

URGENT NEWS ADVISORY

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

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**Texas Biomedical Labs Hit with Shocking Revelations of Animal Deaths;
Watchdog Group Calls for \$100,000 in Federal Fines**

SAN ANTONIO/HOUSTON, TX – Two Texas biomedical laboratories – San Antonio's Texas Biomedical Research Institute and another at the University of Houston – are being targeted by a non-profit research watchdog organization, which charged today horrific deaths at the facilities should result in government investigations and fines of \$100,000 or more.

Sensitive federal records reveal a shocking chimp death and two baboon strangulation deaths at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute (TBRI) in San Antonio, said SAEN, a national research watchdog group.

The TBRI lab should be heavily fined - \$30,000, said SAEN, which uncovered the deaths and has filed a federal complaint with the USDA, which oversees research laboratories.

The Texas Biomedical Research Institute has a history of breaking federal laws. It was cited for two macaque monkey deaths, on January 24, 2013. This same facility also paid a \$25,714 fine during 2012 which again involved improper handling of primates and deaths.

The University of Houston lab should be heavily fined – at least \$70,000, said SAEN, after sensitive federal records revealed a two- week old rhesus monkey named Kwint died with a laundry bag string wrapped around his/her neck. The documents also disclose an eight-month long failure by laboratory staff to monitor monkeys who were deprived of water for an extended period.

The USDA previously issued citations against the University of Houston during a November 2013 inspection. This inspection cited the lab for inadequate monitoring of a rabbit during a surgical procedure which led to the animals' death.

“It is shocking that TBRI and University of Houston are again connected to multiple incidents of animal deaths,” said Michael A. Budkie, A.H.T., Executive Director, SAEN. "They have demonstrated a clear pattern of incompetence that has killed multiple animals and potentially caused severe suffering to others. These incompetent labs deserves the maximum penalty allowable under the law."

The USDA report and SAEN's Official Complaints are available upon request from SAEN.