

**Minority statement on the Policy of Scientists being Locked-Out from WFRC Systems**  
By Evi Emmenegger, IACUC member, BSL-3 Laboratory Manager (10/3/18)

The August 2018 Memo on "Facilities Staff Responsibilities", by Jonathan Sleeman the interim WFRC Director, instituted a center-wide policy that WFRC scientists are blocked from checking systems/equipment that support animal care, personnel health, and experiments. Science staff are not allowed access or locked out of rooms that have equipment/systems that are permanent or unmovable ("nailed down"). These areas now will be considered facilities access-only equipment. These WFRC systems are responsible for animal and employee well being, and impact the environment outside our facility. Every facet of our research is influenced by this "facilities access only" /scientist lockout policy (e.g. air quality, headbox water for animals, experiment integrity, etc.).

The August IACUC meeting minutes state that "facilities has invoked the right to maintain and care for these headboxes" as the justification of the lockout policy in regards to headbox access/cleaning. Does "facilities right" supersede the rights of our research animals to be properly cared for or the staff to have safe working environment? **There should be no policy in place that undermines animal welfare, human health, or scientific integrity.**

For the IACUC specifically (headbox access and cleaning), the lockout policy prevents rapid assessment of a system problem and rectifying easily corrected deviations (cover headbox with lid, turn on airstones) that sustains or improves animal rearing conditions.

If we really want to learn from the damaging incidents that we've had the past year then transparency is key and not repeating the same behaviors/actions that lead to system failures. Literally concealing system/equipment issues behind locked doors is not a team approach. This should be a collaborative process, where both facilities and science staff redundantly monitor the systems and then both groups have input on resolving equipment/system problems.

The main IACUC question to ask is: Does this policy of preventing scientists from monitoring systems improve animal care at the WFRC? Every IACUC member has a duty to do **everything possible** to protect the animals under our care. I encourage other members to advocate and make a motion to rescind this WFRC policy of facilities staff access only/scientist lock out from WFRC systems.