

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Contact: Michael Budkie, SAEN, 513-575-5517 (cell) saen@cinci.rr.com

**KU Med Center Research Subjects Killed – One Set on Fire, Others Abused;
Watchdog Files USDA Complaint, Calls for Ban of KU Staff**

KANSAS CITY, KS – University of Kansas, Medical Center has killed research subjects – including set one on fire – and is guilty of animal cruelty and violating federal law in multiple incidents, according to a national research watchdog group.

SAEN, an Ohio-based nonprofit group that monitors U.S. research facilities for illegalities and animal cruelty, has filed an official federal complaint against the university, urging a major penalty be leveled.

SAEN has also called for research staff connected to a cancer project to be permanently banned from animal use for multiple incidents of what SAEN is calling "bungling" – including setting one animal on fire, while another died of a "massive hemorrhage."

In one case, internal University of Kansas Medical Center records document the deaths of two rabbits and one gerbil, which SAEN alleges violated the federal Animal Welfare Act. An unapproved drug was administered, causing the gerbil death. One rabbit died immediately after drug administration, while a second rabbit was found to have a "complete, compound fracture of the mid-tibia" immediately following handling by KU Med center staff.

SAEN's official complaints with the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture alleges multiple violations of the Animal Welfare Act, including "unqualified personnel," "insufficient experimental supervision by the University of Kansas, Medical Center Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee," "improper animal handling. The complaint calls for the maximum penalty of \$10,000 per infraction/per animal.

In another case, KU Med Center internal records document an incident in which lab staff accidentally set a mouse on fire, killing it. And botched multiple surgical procedures caused two more deaths. One mouse did not recover from surgery, while a second required was euthanized after a "massive hemorrhage."

The three mouse deaths were connected to a cancer research project. SAEN has contacted Dr. Robert D. Simari, University of Kansas, Medical Center, Executive Vice Chancellor, calling for a permanent ban on animal use privileges for the bungling lab staff.

"If KU Med Center staff negligently kills and injures animals regulated by the USDA and also is so careless to literally set an animal on fire, then any project that staff performs must be suspect," said Michael A. Budkie, A.H.T., SAEN's executive director. "This incompetent facility deserves the maximum federal penalties."