

Disaster Plan

Policy #03-21

Disaster Plan for PHSU Animal Research Facilities and Biobubbles

Policy: Major disasters are, by their unpredictable nature, difficult to plan for. Nevertheless, it is important to try to anticipate the kinds of catastrophes that could befall our Animal Research Facility (ARF) and Biobubbles (satellite facilities in Research Building) and to outline appropriate responses.

We define a major disaster as an event that threatens the life and well-being of the users of the ARF and Biobubbles or of the animals housed there due to breach of walls or ceiling, prolonged loss of utilities (cooling, lighting, water) or inability of personnel to come to work or gain access to the animal facility due to storm damage.

The potential consequences to animals include exposure to extreme heat, cold, or wet conditions, loss of lighting or ventilation, lack of food or water, and many hazards associated with escape or release. The policy of the Animal Research Facilities will be first to protect people from harm, then animals, then the scientific integrity of the research studies ongoing in the ARF and in the Biobubbles.

Response Team:

Two response teams are created in the event that any member could not reach the facilities because of transportation problems, flooded streets, bad weather etc.

Action Committee I:

Lizette Laboy — Facility Supervisor (787) 212-0526

Carmen Ruiz — Animal Caretaker (787) 618-2930

Gregorio Cruz - Animal Caretaker (787) 328-4487

Isamar Pacheco — Animal Caretaker (787) 239-7687

Security Guard (787) 840-2575 ext. 2250

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In case there is no one available from committee I, committee II will be activated.

Action Committee II:

Dr. Kenira Thompson (787) 414-8551

Dr. Marian Sepúlveda (787) 370-8205

Dr. James Porter (787) 432-1926 Dr.

Richard Noel (787) 844-6944

Safety of People:

If people cannot enter or stay in the ARF or Biobubbles without risk to their own safety, they should be denied entry or evacuated. The decision to prohibit building access for safety reasons will be made by police, fire and safety authorities of PHSU.

Safety of Animals:

If animals are experiencing severe pain or distress they should be evacuated or euthanized. Decisions should be made in consultation with as many of the relevant parties as are available, including the Veterinary Medical Consultant (VMC), researchers and the supervisor of the ARF. Decisions will be affected by numerous factors including availability of other housing, the extent to which animal health and experimental integrity have already been compromised, the extent to which they will be further compromised by a move to other quarters, current levels of pain and distress in the animals, and the length of time until relief is expected to be provided either in the ARF or in a different facility.

Veterinarian in Charge:

Dr. Mónica Montalvo, DVM

(787) 450-1489

mmontalvo@psm.edu

montalvogonzalez@gmail.com

Protection of Research Integrity:

When the safety and comfort of people and animals has been assured, every effort will be made by ARF staff to preserve the integrity of ongoing research experiments in the ARF and in the Biobubbles, contingent on the availability of sufficient staff. It is recognized that in a disaster situation, even if the ARF and the Biobubbles are undamaged and functional, the availability of staff and users may be severely limited due to hazardous travel conditions, restriction of travel by civil authorities, and the effects of the disaster on personal lives and property. If insufficient personnel are available to perform all normal animal care and husbandry functions, the following priorities will be followed:

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- hydration and nutrition
- essential veterinary medical care
- bedding change and other first-level sanitation
- research activities whose non-performance would destroy the integrity of the research program
- cage washing and other second level sanitation
- other functions as time permits

Preparedness Measures:

The following measures will be taken to prepare for a Storm to minimize its effect on the operation of the ARF and Biobubbles:

Before Storm:

- Activate Action Committee I to carry out an inspection of the facilities to verify any last minute needs at the Facility.
- Food and water to all animals.
- Ensure enough CO2 on hand to euthanize animals if necessary.
- Fill two containers of 33 gallons each with water. These containers will be in the wash area.
- Check that the flashlights are working with extra batteries.
- The Principal Investigator should leave special instructions for the care of their experimental animals to the Supervisor of the Facility.
- Have available two filter masks in the wash area in the case of concentration of objectionable odors due to urine and feces of the animals.

After the Storm:

- The security guard will inspect the facilities in case of emergency the guard should call the Facility Supervisor and Security Officer of PHSU.
- The Action Committee I will go to the facilities to verify that all animals are in good condition.
- In the event that the Committee I cannot reach the facilities, the Facility Supervisor will contact Action Committee II to inspect the facilities to provide water and food for animals as needed and any other measures. • If there is a blackout of electric light, the power plant will be activated automatically within 15 seconds providing energy for the central air to work. Note: The power plant has monthly preventive maintenance by Mr. Eddie William Rivera (787) 384-5545.
- In the event that the air condition will not work the Action Committee will proceed to open all doors to allow air to circulate. Fans in the hallway will be used to lower the temperature.

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- If the power plant will not operate for more than a day and/or temperature exceeds 79°F the animals will be relocated to the facilities surrounding the ARF (casita) and all the windows will be opened to let air circulate.
- After everything has returned to normal, the animals will be returned to ARF.

Copies of this policy will be provided to all users of the ARF and Biobubbles and to the Emergency Planning Committee of PHSU.

Effective date: This policy was revised on March 23, 2021 by:

Safety Officer:

Ms. Miriam Pérez, MPH



Institutional Officer:

Dr. Kenira Thompson, PhD



Animal Research Facilities Supervisor:

Ms. Lizette Laboy Molinari, BS



General Services

Ms. Rossane West, BSS


