

DISASTER PLAN FOR THE MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
ANIMAL RESOURCE FACILITIES (ARF)
Huntington, WV

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I.) GENERAL

The primary concern after a disaster is the preservation of human life. Secondly, the ARF staff will take action to ensure the safety and well-being of the research animals under their care.

Analysis of the consequences of disasters (either natural or man-made) indicates that failure of the physical plant to maintain a proper environment will be the focus of concern. The Veterinarian will be notified in the event of a disaster which threatens the integrity of the building containing the ARF or its environmental controls. He will assess the situation, using resources such as the maintenance and engineering personnel as indicated. A judgment will be made as to whether animals can continue to be safely housed in the ARF, or if they need to be moved to another facility.

II.) PHYSICAL RESOURCES

A.) The Huntington Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) Animal Resource Facility (ARF) is the facility of choice for relocation from the Medical Education Building (MEB), should such be necessary. Any such relocation will be done on the advice of the Veterinarian, and coordinated with the ARF staff. The VAMC ARF usually has sufficient extra animal space to accommodate the MEB ARF animal population.

B.) Both ARFs have their own emergency generator, which powers the HVAC as well as lights and outlets in the animal rooms. Power failure is the most common occurrence, and the generator ensures that the animal room environment is maintained within NIH guideline specifications.

C.) Supplies of feed and bedding, sufficient for 10 days, are kept on hand in the event that regular deliveries are delayed.

III.) PERSONNEL RESOURCES

A.) ARF staff consisting of the Veterinarian (on 24 hour emergency call) and two animal care technicians.

B.) MU personnel, including maintenance, security, and housekeeping.

C.) Huntington, West Virginia fire and police: typical response time is under 15 minutes.

IV.) RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC DISASTERS

A.) NATURAL DISASTERS

1.) Weather related

a.) Flood: The MEB is sited well above the flood plain of the Twelve-Pole Creek and Ohio River. Thus, no immediate problem from flooding is anticipated. The Byrd Biotechnology Science Center (BBSC) ARF is located on Third Avenue, Huntington. There is a flood wall protecting the city from flooding of the Ohio River. Interruption of electrical power and delays in delivery of supplies are the two most likely effects of flooding. Both of these can be managed using on site resources.

b.) Wind (including hurricane/ tornado, severe thunderstorms, etc): Huntington, WV is not a high risk area for severe wind storms. The most frequent occurrence is loss of power from downed transmission lines after a severe thunderstorm which is covered by the emergency generator. Windstorms severe enough to cause physical damage to the building itself are extremely rare. In the event of such a storm, assessment of the damage will be made to determine if the animals need to be relocated.

c.) Ice, snow, hail: Winter weather emergencies are uncommon in Huntington, WV. Loss of power and delayed

shipment of supplies are the most likely effects of a severe winter storm. Generator power and feed resources should be sufficient to deal with most winter weather disasters. It has not yet proven necessary to evacuate the animals from the facility due to such occurrences.

2.) Earthquake: West Virginia is not considered a high risk area for major earthquakes. Minor quakes may disrupt power or delay delivery of supplies. Should a major quake occur, it is probable that the building may be damaged. In such an event, it may be necessary to relocate the animals to one of the other animal facilities, assuming that facility is less affected. If both facilities are damaged, the animals will be made as comfortable and secure as possible and left on site. Any such decision must be made on consult with engineering personnel.

B.) MAN-MADE DISASTER (Terrorism or sabotage): The MEB is protected by patrolling VAMC police force. Security access to the building is granted to investigators, Police, fire and research staff. The MEB ARF outer doors are locked at all times. Access to the animal area is further restricted to PIs with approved animal protocols, VA Police, MU Police, and the MU maintenance staff who coordinates for building maintenance and repair. Animal room doors in the facility are further secured by key locks, with key issue limited to ARF staff and PIs with animals in-house. In the event of a break-in attempt, the inner doors should hold up long enough for Huntington Police to arrive to back up the VA Police. The Veterinarian will be notified in the event of a break-in attempt, and will respond to evaluate what damage has been done, and see that the animals are properly housed and cared for. Since this facility mainly uses only rodents, it is not considered to be a high-risk target for animal rights saboteurs.

