Surveillance Procedures - Husbandry Quick Reference

1. Species Specific Procedures
   a. Mice
      i. Surveillance cages are being placed in 1st quarter (begins January) and 3rd quarter (begins July)
      ii. Fecal swaps will be done for the entire time that the cages are in the room
      iii. RHST members will be collecting test samples 2 months after the sentinels have been placed - the sentinels will stay in the room
      iv. Approximately 5 months after the sentinels are placed, an RHST member will pull the sentinels out of the rooms for euthanasia and testing
   b. Rats
      i. Sentinels are being placed every 6 months (Quarters 1 and 3), but will only be in the room for 2 months, as in the past.
         1. Exception: Breeding Colony in NCRC and Britton lab in BSRB rats are now tested quarterly. Sentinels for these rat rooms will be placed in Quarters 2 and 4 (begin in April and October respectively), and will be in the rooms for approximately 5 months. Fecal swaps should be done for the entire time the cages are in the rooms.
            a. An RHST member will collect test samples 2 months after placement, and then pull the sentinels out of the rooms approximately 5 months after placement
   c. Guinea Pigs
      i. Colony animals are being tested directly. No sentinels are used
   d. Voles
      i. Mice are being used as sentinels for this species
      ii. For at least the first year, these will be tested quarterly.
      iii. Cherie Chang will be coordinating with the lab regarding the direct testing of colony animals in addition to surveillance testing.

2. Record Keeping
   a. Record the date of the first fecal transfer on the cage card.
   b. Update the cage card with the new rack number when the rack that a surveillance cage is assigned to is changed out.
   c. If a lab's animals are moved to a different room, move the surveillance cage(s) assigned to them as well and update the room number on the cage card(s).

3. Sick, Moribund, or Dead Surveillance Animals
   a. If a sentinel is found moribund during the surveillance period in the animal room, the technician should call/page the area Veterinary Technician.
   b. If a sentinel is found dead in a sentinel cage by husbandry, the technician should call/page the area Veterinary Technician and place the dead animal in the nearest cooler, and note in their message to the Vet Techs where the sentinel is located. The husbandry technician should also note the cause of death on the cage card along with the number of animals found dead and notify the RHST.
   c. Any sentinel found dead or moribund in a sentinel cage on the weekend will be handled according to weekday procedures.

4. Fecal Transfers
   a. Perform fecal transfers at each cage change, for as long as the sentinel cages are in the room. Transfer soiled bedding from each investigator cage into that investigator's surveillance cage as follows:
      i. Start with an empty, clean cage (no bedding).
      ii. All of the bedding in the surveillance cage will be taken from the investigator's cages as they are being changed.
      iii. Take enough soiled bedding from each colony cage to result in an approximately equal amount of bedding as in a clean cage.
         1. The amount transferred depends on the number of dirty cages to be included in the transfer.
            a. For example, transferring dirty bedding from five cages uses more from each cage than transferring dirty bedding from 30 cages.
      iv. Take approximately equal amounts of dirty bedding (including feces) from EACH dirty cage. Avoid a large amount from one cage and very small amounts from the remaining cages.
      v. The end result is that all of the bedding in the new surveillance cage has been in another mouse cage. Surveillance animals should NEVER be placed on clean bedding.
   b. If an investigator's animals are spread throughout several different racks, change the surveillance cage each time any of that investigator's mice are changed. Surveillance cages may be changed more than once a week to accommodate this.
   c. If the surveillance cage needs to be changed on a non-change day, use a clean cage with half clean bedding and half dirty bedding from the old cage. Surveillance animals should NEVER be on clean bedding.
   d. For rodents being housed in open-air cages, bedding transfer will be performed as if a rodent cage with an MI top was being used.