Regulations for the housing and care of laboratory animals

30 January 2001/GZB/VVB 2148400
The Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport
In line with Article 4, second paragraph of the Laboratory Animals Decree,

Decree:

§ 1. Definitions of terms

Article 1
The following definitions apply to these regulations:
a. housing: area in which laboratory animals are kept
b. bedding: ground covering material consisting of such materials as compost, (chopped) straw, wood chippings, wood shavings, wood flakes, sawdust, clay granules, paper, peat dust or sand, or a combination of two or more of these materials
c. animal laboratory waste: cadavers, parts of animal cadavers, faeces and urine, bedding, straw and remains of feed from the housings. Also included are animal products used in the laboratory such as eggs, blood, milk and artificially produced cells and tissues
d. air exchange rate: the number of times the air is refreshed per hour.

§ 2. Housing and care of laboratory animals, general provisions

Article 2
1. The housing must be suitable for the needs of the species. Bedding and enriching materials suitable for the species must be present in the housing.
2. Suitable nesting material must be provided to pregnant animals before they give birth.

Article 3
Housing for animals must be so constructed that this does not cause harm to the health or well-being of the animals and allows the animals to be inspected.

Article 4
The use of wire cages and wire grid bottoms for rodents and rabbits is not permitted.

Article 5
1. Animals may only be kept in housing that can be thoroughly and efficiently cleaned and where necessary disinfected.
2. Animal housing must be cleaned regularly.

Article 6
1. A separate area must be available for storing feed, bedding, clean trays, cages, instruments and other equipment.
2. The area described in Article 6.1 must be dry and inaccessible to insects and other animals such as dogs, cats, wild rodents and birds.

Article 7
1. There must be an area separate from the animal housing and the area described in Article 6 where animal laboratory waste can be stored and disposed of.
2. The area described in Article 7.1 must be easy to clean and disinfect and be inaccessible to insects and other animals such as dogs, cats, wild rodents and birds.
3. If the animal laboratory waste is not removed regularly it must be stored at temperatures of ± 0 °C or lower.

Article 8
Smoking is prohibited in rooms in which animals are present.

Article 9
1. Animal housing areas must be provided with a properly functioning ventilation system.
2. The air exchange rate must be suitable for the number of animals present.
3. An air exchange rate of 8 is generally sufficient for rodents and rabbits. Where there are a large number of animals present the air exchange rate must be at least 15. The air exchange rate for dogs and cats is 10 to 12.

Article 10
1. The following maximum and minimum temperatures must be maintained in animal housing containing adult animals:
   a. rodents: 19 to 24 °C;
   b. guineas pigs: 16 to 24 °C;
   c. quails and small birds: 20 to 24 °C;
   d. rabbits, dogs, cats and ferrets: 15 to 24 °C;
   e. horses, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, ducks and pigeons: 10 to 24 °C.
2. The temperature must be carefully checked and recorded at least once a day.

Article 11
The relative humidity in animal housing must be kept at 55% ± 15% and checked at least once a day.

Article 12
Animals which are kept outside or in housing which is in direct contact with the open air must be provided with protection from wind, rain, sunburn and extreme temperatures.

Article 13
1. Adjustable lighting, suitable for the species, must be present in animal housing.
2. The maximum light intensity permitted in animal housing, measured vertically at animal height, is 350 lux for all mammals, except where it is necessary to have a higher intensity for inspecting, handling or caring for the animals.
3. The maximum light intensity permitted in animal housing, measured vertically at animal height, is 60 lux for albino animals, except where it is necessary to have a higher intensity for inspecting, handling or caring for the animals.
4. The length of the light and dark periods must be adapted to the species and must be:
a. for dogs and cats: a minimum of 10 to 12 hours of light
b. for rodents and rabbits: 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness.

**Article 14**
Loud noises in the audible and ultrasonic ranges must be avoided.

**Article 15**
All automatic or mechanical equipment which is essential for the health and well-being of the animals must be inspected at least once a day. Faults must be remedied immediately or, if this is not possible, the necessary measures taken to protect the health and well-being of the animals until the fault can be remedied, in particular by adopting other methods of feeding and maintaining acceptable living conditions. In the case of artificial ventilation or an oxygen supply to fish, there must be an emergency backup system so that if the system should break down there will still be an adequate supply of fresh air or oxygen to guarantee the health and well-being of the animals. There must also be an alarm system to warn the license holder should the system fail. The alarm must be tested regularly.

**Article 16**
Animal feed, but not bulk feed such as hay or silage maize, must be stored in closed sacks or bins. The use-by date of the packed feed must be shown.

**Article 17**
1. All species must be fed in such a manner that their physiological and where possible ethological needs are met.
2. All species must be provided with as much good quality drinking water as they require.

**Article 18**
1. The animals and the conditions in which they are bred, kept or used must be inspected at least once a day. The inspections and the results must be recorded.
2. If problems or suffering are detected during an inspection suitable measures must be taken as soon as possible.

**Article 19**
Animals may only be moved if they are fit for transportation. In cases where the purpose of the transport is treatment, diagnostic testing or experimentation, adequate care must be available during the transport.

**Article 20**
Rats and mice must not be housed together.

**§ 3. Transitional and final provisions**

**Article 21**
For two years after the date these regulations come into effect, the requirements set out in Articles 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 with respect to animal housing will not apply to licensed animal housing whose owners can prove that it was in use before that time.

Article 22
These regulations shall come into effect on the second day after the date on which they are published in the Government Gazette.

Article 23
These regulations shall be referred to as: Regulations for the housing and care of laboratory animals.

These regulations and explanatory notes will be published in the Government Gazette.
The Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport
E. Borst-Eilers