

CDC suspends A&M research

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U.S health officials have suspended Texas A&M University's research of dangerous infectious diseases.

A report by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said lax oversight by the university resulted in hazardous working conditions and security breaches at the university's federally funded laboratories, the Houston Chronicle said Wednesday.

The order, which bans the university from conducting research on regulated toxins or microbes, affects five labs at the university's National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense. The labs are part of an \$18 million federal effort to study vaccines to counteract biological weapons.

The investigators found at least seven cases in which A&M allegedly allowed unauthorized access to the biological agents. The university is also accused of allowing former employees to enter the labs and of failing to secure the inventory of biological agents.

The newspaper said A&M's problems began in February 2006 with the university failed to report a researcher's exposure to the Brucella bacterium immediately after the incident happened.

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