

Amphibian and Reptile Euthanasia

Recommended Best Practices

Amphibians and Aquatic species (frogs, toads, fish, salamanders)

1. Injectable anesthetic overdose: Sodium pentobarbital or Euthasol ® 120 mg/kg intra-coelomic or intra-cardiac (fish, frogs, toads, salamanders) or in dorsal lymph sac (frogs and toads). Death results in 15-30 minutes.
2. Percutaneous anesthetic overdose: Immersion in 6.5%MS222 for at least 30 minutes (aquatic species only)
3. Physical method: Immersion in ice water for immobilization and decapitation using guillotine followed by immediate double pithing. (aquatic species only)

Confirmation of death: amphibians may have reflexive movements after death. To verify death – check for respiration and reflexes like righting reflex and horizontal flotation. In case of doubt, use mechanical methods described in (3).

Reptiles (turtles, lizards)

1. Injectable anesthetic overdose: Sodium pentobarbital or Euthasol ® 150-200 mg/kg intra-coelomic or intra-cardiac.

Confirmation of death: reptiles may have reflexive movements and heartbeat after death. To verify death – check for respiration and reflexes like righting reflex, reflex withdrawal to noxious stimuli. Remove a vital organ (decapitate or open thorax and remove heart).