



Category 4: Facilities

OPTIONAL

4.14 Practice provides healthier environments using mechanical techniques.

Negatively pressurize ward spaces

- Be prepared to demonstrate via the building mechanical drawings that the patient wards are negatively pressurized, meaning that more air is removed than supplied.

Minimal air exchanges for wards

- More air must be exchanged in patient ward spaces than in office areas to comply with accepted animal health standards.
- At a minimum, 10 to 15 air changes per hour are generally required in animal housing areas.
 - While this rule of thumb is a good start, using a cubic foot per minute (CFM) guideline may be more useful and create a more targeted approach:
 - Isolation wards should be exchanged at 40 CFM per animal.
 - Dog wards need 30 to 35 CFM per animal.
 - Cat cage wards need 35 to 40 CFM per animal.

External heat support provided to patients/pets as needed to maintain normothermia

- Radiant heating is used for patient comfort and is not intended to replace building heating systems.
- Radiant heating may be delivered a number of ways including but not limited to:
 - Air or water patient warmers
 - Radiant heating pads
 - Hydronic or electric heating integrated into the floor slabs
- Radiant heating may be provided to locations including but not limited to:
 - Pre- and post-anesthetic patients runs and caging
 - ICU/CCU runs and caging
 - Examination, treatment, and surgery tables, including via electric radiant heating integrated with the table
 - If using caging with built-in radiant heating, always separate the patient from direct contact with the heated surface. This can be done with a platform provided by the supplier of the heated cage. Providing this separation will safeguard against the patient overheating.
- For safety reasons, patients who are not awake, alert, and/or ambulatory should not have access to radiant heating pads or other plug-in devices.