Policy # AW-09-2018

Policy Title: Guillotine and Scissor Maintenance

Policy: All guillotines and decapitation scissors used in animal experimentation must be kept in clean and sharp working order. The 2013 AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals requires that guillotines and other sharps (shears or scissors) for decapitation must be kept clean, in good condition with sharp blades. The action should be smooth with no perceptible binding or resistance, and the blade must be rust-free, sharp, and decapitate with minimal force.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Personnel using a guillotine or scissors are to ensure that it is in good condition with a sharp blade prior to use.
- A sharpness test must be performed before use; failing sharps may not be used for the procedure and must be replaced or sharpened before use.
- Personnel using a guillotine or scissors are responsible for their proper cleaning and good operating condition after use.
- Necessary blade sharpening or replacement is to be documented.
- The IACUC or its designee must inspect all guillotines and scissors, along with the sharpness tests and logs, as part of the semiannual inspection.

PROCEDURE

- Prior to use, the guillotine or scissor should be checked for rust, smoothness of operation, blade sharpness and cleanliness.
- The use of disposable plastic cones (e.g. Rodent Restraint Cone, Harvard Apparatus, Holliston, MA) is recommended to provide animal restraint, minimize distress, improve positioning, and enhance operator safety.
- After use, the entire guillotine or scissor should be cleaned. Periodically, the guillotine should be taken apart and the blades thoroughly sanitized.

REFERENCE

- The AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition