Title: Animal Facility Quality Assurance and Monitoring

I. Purpose:

To provide standards for monitoring and quality assurance testing of equipment and methods used to clean, sanitize, disinfect, and sterilize animal caging and associated equipment and supplies. This policy also has a provision for testing equipment used for sterilizing supplies used for aseptic surgery in animals used in research and teaching.

II. Policy:

Cage wash facilities shall test caging and other reusable husbandry supplies/equipment that have been recently washed, sanitized and dried quarterly using Rodac plates. ATP Testers can be used in lieu of Rodac plates. Results must be logged. It is also recommended that Rodac plates are used as an infrequent secondary method to provide assurances that no viable organisms are found.

Autoclaves used for primary sterilization of caging supplies shall be monitored using a spore ampule or other equivalent bio indicator at least quarterly, more frequently is recommended. Autoclaves used for sterilizing surgical supplies and packs shall be tested at least bimonthly using a spore ampule or other bio indicator. Autoclave loads shall use tape and other indicators during the load in addition to the spore ampules or biological indicators. Other sterilizers used for primary sterilization of caging or surgical supplies must also use bio-indicators or other methods appropriate for the mode used.

Cage washing residue shall be tested using ph/litmus paper to ensure no caustic or acidic residue is left on the housing materials for facilities hand washing their cages.

For automatic cage washers and rack washers the temperature of the rinse water shall be logged at the beginning of each day prior to running the machine. (machines with an interlock preventing operation until the appropriate temperature has been reached are exempt from daily logging). The preferred minimum temperature 180 F, or 140-180 when the appropriate combination of chemical and heat has been achieved for sanitization. Monthly a tri temp or comparable temperature indicator will be run through cage washers and rack washers. Results will be logged and kept with machine records.

High risk activities such as feeding raw diets, unpasteurized food stuffs or other work...
involving known or suspected sources of potentially pathogenic bacteria are subject to more stringent monitoring at the discretion of the AV. Raw food stuff and unpasteurized products may be a hazard to personnel and a possible source of pathogens for animals. Extra precautions shall be taken to ensure equipment and materials are properly sanitized and disinfected. Increased frequency of Rodac plate submissions may be implemented during high risk activities at the discretion of the AV or designee.

A log or other facility kept record of testing, results and follow up shall be kept by the facility manager.

Results for all of the above mentioned testing modalities shall be available for review by the veterinarian and/or IACUC staff during visits and inspections.

III. Procedure:

Samples are collected at the intervals indicated above. For results submitted to the Comparative Pathology Laboratory (CPL) the Health Monitoring Coordinator (HMC) is copied and forwards any unsatisfactory results to the clinical veterinarian or facility manager for review and corrective action. Machines that are not functioning properly must be taken off-line until repaired and retested when brought back on-line.

For samples submitted to other laboratories or done in house copies must be reviewed by the facility manager and/or veterinarian. A log or other facility record must be kept that indicates submissions, results, and follow up for unsatisfactory results.

When submitting Rodac plates and spore ampules for analysis the following information must be included with the submission: Date of test, location (building & room), type of test, and what was sampled. For Rodac plates indicate what equipment or locations were tested and for autoclaves indicate cycle and location of ampule. For example flash cycle on top of instrument or wet cycle inside bottle. For ATP log what was sampled and how it was processed/equipment being tested. You must also indicate if this is a routine test or a resample for unsatisfactory results.

The CPL submission sheet and more information can be obtained from CPL@ucdavis.edu or 530-752-2832 or http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ars/cpl.html