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**Valdosta State University Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee**

**Standard Operating Procedure Number 012**

**ANIMAL CARE DURING EMERGENCY CONDITIONS**

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**PURPOSE:** This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) specifies general procedures used by Valdosta State University (VSU) to prepare and provide for animal care in the event of mandatory evacuation due to hurricane or other storm warning and other anticipated emergency situations. These procedures are to be used as guidelines to prepare for the care of animals and timely evacuation of staff. These procedures are intended to ensure the humane disposition of animals should it be required during or after an emergency.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S EMERGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:** Because VSU's animal program does not employ a facility director or animal care technicians, the emergency preparations and follow-up are the responsibility of each Principal Investigator who has vertebrate animals housed in the Bailey Science Center Animal Facility, the Bailey aquatic laboratory, or any other facility or laboratory on campus. The SOP specifies procedures for rodents and fish. Investigators utilizing other families of vertebrate animals may be required to develop similar emergency procedures as part of the Animal Use Protocol (AUP) submission and approval.

**EMERGENCY RODENT CARE:  
Bailey Science Center Animal Facility**

**A. Seventy-Two (72) Hours Prior to Event**

1. Change out cages
2. Replace small water bottles with large water bottles for group housed animals
3. Clean all soiled cages and water bottles
4. Ensure an adequate supply of bleach and any other needed emergency supplies
5. Secure all chemicals and ensure that MSDS sheets are posted
6. Properly dispose of all carcasses and biohazards (including sharps)
7. Contact Plant Operations to determine availability of backup power after event
8. Provide University Police with list of individuals (and their contact information) who may enter the animal facility after the event

**B. Forty-Eight (48) Hours Prior to Event**

1. Fill 55 gallon drum or other large container(s) with water
2. Turn freezers and refrigerators to lowest setting
3. Turn off gas at cutoff
4. Close valves on all tanks
5. Provide all animal researchers copies of contact list

**C. Twenty-Four (24) Hours Prior to Event**

1. Fill sinks with water
2. Ensure that water bottles are full and all animals have a three day supply of food
3. Open doors to individual housing rooms to allow ventilation in the event emergency power fails
4. Notify Plant Operations and University Police that temperature alarms will be temporarily suspended

#### D. After Event

1. Make contact with Plant Operations, University Police, and with others on the contact list to determine strategy for entry to the facility (do not enter facility/building alone)
2. Take flashlight, gloves, and mask
3. If rooms are damaged, relocate animals to a secure location
4. Assist Plant Operations as requested to restore regular power to the facility as soon as possible
5. If emergency power has failed, open door to hallway to allow ventilation until regular power is restored
6. Refresh animal water bottles and food supply
7. Remove dead animals, wrap securely, and place them inside the freezer
8. Contact others on the contact list to notify them of the status of the facility
9. Continue to check on animals on a daily basis until conditions return to normal
10. If food or water supplies are compromised or animals are injured or are suffering, euthanize using AVMA an acceptable procedure

### **EMERGENCY FISH CARE:**

#### **Bailey Science Center Aquatic Laboratory and Individual Investigators' Laboratories**

##### A. Seventy-Two (72) Hours Prior to Event

1. Ensure adequate level of water in all tanks
2. Ensure an adequate supply of bleach and any other needed emergency supplies
3. Secure all chemicals and ensure that MSDS sheets are posted
4. Properly dispose of all carcasses and biohazards (including sharps)
5. Contact Plant Operations to determine availability of backup power after event
6. Provide University Police with list of individuals (and their contact information) who may enter laboratory after the event

##### B. Forty-Eight (48) Hours Prior to Event

1. Fill 55 gallon drum or other large container(s) with water
2. Turn freezers and refrigerators to lowest setting
3. Turn off gas at cutoff
4. Close valves on all tanks
5. Provide all animal researchers and animal care staff copies of contact list

##### C. Twenty-Four (24) Hours Prior to Event

1. Fill sinks with water
2. Ensure animals have a three day supply of food
3. If applicable, notify Plant Operations and University Police that temperature alarms will be temporarily suspended

#### D. After Event

1. Make contact with Plant Operations, University Police, and with others on the contact list to determine strategy for entry to the laboratory (do not enter laboratory/building alone)
2. Take flashlight and gloves
3. If rooms are damaged, relocate animals to a secure location
4. Assist Plant Operations as requested to restore power to laboratory and aeration tanks as soon as possible
5. Refresh animals' food supply
7. Remove dead animals, wrap securely, and place them inside the freezer
8. Contact others on the contact list to notify them of the status of the laboratory
9. Continue to check on animals on daily basis until conditions return to normal
10. If food supplies are compromised or animals are injured or are suffering, euthanize using AVMA acceptable procedure