USE OF ANIMALS IN THE SCHOOL CLASSROOM

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

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## Acknowledgments

*Brevard County Manual Procedures for the use of Animals in the Classroom*

*FAST Manual Planning and Managing Dissection Laboratories*
INTRODUCTION

Procedures for the *Use of Animals in the Laboratory Classroom* have been developed by a task team of experienced science educators with varied science backgrounds and philosophies. This document was created to provide guidelines for the responsible use of animals in the classroom. Recommendations are based on published research, professional consultation and teacher input.

The committee recommends that educators foster a respect for life and living things. It supports the right of professional educators to choose appropriate instructional strategies for achieving educational goals. The choice to use animals or to use alternatives must focus on teaching fundamental biological concepts while promoting a respect for all living things.

Educators choosing to use animals for instructional purposes will find suggestions in this guidebook for conducting activities in safe, sensitive and appropriate manners. Also provided in this document is information for implementing alternatives that will provide challenging, meaningful experiences for students.
CURRENT FLORIDA STATUTE

233.0674 Biological experiments on living subjects

(1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT

(a) The Legislature finds that:

1. Biological experimentation is essential for an understanding of the complexity and diversity of life processes;

2. Such studies should lead to a broader awareness of living systems;

3. Capable students anxious to pursue careers in biological sciences should receive appropriate encouragement and guidance; and

4. Biological experimentation should be within the comprehension and capabilities of the student undertaking the study.

(b) The Legislature recognizes that the use of live animals in some kinds of experiments by students in grades K through 12 may be distasteful or traumatizing to immature students.

(2) STATE POLICY - It is therefore the intent of the Legislature with respect to biological experiments involving living subjects by students in grades K through 12 that:

(a) No surgery or dissection shall be performed on any living mammalian vertebrate or bird. Dissection may be performed on nonliving mammals or birds secured from a recognized source of such specimens and under supervision of qualified instructors. Students may be excused upon written request of a parent or guardian.

(b) Lower orders of life and invertebrates may be used in such experiments.

(c) Nonmammalian vertebrates, excluding birds, may be used in biological experiments, provided that physiological harm does not result from such experiments. Anatomical studies shall only be conducted on models which are anatomically correct for the animal being studied or on nonliving nonmammalian vertebrates secured and from a recognized source of such specimens and under the supervision of qualified instructors. Students may be excused from such experiments upon written request of the parent or guardian.

(d) Observational studies of animals in the world or in zoological parks, gardens, or aquaria, or of pets, fish, domestic animals, or live stock may be conducted.
(e) Studies of vertebrate animal cells, such as red blood cells or other tissue cells, plasma or serum, or anatomical specimens, such as organs, tissues, or skeletons, purchased or acquired from biological supply houses or research facilities or from wholesale or retail establishments which supply carcasses or parts of food animals may be conducted.

(f) Normal physiological and behavioral studies of the human animal may be conducted, provided that such projects are carefully selected so that neither physiological nor psychological harm to the subjects can result from such studies.

(g) All experiments shall be carried out under the supervision of a competent science teacher who shall be responsible for ensuring that the student has the necessary comprehension for the study to be undertaken. Whenever feasible, specially qualified experts in the field should be consulted.

(h) Live animals on the premises of public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools shall be housed and cared for in a humane and safe manner. Animals shall not remain on the premises of any school during periods when such school is not in session, unless adequate care is provided for such animals.

(3) **EXEMPTIONS** - The provisions of this section shall not be constructed to prohibit or constrain conventional instruction in the normal practices of animal husbandry or exhibition of any livestock in connection with any agricultural program or instruction of advanced students participating in advanced research, specific studies, or projects.

(4) **PENALTY** - In the event that any instructional employee of a public high school or area vocational technical center knowingly or intentionally fails or refused to comply with any of the provision of this section, the school board, acting as a board, may suspend, dismiss, return to an annual contract, or otherwise discipline such employees as provided in section 230.23(5)(f) in accordance with procedures established in chapter 231. In the event that any instructional employee of any nonpublic school knowingly or intentionally fails or refuses to comply with the provisions of this section, the governing authority of such school may suspend, dismiss, or otherwise discipline such employees in accordance with its standard personnel procedures.
ALTERNATIVE

ACTIVITIES
ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

Animal dissection should not be the only instructional strategy used for accomplishing educational goals in the biological sciences. The following resources and activities can be used in conjunction with a dissection lab or as alternatives to a dissection lab:

Class Discussion and Debate

Review the Florida Statute 233.0674 "Biological experiments on Living Subjects" and discuss the ethical use of animals for educational purposes. (See pages 7 and 8 of this guidebook.)

