Handling Animal Escape

Purpose:
1. To minimize the possible disease/pathogen exposure to the research colony from any escaped rodent
2. To prevent the release of transgenic animals to the wild

Responsibility: Animal Users, Principal Investigators, Technician, Director and Scientific Officer

Related SOP: NA

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1. General note
   1.1. Users are advised to handle cages on a stable working surface, like an animal transfer station, biosafety cabinet, three decked trolley, bench, operating table but not on unstable surfaces, like the top of a diet bucket to avoid the falling of mouse cage.
   1.2. Escaped animals should first be allowed to calm before being re-captured.
   1.3. Escapes of animals occasionally happen due to a variety of reasons such as hyperactive animals, improper closure of lid and sudden threatening of animals by unpredicted environmental stimulations. All animal escapes must be reported to APCF staff immediately.

2. Users’ Response
   2.1. Ask assistance from any APCF technical staff once animal escape happens.
   2.2. Mouse captured from the floor must not be returned to the original cages. User will decide the mouse be euthanized or use it in terminal procedures as soon as possible.
   2.3. The use of captured escaped animals has scientific risks, including exposure to pathogens on the floor and mistaken identity, which may lead to mis-identification of genotype.
   2.4. The use of captured escaped animals is the decision of the user, to whom APCF must be fully informed and knowing of the risks associated with their decision.

3. APCF staff Response
   3.1. Staff will take the Escape Rodent Catching Kit from corridor A or corridor C. An extra pair of gloves is worn before catching escape mouse; whereas leather gloves are worn before catching escaped rat. Rabbit is caught as usual without the need of additional protective equipment and handled as per usual handling protocol.
   3.2. Escape rodent is captured with the net, and then the tail is held by the forceps provided in the kit before being transferred into a new cage.
3.3. Except the rabbit which identity can be identified accurately and placed back to its cage, other captured animal is housed in new cage with food and drinking water.
3.4. If the animal can be identified (by ear marks, coat color, location and the identification of a cage missing a similar animal), the suspected home cage and the new cage housing the captured animal are labeled accordingly. The corresponding user is notified.
3.5. If all manual attempts are done but the rodents cannot be captured, trap is set up to capture the animal humanely. The trap is monitored twice daily to ensure the captured animal is not injured or starved.
3.6. The trap captured animals is euthanized immediately.