have access to water**.
- **November 26, 2019:** Five male **rats** who were subjected to surgery sustained **burns to their prepuces** and one of them had to be euthanized after experimenters failed to use a heating pad properly.
- **November 26, 2019:** Two **mice** died and nine more had to be euthanized after the experimenters failed to administer the correct dose of **influenza virus**. Instead of 1,000 pfu/mL, the animals received 1,000,000 pfu/mL.
- **January 22, 2020:** Two adult **mice** died of **dehydration** after staff members failed to notice that the animals didn’t have access to water because the lixit had been damaged.
- **February 21, 2020:** A female **gerbil** was euthanized after an experimenter failed to follow the approved protocol and tried to perform a second embryo transfer during a single surgical procedure.
- **February 21, 2020:** Two **monkeys** sustained **injuries** after a transfer door failed, allowing the animals to get close enough to each other to fight.
- **March 23, 2020:** Two **mice died of dehydration** and two more had to be euthanized after an experimenter failed to notice that the cage didn’t have a water valve.
- **March 23, 2020:** Thirteen **mice** died from **exposure to a high concentration of cigarette smoke** after no one noticed that the smoke machine wasn’t functioning properly.
- **May 22, 2020:** Two **rats** died after experimenters failed to follow the approved protocol and didn’t monitor them after **injecting them with parasitic larvae**.
- **May 22, 2020:** Five **mice died of asphyxiation** after a staff member improperly docked their cage in the rack, leaving them with no airflow.
- **May 26, 2020:** Three **rats** were **subjected to spinal injury surgeries**—two of them died during the procedure and the third died a day later after experimenters failed to administer the appropriate dose of analgesic.
- **July 30, 2020:** Several **monkeys sustained injuries** when two of them were able to escape from their cage into the room.
- **July 30, 2020:** A female **monkey was left without water** for at least 12 hours after staff members failed to notice that she was in the “trapping run.”

- **July 30, 2020:** A **juvenile monkey's left arm had to be amputated** after staff members failed to notice that a feeder was missing a lock, which allowed the monkey to escape and climb to another cage, where he was injured by the monkey confined to that cage.
- **August 24, 2020:** The tails of five **mice** over 28 days old were **clipped without anesthetics or analgesics** and one of them had to undergo surgery because his or her spine was exposed after experimenters failed to follow the approved protocol.
- **September 28, 2020:** Five **weanling mice died** because they weren't fed for four days after weaning.
- **September 28, 2020:** Five **mice** died after **not having access to water** for at least three days because staff did not fully seat their cage in the rack to enable access to the automatic waterer.
- **September 28, 2020:** Nineteen **mouse pups died of starvation** after 12 days without food.
- **December 28, 2020:** Five **mice died of dehydration** because the cages that they were held in weren't seated properly to have access to water.
- **December 28, 2020:** Two **squirrel monkeys** were given **injections in their eyes** with only one week between injections, although the protocol specified a three- to four-week interval between injections.
- **January 6, 2021:** The tails of 22 **mice** were **clipped without anesthetics or analgesics** one day after the approved age for the procedure. Thirteen mice suffered from complications, and one mouse died.
- **January 28, 2021:** Five **mice** were left without the approved vertical clearance in their cage for several days because of the use of a wire mesh base for fecal collection.
- **January 28, 2021:** Three recently **weaned mice died of starvation** after eight days without food.
- **March 4, 2021:** A 10-day-old **mouse pup** was left alone in a cage after a tag was inserted in his ear. The pup **didn't have access to food or water** in the cage and was moribund when he was found. He was euthanized.