Critique the National Science Teachers Association's "Guidelines for Responsible Use of Animals in the Classroom." (See page 41 of this guidebook.)

Discuss or debate current topics such as organ transplants, euthanasia, in vitro fertilization, animals in medical research, surrogate parenting and fetal tissue research.

Naturalistic Observation

Observe and/or videotape animals in their natural habitat. Prepare a report or presentation on a species to include: habitat, environmental adaptation, camouflage, feeding habits, mating or nesting behavior, physical characteristics, and physiology.

Model Construction

Groups of three or four students may be assigned a different organ or anatomical structure for the specimen under study. Each group should be responsible for creating an approximately scaled replica of the assigned structure. Materials should be inexpensive (such as clay, plaster, sponges, wire, fabric, foil, tubing, or other household items). Each group should make a presentation of its model and describe the structure's location and function. An attempt should be made to integrate all of the structures into systems and
the systems into a complete organism.

**Skits**

Students can assume the identities and roles of anatomical structures and systems. Skits can be created by groups to describe the location, function, and interaction between other organs, structures, and systems.

**Audio-Visual Presentations**

A camcorder and a large video monitor can be used to bring a dissection to a larger audience. This technique can help reduce the number of specimens needed for a dissection lab. In addition, students may wish to record and then edit dissection footage into a presentation of their own.

Laser discs with large monitors and computers can be used to create unique presentations from the numerous moving and still images available on various specimens.

**Anatomical Overlays**

Transparency film and colored markers can be used to create unique multilayered overhead projects that can enhance a presentation on a structure or entire system. These may be prelabeled or labeled during the discussion and presentation.

**Models**

There are models available for almost every specimen currently being used for dissection lab activities. Following is a list of some unique models educators may find beneficial.

- **Great American Bullfrog**: This model separates into parts portraying ten organ systems. Anatomical features are numbered and a key is provided. Denoyer-Geppert Science Co. (1-800-621-1014)
• Pro-Sect Fetal Pig Sagittal Section: Sagittally sectioned 11 to a 12-inch fetal pig with arteries colored red is molded and sealed in a transparent liquid-filled plastic tray. NASCO (1-800-558-9595)

• Freeze-Dried Specimens: Already dissected and injected specimens have all organs numerically identified with a key. Ward's Supply Co. (1-800-962-2660)

Software

There are numerous programs available that provide representations of specimen dissection and structure identification. Contact the publisher for reviews or software loans.

• Publisher: Intellimation
  Title: MacFrog
  Computer: Macintosh

• Publisher: Bio-Soft, Inc.
  Title: Bio-Soft Probe Series
  Computer: Macintosh

• Publisher: Ventura
  Title: Protozoa, Marine Life Sciences, The Senses, Fetal Pig
  Computer: Macintosh, Black and White

• Publisher: Focus Media, Inc.
  Title: The Heart Simulator
  Computer: Apple

• Publisher: Bio Learning Systems
  Title: Kidney Function
  Computer: Apple

Laser Discs

• Publisher: Optical Data Corp.
  Title: The Human Body

• Publisher: Optical Data Corp.
  Title: The Frog

• Publisher: Videodiscovery, Inc.
  Title: Bio Sci II
GUIDELINES FOR
LIVE ANIMALS
GUIDELINES FOR LIVE ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

Experiences with live animals in the classroom can provide excellent learning opportunities and encourage respect for life. However, prior to bringing animals into the classroom the educator should consider these questions:

- What are my responsibilities for the health and safety of students exposed to live animals?
- Have I thoroughly and objectively examined my reasons for having animals in the classroom?
- Am I knowledgeable about proper care and handling techniques?
- What arrangements will be made to care for the animals during weekends and holidays?

One of the purposes of this guidebook is to assist educators in addressing these concerns.

The decision to keep live animals in the classroom requires compliance with Florida laws, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission rules and The School District of Palm Beach County policies. Some of the regulations from these agencies are summarized below.

- Protected animals (such as indigo snakes, gopher tortoises, alligators, and American crocodiles) may **not** be kept.

- No more than two box turtles and/or one Florida pine snake may be kept.

- Venomous animals may **not** be kept.

