

Standard Operating Procedure

Standards for cage changes in mouse housing

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1. Purpose

The SOP defines standards and criteria for changing bedding and primary enclosures for mouse husbandry.

2. Scope

The SOP applies to all personnel responsible for changing mouse cages at UCSD vivaria.

3. Responsibility

ACP personnel is responsible for ensuring that the minimum cage changing standards are maintained at all times.

4. Definitions

Cage changes refer to replacement of the cage bottom and bedding. Supplies of food and water need to be adequate at all time to ensure animal health, but are not directly impacted by the standards.

5. Procedures

5.1. Mouse cages must be changed when ANY of the following is observed:

- a. Wet bedding connects any two corners of the cage
- b. Dry bedding areas (“islands”) are not large enough for all animals to sit or lie on
- c. Volume of feces exceeds volume of bedding

d. A weaned animal is found dead in the cage

5.2. These criteria constitute the minimum standards for individual cages that must be followed by default in all UCSD vivaria.

5.3. ACP may impose more frequent cage changing for veterinary reasons.

5.4. Investigators may request more frequent cage changing, which will be implemented in consultation with ACP personnel (and recharged as appropriate).

5.5. Investigators may ask ACP personnel to accommodate experimental objectives in the planning and execution of cage changes, as long as the minimum standards are met at all times.