The physical security for the BBSC is monitored by a commercial security force. This company has a guard on site 24 hours/day, 7 days/week who is in radio and telephone contact with the MU Police. The building is also routinely patrolled by the MU Police. Exterior doors of the building are locked between the hours of 9:00 pm and 7:00 am during weekdays and continuously on weekends and holidays. Exterior doors of the ARF and the animal rooms are locked continuously with controlled access for PIs and their technicians. In the event of a break-in attempt, the inner doors should hold up long enough for Huntington Police to arrive to back up the MU Police. The Veterinarian will be notified in the event of a break-in attempt, and will respond to evaluate what damage has been done, and see that the animals are properly housed and cared for. Since this facility mainly uses only rodents, it is not considered to be a high-risk target for animal rights saboteurs.

C.) FIRE: In the event of a fire in the building, all personnel will evacuate to designated assembly areas, as practiced during regular fire drills. No attempt will

be made to rescue animals, which would put human life at risk. The Fire Department will do their best to keep fire and smoke from spreading to the animal area. Once the fire threat has abated, the Veterinarian and engineering personnel will evaluate the condition of the physical plant to determine that the environmental controls are still functional. Animals will be checked for health effect due to possible smoke or heat exposure. Injured animals may be euthanized; non-injured animals may be relocated to the other facility if the building environment is judged to be detrimental to their health.

D.) **PHYSICAL PLANT BREAKDOWN:** In the event of a failure in the building's physical systems (HVAC, electric, plumbing), the Veterinarian will be notified, and will make an evaluation as to the extent of the possible negative effects of the break down on animal health and well-being. Maintenance personnel will be consulted to determine what steps will be taken to fix the problem, and also what emergency action can be taken to maintain or restore the proper environment for the animals. If the animal room environment cannot be maintained within NIH Guide parameters, the animals may need to be relocated to the other facility.

V.) **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

One consequence of a disaster may be the inability of the ARF staff to report for duty. In the event that no trained animal care personnel are available, MU security personnel will be asked to check on the physical conditions in the animal area and report to the first person in the ARF Emergency Notification Chain they can reach. (This chain begins with the Veterinarian, and includes the IACUC Chair, animal technicians, and maintenance personnel.) The Veterinarian or IACUC Chair will be responsible for making decisions regarding animal health and well-being. All animals are provided with sufficient feed and water at the cages to last several days, in the absence of routine care.

**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
ANIMAL RESOURCE FACILITIES
DISASTER PLAN**

The following has been prepared as a guide for handling an emergency in the Animal Resource Facility that places the health and well-being of research animals at risk.

Emergency/Disaster During Regular Duty Hours

Employees will follow existing procedures for emergency/disaster during regular duty hours. Any and/or all animals will be rescued if possible, without endangering human life or health. Animals are housed in the basement of the Medical Education Building. In the event of disaster, attempts shall be made to evacuate animals to the Huntington Veteran Affairs Medical Center Animal Resource Facility located adjacent to the Medical Education Building, if the VAMC is capable of accepting these animals. For animals housed in the BBSC, safe areas will be utilized for evacuation sites. If there are no safe areas in the BBSC, attempts will be made to evacuate the animals to the Medical Education Building ARF. If no suitable areas are available, the animals will be monitored for injury or distress and, if needed, be humanely euthanized. Animals that are injured or in distress will be humanely euthanized by the means appropriate for that species, in accordance with the AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia. Care will be supervised by the ARF Director.

Emergency/Disaster After Regular Duty Hours

Responders will follow existing procedures for emergency/disaster after regular duty hours. Any and/or all animals will be rescued if possible, without endangering human life or health. Animals are housed in the basement of the Medical Education Building. In the event of disaster, responders are directed to attempt rescue of the animals and to promptly notify the ARF Director and the Animal Care Staff. Provisions have been developed for temporary housing facilities in the Huntington Veteran Affairs Medical Center Animal Resource Facility located adjacent to the Medical Education Building. For animals housed in the BBSC, safe areas will be utilized for evacuation sites. If there are no safe areas in the BBSC, attempts will be made to evacuate the animals to the Medical Education Building ARF. If no suitable areas are available, the animals will be monitored for injury or distress and, if needed, be humanely euthanized. Animals that are injured or in distress will be humanely euthanized by the means appropriate for that species, in accordance with the AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia. Care will be supervised by the ARF Director.