- These animals may be kept without a permit:
  - Reptiles (except protected species)
  - Gerbils, rats, mice, rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters
  - Amphibians
  - Parakeets, canaries, love birds, cockatiels, finches, myna birds, doves (ringed, ruddy and diamond), button quail
• Teachers who maintain live animals in the classroom should refer to "Animal Care and Experimentation" on page 43 of this guidebook.

• Any animal to be housed in the classroom should first be examined by a veterinarian to establish that it is free from disease.

• All aspects of animal care and treatment shall be supervised by a qualified adult who is knowledgeable about research methods, biology, care, and husbandry of the species being studies.

• Animals must be housed in clean, ventilated, comfortable environments appropriate for the species. Animals must have adequate lighting, humidity, and controlled temperature. Proper care for the animals must be provided at all times, including weekends, holidays, and vacation periods.

• Behavior studies should use only reward (such as providing food) and not punishment in training programs. When food is used as a reward, it should not be withheld for more than 12 hours.

• **The feeding of live animals to reptiles should not be viewed by students.**

• Adequate plans should be made to control unwanted breedings of classroom animals.

• Appropriate plans should be made for future care of animals at the conclusion of the study. As a general rule, laboratory-bred animals should not be released into the wild as they may disturb the natural ecology of the environment.

• Because students' attitudes toward animals are influenced by their experiences with animals in the classroom, it is especially important that animals are treated respectfully with regard to handling, cage size, and nutrition. Cage size requirements for several common classroom animals are in the chart that follows.
NSTA POSITION STATEMENT
(adopted by the NSTA Board, July 23, 1991)

Guidelines for Responsible Use of Animals in the Classroom

These guidelines are recommended by the National Science Teachers Association for use by science educators and students. They apply, in particular, to the use of nonhuman animals in instructional activities planned and/or supervised by teachers who teach science at the pre-college level.

Observations of living organisms give students unique perspectives of life processes that are not provided by other modes of instruction. Studying animals in the classroom enables students to develop skills of observation and comparison, a sense of stewardship, and an appreciation for the unity, interrelationships, and complexity of life. This study, however, requires appropriate, humane care of the organism. Teachers are expected to be knowledgeable about the proper care of organisms under study and the safety of their students.

These are the guidelines recommended by NSTA concerning the responsible use of animals in a school classroom/laboratory:

• Acquisition and care of animals must be appropriate to the species.

• Student science projects involving animals must be under the supervision of a science teacher or other trained professional.

• Teachers sponsoring or supervising the use of animals in instructional activities including acquisition, care, and disposition, will adhere to local, state, and national laws, policies and regulations regarding species of organisms.
# Housing Requirements for Common Classroom Animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANIMAL</th>
<th>Minimum Cage Size and Physical Requirement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rabbits</td>
<td>For 1 adult or 2 juveniles:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smaller breeds: 2' x 3' floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larger breeds: 2' x 4' floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea Pigs</td>
<td>For 1 adult: 1.5' x 2' floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For 2 or more adults: 2' x 2' floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamsters, mice, and gerbils</td>
<td>For 1 - 2 animals: 10&quot; x 10&quot; floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rats</td>
<td>For 1 - 2 animals: 18&quot; x 18&quot; floor space and 1 gnawing log</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snakes</td>
<td>For 1-4 snakes: a perimeter 1.5 times the length of the longest snake, a resting limb, a large rock and a soaking area</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For each additional snake, increase cage size 25% of floor area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lizards, anoles, and skinks</td>
<td>For 1 - 2 small lizards, 2-6&quot; long: 12&quot; x 8&quot; x 10&quot; high with branches and access to ultraviolet light</td>
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<td>For each 2 additional lizards, increase cage size by 2&quot; in length and width</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For 1 - 2 lizards, 7-12&quot; long: 20&quot; x 10&quot; x 15&quot; high, with branches and access to ultraviolet light</td>
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<td>For each additional lizard, increase cage size by 4&quot; in length and width</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For 1 - 2 small lizards, 13-24&quot; long: 30&quot; x 15&quot; x 12&quot; high, with branches and access to ultraviolet light</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For each additional lizard, increase cage size by 6&quot; in length and width</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For 1 - 2 lizards, 2-4' long: 36&quot; x 15&quot; x 18&quot; high, with branches and access to ultraviolet light</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For each additional lizard, increase cage size by 10&quot; in length and width</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turtles and terrapins</td>
<td>For 1 turtle: an area 5 times body size, with 50% of the area having a pool, sun, and shade</td>
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<td>For soft-shelled turtles, a non-abrasive pool bottom is required. The pool must allow for complete submersion of the largest turtle.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For each additional turtle, increase cage area by 5 times body size</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tortoises</td>
<td>For 1 tortoise: a land area 10 times body size, with sun and shade, and a slope pool for immersion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For each additional tortoise, increase cage area by 7 times body size</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>For 1 - 2 birds: 1' x 1' x 10&quot; high minimum, depending on species</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For additional birds, community cages must be sufficient to provide flight space</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ANIMAL CARE AND HANDLING

