

**STONEHILL**  
**COLLEGE**  
**Rodent Caging Sanitation SOP**

The intent of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe the procedure for sanitation of animal cages. This procedure is approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of Stonehill College. Any exemption must be approved by the IACUC prior to its application.

- 1. Introduction:** Laboratory animal caging must be washed and sanitized using specialized equipment. It is important that animal technicians learn how to use and care for such equipment.
- 2. Materials:**
  - Rodent cages
  - Wire bar lid
  - Microisolater top
  - Water bottle
  - Cage/ rack washer
  - Bottle washer
  - Autoclave
  - Temp-Tape
  - Integrator Strips
  - Equipment operating manual(s)
- 3. Procedures:**
  - a. Rodent cages, wire bar lids and filter tops are sanitized by the cage/rack washer after each use, at least once a week. (Refer to the operating manual for the proper use of the cage/rack washer.)
  - b. The bottles are sanitized in the bottle wash after each use, at least once a week. (Refer to the operating manual for the proper use of the bottle washer.)
  - c. The shelf racks are washed in the cage/rack washer at least once a month.
  - d. The detergent used is Clout, manufactured by Pharmacal. (Refer to the operating manual or container labels for proper use of detergent. Refer to the MSDS for any hazards pertaining to the detergent being used.)
  - e. For immunodeficient animals, all caging equipment and bottles are sterilized in the autoclave. (Refer to the operating manual for proper use of the autoclave.)

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**4. Assurance of Proper Sanitation:**

- a. **Cage washer use:** Cage washers must reach a water temperature of at least 180 degrees F for 3 minutes in accordance with the Guide recommendations.
  - a. Temperature indicator strips (Temp-Tape strips, manufactured by Pharmaca) will be used on a daily basis.
  - b. Strips will be placed on a cage or other equipment during a cage wash cycle to ensure that proper temperature has been reached.
  - c. All strips are placed in a notebook and the date recorded.
- b. **Autoclave use:** Autoclaves must reach a temperature of 250 degrees F, a pressure of 15 psi and maintain these conditions for a minimum of 15 minutes.
  - a. (Verify Integrator strips, manufactured by Steris), will be used with each use of the autoclave for both a dry and liquid cycle to show that the proper sterilization has occurred.
  - b. The integrator strips are placed in the middle of the autoclave load during a cycle.
  - c. If the center of the autoclaved load has reached 250 degrees F for 15 minutes, a color change occurs on the integrator strip.