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1. Upcoming Symposia on Ocular Toxicity

The Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) is hosting two symposia on ocular toxicity testing on May 11-13, 2005 in Bethesda, MD. Organized in collaboration with the European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods (ECVAM), the symposia are intended to advance the Three R's of replacement, reduction, and refinement of the rabbit-based Draize eye irritancy test, while furthering the development of test systems necessary to meet regulatory requirements and better protect human health. The first symposium, "Mechanisms of Chemically-Induced Ocular Injury and Recovery," seeks to identify endpoints that should be considered for inclusion in the current version of the Draize test that would improve the test's reliability and support the validation of predictive in vitro methods. The second symposium, "Minimizing Pain and Distress in Ocular Toxicity Testing," aims to identify research and validation studies necessary to support ocular testing procedures that avoid pain and distress in rabbits.

The Draize eye irritancy test has been one of the most controversial animal-based tests. It was the focus of the late Henry Spira's 1980 full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*, which asked "How Many Rabbits Does Revlon Blind for Beauty's Sake?" Several assessments of potential alternatives to the Draize test have been undertaken over the years. However, proponents of the Three Rs have been frustrated by the slow pace of progress. According to Robert Scala, Ph.D., a toxicologist retired from Exxon Corporation, the upcoming ICCVAM symposia "are important steps in the effort to better understand the mechanism of ocular irritancy and thereby reduce the reliance on intact animal tests."

SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION: <http://frwebgate5.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=395003232726+1+0+0&WAIAction=retrieve>

2. Animal Dealer Loses License and Pays Record Fine

Following an investigation of a "Class B" animal dealer who bought and sold dogs and cats for research, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has put C.C. Baird on probation for five years and levied

\$262,700 in fines, the largest civil penalty ever collected under the Animal Welfare Act. C.C. Baird and family did business as Martin Creek Kennels and Pat's Pine Tree Farms, both based in Arkansas. According to the *St. Louis Post* (Missouri), "The USDA complaint...accused the Bairds of violations of 'utmost seriousness', including severe mistreatment and neglect of a multitude of animals that even led to animal deaths. They were also charged with buying animals of suspicious and possible stolen origins and falsifying animal health certificates." Included in the complaint were 61 alleged violations regarding failure to provide proper veterinary care; 51 alleged violations regarding stolen pets between Jan 2002 and March 2002; and over 100 alleged violations of minimum humane care standards for animals. The Bairds have a history of AWA violations, fines, and repeat offenses. In the latest case, they agreed to pay the fine and surrender their federal animal dealer licenses. In return, the USDA dropped its civil complaint alleging AWA violations. The USDA action against the Bairds followed an extensive undercover investigation by Last Chance for Animals.

A USDA raid of Martin Creek Kennels in 2003 seized 125 dogs, which agents described as being in need of immediate health care. In July of 2004, the USDA filed the 108 page complaint listing alleged violations at both of the Baird kennels and was based on USDA inspections dating back to 1998. USDA inspectors found dog skeletons and carcasses still bearing their identification tags at the "disposal site" on the premises. The government confiscated the remaining hundreds of dogs and cats, and adoptions are being handled by Northeastern Arkansas for Animals, which will coordinate the dissemination of dogs to various other shelters and adoption groups.

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING:

<http://www.kfvs12.com/Global/SearchResults.asp?qu=Baird&x=13&y=10>;

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2005/02/baird_ac.html; *St. Louis Post* (Missouri) February 2, 2005

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### **3. OLAW Guidance on Prompt Reporting of Non-Compliance**

The National Institutes of Health Office of Animal Welfare (NIH/OLAW) recently issued guidance for the prompt reporting of deviations and non-compliance with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. The guidance, applicable to Public Health Service awardee institutions, is intended to assist Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUCs) in determining what, when, and how situations affecting lab animals should be reported to OLAW. The Public Health Service *Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* defines three categories of situations that should be promptly reported: 1) serious or continuing noncompliance with the *Policy*; 2) serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide*; and 3) any suspension of an activity by the IACUC. Some examples of "reportable situations" are conditions that jeopardize the health or well-being of animals, including natural disasters, accidents and mechanical failures, resulting in harm or death to animals; failure to monitor animals post-procedurally as necessary to ensure well-being; and failure of animal care and use personnel to carry out veterinary orders. Examples of situations that are not normally reportable include animal death or injuries related to manipulations that fall within parameters described in the IACUC-approved protocol and infrequent incidents of drowning or near-drowning of rodents when the cause was water bottle valves jammed with bedding.