The care and well-being of animals studied in the classroom should be of major importance to the science teacher and student. Students can learn a great deal about animal behavior, nourishment, life patterns, and environmental considerations by observing animals.

The science teacher is ultimately responsible for all animals kept in the classroom. Students may participate in maintaining a schedule for feeding animals, cleaning their cages, supplying water, and maintaining appropriate temperature. The teacher must supervise all student involvement.

The following guidelines should be utilized for proper selection, care, and handling of animals:

1. Animals should be hardy and able to thrive in captivity.
2. Animals should have natural habitats that can be easily replicated.
3. Incompatible animals should never be housed in the same cage.
4. Animal quarters should be kept clean, protected from the elements and have enough space for normal activity.
5. The quantity and type of food should meet the animal's nutritional requirements.
6. Temperature, lighting, and other environmental features should be appropriate for the type of animal being housed.
7. Precautions should be taken to prevent unauthorized students from harassing or injuring the animal or themselves.
8. Careful monitoring of the animal's health is required and euthanasia, if it becomes necessary, must be carried out by a licensed veterinarian.
9. Students should be thoroughly instructed in the care and handling of animals before access to any animal is permitted.
10. Students must wear heavy cotton work gloves when handling animals which may bite.
11. Animals should be handled in the manner and extent indigenous to the species. Unnecessary handling will maximize the possibility of injury to the animal and the student.
12. Students should report all bites or scratches to the teacher.
13. Remember provisions will have to be made for animal care over weekends and holidays.
14. Remind students to wash their hands after handling animals.
15. After the study of animals is completed, they should be returned unharmed to their natural environment.
INJURED ANIMALS AND THE SCIENCE TEACHER

Wild mammals and birds, whether healthy or injured, brought in by students should not be accepted by the teacher. Educators may encourage students to continue to show respect and concern for the animal's well being.

The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission regulates licensed rehabilitators for the care and rehabilitation of injured animals and prohibits the possession of sick or injured wildlife by unlicensed persons. Listed below are Palm Beach County licensed rehabilitators.

Dr. Randi McCormick, Associate Curator
Palm Beach Zoo at Dreher Park
1301 Summit Blvd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33405-3098
(561) 533-0887 (561) 533-0888

Bonnie Findlay
Bambi Bird and Wildlife Sanctuary
10948 Acme Rd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33414
(561) 793-2473

Joan Goodine
5593 Papaya Rd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33413
(561) 683-5639 (561) 686-3663

David Hitzig
Busch Wildlife Sanctuary
17032 130th Ave. North
Jupiter, FL 33478
(561) 744-1646

Jean Marie Marks
126 N.W. 11th Ave.
Boca Raton, FL 33486
(561) 338-0403 (954) 524-4302

Marc McCarthy
McCarthy's Wildlife Center, Inc.
12943 61st Street North
West Palm Beach, FL 33412
(561) 790-2116

Jeanne C. Muir
8418 Southeast Merritt Way
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 746-6559

Ellen Rosenberg
Wildlife Recovery Center
12567 61st Street North
Royal Palm Beach, FL 33412
(561) 793-8075

Diane Sauve, Executive Director
Ocean Impact Foundation
C/o Palm Beach Animal Care & Co.
7100 Belvedere Rd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33411
(561) 471-3403

Terrance F. Wolf, Wildlife Director
Lion Country Safari
20003 Lion Country Safari Rd.
Loxahatchee, FL 33470
(561) 793-1084

Allyn Szewiako
999 Southwest 8th St.
Boca Raton, FL 33486
(561) 338-0508
ANIMAL CARE AND EXPERIMENTATION

1) Animals should be ordered from reputable suppliers when they are to be used in class experiments to minimize the risk of parasites and diseases. Only those animals that appear to be healthy should be kept in the classroom. Should an animal show any signs of illness, it should be isolated from the other animals.

