

**University of Connecticut**  
**Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee**  
**Guideline for Maintenance of Guillotines**

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**A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all guillotines used in animal experimentation on unanesthetized animals are kept in clean and sharp working order. The 2000 AVMA Panel on Euthanasia requires a maintenance program for guillotines to ensure good working order and servicing on a regular basis to ensure blade sharpness. The guillotine action should be smooth with no perceptible binding or resistance, and the blade must be rust-free, sharp, and decapitate with minimal force.

**B. RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Personnel using a guillotine are to ensure that it is in good condition with a sharp blade prior to use.
2. Personnel using a guillotine are responsible for its proper cleaning and good operating condition after use (see C.3 below). Guillotines also should be periodically lubricated with a spray lubricant (WD-40 or equivalent).
3. Blade sharpening is to be documented by providing the date of service and the service provider using an adhesive label affixed to each unit. A new sticker is to be applied after each blade sharpening.
4. All guillotines must be inspected by the IACUC or its designee as part of the semi-annual inspection.

**C. PROCEDURE**

1. Prior to use, the guillotine should be checked for rust, smoothness of operation, blade sharpness and cleanliness.
2. 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.
3. After use, the entire guillotine should be rinsed under cold water to remove visible contamination. After removing visible contamination, the unit should be cleaned and rinsed with 70% alcohol to assure evaporation and reduce the need to hand-dry the equipment. The guillotine should be turned upside down with the blades opened to facilitate drying. Periodically, the guillotine should be taken apart and the blades thoroughly sanitized.
4. Technical Services Center (486-3859) provides blade re-sharpening services.

**D. REFERENCE**

AVMA Panel on Euthanasia. J Am Vet Med Assoc. 202:230–247, 2000.

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The UConn IACUC voted to formally accept this document on November 8, 2005.