OLAW's recommendations further state that reports should be submitted to OLAW as situations occur, not collected and submitted in groups or with the annual report. Reports must contain a full explanation of the situation: what happened, when, where, species of animal(s), and type of individual(s) involved (investigator, animal caretaker, vet, etc). Reports must also include descriptions of actions taken by the institution and of the corrective plan and implementation schedule.

*SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:* <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-034.html>

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#### **4. OSU Spinal Cord Injury Course Under Investigation**

A summer course at Ohio State University is under scrutiny following a complaint and a lawsuit by the Washington, DC-based Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM). The Spinal Cord Injury Techniques training course requires students to surgically expose the spinal cords of mice and rats and drop weights on them to simulate human spinal cord injuries. The course, which is partially funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), runs from July 10-30 and is intended for staff and visiting scientists, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, and laboratory technicians. The course has been offered for the last two years.

PCRM had been alerted to the course by a local group, Protect Our Earth's Treasures. PCRM's complaint against the course took the form of a letter to the NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and includes claims that OSU ignored federal regulations requiring government-funded research institutions using animals to minimize pain and distress and consider non-animal alternatives. OLAW agreed to investigate the charges and has contacted OSU. In a letter to OLAW, an OSU representative wrote that the course entails only one major surgery and that the animals are treated for pain. PCRM filed a lawsuit in Ohio Supreme Court on April 28<sup>th</sup>, seeking to compel OSU to release photographs and video from the course under the Ohio Public Records Act.

*SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:*

[http://www.thelantern.com/global\\_user\\_elements/printpage.cfm?storyid=879742;](http://www.thelantern.com/global_user_elements/printpage.cfm?storyid=879742;)  
<http://medicine.osu.edu/sci>; <http://www.newstarget.com/006649.html>

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#### **5. New Prizes for Work On Alternatives Methods**

Two new prizes for research that advances alternative methods (the "Three R's" of replacement, reduction, or refinement of animal use) are being offered this year. The Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART), the Australian Museum, and the Sherman Foundation have announced a new \$10,000 prize designed to encourage research into alternatives to the use of animals or animal products for scientific or teaching purposes. The Voiceless Eureka Prize for Research will go to an Australian scientist(s) for work carried out in Australia in the past five years that has reduced, or has the potential to reduce, the use of animals in laboratory-based research, education and testing. Entries close on Friday, May 13, 2005.

The Dieter Lutticken Award, sponsored by Intervet International, the animal health arm of drug-maker Akzo Nobel, recognizes outstanding contributions in the testing, development and production of veterinary medicines. Based in the Netherlands, Intervet states that the scope of the 20,000 Euro award "covers in vitro models used in research and development which replace animal testing for licensing purposes as well as studies avoiding the use of animals..." The application deadline is September 30, 2005.

These two awards join a growing list of awards for innovative research that advances alternative methods.

*SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:*

<http://www.amonline.net.au/eureka>;  
<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ANZCCART>;  
[http://www.intervet.com/News/Company\\_news/Current\\_company\\_news/Announcement\\_new\\_selecti\\_on\\_round\\_DLAward.asp?ComponentID=98322&SourcePageID=23492#1](http://www.intervet.com/News/Company_news/Current_company_news/Announcement_new_selecti_on_round_DLAward.asp?ComponentID=98322&SourcePageID=23492#1)

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**Animal Research News & Analysis** is an electronic newsletter that provides news stories and interpretive analyses concerning the use of animals in research, testing, and education. The newsletter is produced by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and is distributed periodically. Any questions, comments or email address changes should be directed to [ari@hsus.org](mailto:ari@hsus.org). To unsubscribe, please send an e-mail request to [ari@hsus.org](mailto:ari@hsus.org) with the words, "unsubscribe – Animal Research News" in the subject line; please specify your first and last name. The HSUS's collection of web-based animal research-related news stories can be viewed at: [http://www.hsus.org/animals\\_in\\_research/animals\\_in\\_research\\_news](http://www.hsus.org/animals_in_research/animals_in_research_news).

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