2) Pregnant or nursing animals should not be handled or disturbed. Even the tamest laboratory animal may inflict a painful bite.

3) The wearing of heavy gloves is recommended when handling animals that may become excited, such as untamed rodents or new additions to a cage.

4) Dangerous animals:
   i) Poisonous animals shall never be housed in the school classroom or laboratory. Caution must be exercised during field activities.
   ii) When conducting field studies, the teachers must be familiar with any species of a venomous animal likely to be found in the study area. Many excellent references, such as the Audubon Society Field Guide and the Peterson Field Guides are available and should be carefully consulted so that the teacher can make positive identification of dangerous animals.
   iii) Emergency medical attention must be sought immediately in the case of envenomation.
   iv) Wild mammals and birds, whether healthy or injured, brought in by students should not be accepted by the teacher for classroom housing.
   v) Dried wing scales and exoskeletons from insect collections, mammalian hair and dander and toxic secretions of many animals have all been implicated as allergens.
   vi) If animals of suspect origin are handled, protective gloves must be worn.
   vii) After handling any animal, the hands should be thoroughly washed.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT POISONOUS ANIMALS

ANIMAL CARE RESOURCES

The following books are recommended sources of information about the suitability, maintenance, and care of various animals. Care booklets accompanying live animals ordered from major suppliers may also be a good source of information.


The following resources were taken from the *International Rules for Precollege Science Research: Guidelines for Science and Engineering Fairs/June 1997-May 1998*.

1) *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (The Guide, NIH Publication 85-23)

   Office for Protection fr. Research Risks (OPRR)  (301) 496-7163
   National Institutes of Health  
   9000 Rockville Pike, Bld. 31, Room 5B63  
   Bethesda, MD 20892

2) Federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA)  
   7 U.S.C.2131-2157

   Subchapter A - Animal Welfare (Parts I,II,III)  (301) 734-7833
   Regulatory Enforcement & Animal Care  
   U.S. Department of Agriculture  
   4700 River Rd.  
   Riverdale, MD 20737

3) *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching* (Agri-Guide)

   American Dairy Science Association  (217) 356-3182
   309 West Clark Street  
   Champagne, IL 61820
Sources of Information for Alternative Research and Animal Welfare

The National Library of Medicine provides computer searches through MEDLINE under the key phrase Animal Welfare.

1) Reference Librarian (301) 496-6095
National Library of Medicine
68699 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20894

2) National Agriculture Library (NAL) provides reference service for materials that documents a) Alternative Procedure to Animal Use and b) Animal Welfare.

Animal Welfare Information Center (301) 504-6212
National Agriculture Library
5th Floor, 10301 Baltimore Blvd.
Beltsville, MD 20705

3) Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources (ILAR) provides a variety of information and animal sources, housing, and handling standards, and alternatives to animal use through annotated bibliographies published quarterly in ILAR Journal.

Dr. Thomas L. Wolfle, Program Director (202) 334-2590
Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources
National Research Council
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20418

Quarterly bibliographies of Alternatives may be obtained from:

Dr. Sid Siegel, Chief, OSHI (301) 496-5022
8600 Rockville Pike, Bldg. 38A, Room S-404
Bethesda, MD 20894

4) Euthanasia Guidelines


Other Federal Laws That May Apply


Department of the Interior (703) 358-1711
Publications Service
4401 N. Fairfax Dr.
Arlington, VA 22203
Other Guidelines and Regulations that May apply to Animal Research Projects or Laboratory Safety

1) Carcinogens, Chemicals, and rDNA
   National Institutes of Health
   Division of Safety
   Building 31, Room 1C02
   Bethesda, MD 20892
   (301) 496-2960

3) Infectious Agents
   Center for Disease Control
   Office of Biosafety
   1600 Clifton Road F-05
   Atlanta, GA 30333
   (404) 639-3235

4) Isotopes
   Larry Camper
   U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
   Medical and Academic Use
   TFWN
   11555 Rockville Pike
   Rockville, MD 20855
   (301) 415-7231
   (301) 415-5369 (Fax)

5) Radiation and Medical Devices
   Food and Drug Administration
   Center for Devices & Radiological Health
   Office of Compliance, HFZ-300
   2098 Gaither Road
   Rockville, MD 20850

6) Safety and Health
   Department of Labor
   Occupational Safety & Health Admin.
   Publications Office
   200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
   Washington, DC 20210
   (202) 219-4667