



**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE #614**  
**GUIDELINES ON WIRE-BOTTOM**  
**CAGING FOR RODENTS**

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**1. PURPOSE**

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The intent of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe limitations for housing rodents in wire-bottom cages.

**2. RESPONSIBILITY**

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Facility Animal Care Committees (FACCs), principal investigators (PIs) and their staff, veterinarian, facility manager.

**3. PROCEDURES**

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- 3.1. The default housing system for maintaining rodents at McGill University is solid-bottom caging with bedding.
- 3.2. The use of wire-bottom cages can exceptionally be approved by the FACC when there is an appropriate scientific rationale for not using solid-bottom caging with bedding. Appropriate scientific rationale for using wire-bottom cages include, but are not limited to:
  - 3.2.1. Prevention/ limitation of coprophagia.
  - 3.2.2. Eliminate ingestion of bedding or bedding contaminants.
  - 3.2.3. Contact studies in which there may be a risk of the animals having additional contact with the compound.
  - 3.2.4. Medical conditions that may be exacerbated by use of bedding (ex.: diabetic or burn models).
  - 3.2.5. Metabolic studies in which feces and urine are collected and/or water and food consumption must be accurately measured with collection of spills.
  - 3.2.6. Assessment of copulation in rats by detection of the copulatory plug.
  - 3.2.7. Studies involving short term (less than 8 hours), individual, restricted feeding.
- 3.3. For all rodents housed on wired-bottom cages:
  - 3.3.1. The investigator must provide a detailed justification for the use of this type of housing in the Animal Use Protocol (AUP).
  - 3.3.2.

## SOP REVISION HISTORY

DATE	NEW VERSION
2023.08.14	2. RESPONSIBILITY