
1. PURPOSE

This Standard Operating procedure (SOP) describes the daily routine for rodent care.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

Animal care staff, facility supervisor, facility manager.

3. MATERIALS

- 3.1. Rodent diet (within 6 months of the milling date)
- 3.2. Fresh or sterilized water bottles
- 3.3. Clean or sterilized cages with bedding
- 3.4. Clean or sterilized environmental enrichment devices
- 3.5. Clean or sterilized micro-barrier tops and wire-bar lids
- 3.6. Disinfectant solution
- 3.7. Cage cards (Darwin, Veterinary Care, Dead Animal Found)
- 3.8. Room log

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1. Daily:
 - 4.1.1. Log temperature (min/max) and humidity (min/max). Report any abnormality of environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, light, noise) to the supervisor
 - 4.1.2. Observe all cages for illness, injury, general condition of animals, dead animals and new pups.
 - 4.1.3. Replenish food as needed.
 - 4.1.4. Check the amount of water remaining within the bottle. If the water bottle is less than ½ full, replace with a fresh water bottle. Do not refill water bottles as this can lead to harmful bacterial growth. If it appears that the water is not being consumed, check the condition of the water stopper.
 - 4.1.5. Flush automatic watering system twice daily.
 - 4.1.6. Perform Veterinary Care treatments as indicated on the Treatment Log. Initial the back of the Veterinary Care card after performing the treatment.
 - 4.1.7. Sweep the floor and empty the garbage container.
 - 4.1.8. Reset temperature/humidity meter.
 - 4.1.9. Verify that all the racks are well-connected and that the blowers are running properly.
 - 4.1.10. Check vermin traps.
 - 4.1.11. Replenish supplies in the room as needed (especially important prior to the weekend).
 - 4.1.12. Fill in the Room Log.
- 4.2. Cage change:
 - 4.2.1. Only one cage is to be changed at a time to avoid the unintentional mixing of animals.
 - 4.2.2. Ventilated cages are changed once every two weeks, at a minimum.
 - 4.2.3. Static cages are changed once a week, at a minimum.
 - 4.2.4. Cages that are visibly wet, excessively soiled, or that have a strong ammonia odor are changed as necessary.
 - 4.2.5. Transfer dirty bedding to the sentinel cages during cage changing as per SOP

- 4.2.6. Change the water bottles once a week, at a minimum.
- 4.2.7. Change water valves when the cages are relocated or at least every 3 months.
- 4.2.8. Feed the mice ad libitum (as much as they want), unless otherwise instructed, with the appropriate rodent diet. If the food in the hopper is moldy, discard the food and change the entire cage unit (cage, water bottle or valve, environmental enrichment device, wire-bar lids and micro-barrier tops).
- 4.2.9. Change the wire bar lids and the cage card holders when they are visibly soiled. At the time that the wire bar lid is changed all remaining food is discarded.
- 4.2.10. Ensure that all cages have an environmental enrichment device (refer to SOP). Transfer the nest to the clean cage with the animals during cage change, add additional nesting material if necessary.
- 4.2.11. Transfer the cage card(s) to the clean cage before replacing it back on its rack.
- 4.2.12. When transferring animals to clean cages, check the number of animals within the cage. This number should correspond to the number of animals recorded on the cage card. If it does not correspond, record the correct number on the cage card.
- 4.2.13. Wipe down the rack shelving with the disinfectant solution before replacing the clean cage.
- 4.3. Weekly:
 - 4.3.1. Flush the floor drains:
 - 4.3.1.1. Run tap water through the drain for approximately 10 seconds.
 - 4.3.1.2. Pour disinfectant, such as bleach.
 - 4.3.2. Change/clean prefilters in changing stations/biosafety cabinets
 - 4.3.3. Check light timers.
 - 4.3.4. Mop the floor.
- 4.4. Monthly:
 - 4.4.1. Change the micro-isolator tops.
 - 4.4.2. Wipe down all surfaces such as sinks, doors, doorjambes and doorknobs, windows, cart tops, shelves, etc. with the disinfectant solution.
 - 4.4.3. Clean changing stations/biosafety cabinets: remove filters, vacuum and drain.
 - 4.4.4. Clean room exhaust grills.
 - 4.4.5. Clean garbage container and cleaning devices (broom, mop, etc.).
- 4.5. Bi-annually:
 - 4.5.1. Wash all walls with disinfectant solution every six months, at a minimum.
 - 4.5.2. Wash racks every six months.

5. SPECIAL PROCEDURES

- 5.1. Dead animals:
 - 5.1.1. Dead animals are placed in a plastic bag with a Dead Animal Found card attached. The information from the cage card must be transferred to this card. Document also the dead animals on the cage card (with ID and date). The information is transferred to the Mortality Log.
 - 5.1.2. Place the bag in the cold room or in the refrigerator/freezer.
 - 5.1.3. The PI is notified if necessary.
- 5.2. Sick or injured animals:
 - 5.2.1. Place a Veterinary Care card on the cage housing the sick or injured animal.
 - 5.2.2. Complete a Rodent Illness/Injury Report and follow the instructions in the Rodent Veterinary Care Program SOP

5.3. Over-crowded cages:

5.3.1. If the cage population density exceeds guidelines, the cage must be immediately identified with Veterinary Care card and a Rodent Illness/Injury Report is filled.

5.3.2. If the problem is not corrected within a reasonable time, the veterinary care staff will separate the animals accordingly and the investigator will be charged for the technical time.

5.4. Escaped Animals:

5.4.1. Capture the animal and place into a cage on its own and identify as “escaped animal”. Inform the facility supervisor who will notify the investigator.