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Wichita Falls (TX) Animal Control is replacing its animal control vehicles with trucks of a new design that will make animal handling easier for the drivers. Using the old vehicles, the drivers had to lift the animals up and then lower them down into the compartments. With the new vehicles, the drivers can get the animals into the compartments with less strain and stress for both driver and animal.

The Humane Society of Wichita County (Rt. 1, Box 107, Wichita Falls, TX 76301) had been urging that the change be made for some time. The society operates the county Animal Reclamation Center, in addition to running its own shelter. Last spring, HSUS staffer R. Dale Hylton visited the Center and saw the difficulties the drivers were having with the old vehicles. He wrote the county to reinforce the society's recommendation that
Many agencies use vehicle surfaces for educational messages. Above, from High Point, NC.

Top-loading truck used previously in Wichita Co.

Well-marked vehicle from Trumbull Co., OH.

Keeping track while you're making tracks

The animals must be protected from heat or cold, rain or snow. The animal compartment should be vented with an exhaust fan or air conditioned, depending on the climate in your area. A thermometer should be attached to the inside of the animal compartment and checked frequently by the driver. Animals are prone to heat stroke in temperatures above 80 degrees with high humidity. Drivers must remember that heat builds up in the animal compartment particularly when the truck is not moving.

The vehicle should have locks on all openings to prevent animals from escaping and to keep people from removing animals.

The vehicle should be designed so animals can be put in and taken out of enclosures with a minimum of stress on the driver and the animals.

For more on animal control vehicles, see "Just Wright" on page 12.
Rescue program

The Wilson County (NC) Humane Society operates an animal rescue program staffed by volunteer Thomas Marshall. The number of rescue calls received averages 1½ per day. The society purchased an ambulance from the county government for $1, and Marshall equipped it to handle injured and sick animals. He uses his own truck for some calls.

Marshall describes himself as “about 98% of the staff” of the rescue service. His full-time job allows him some flexibility to respond to calls, and most of the rescue work is on weekends, nights and holidays. He has developed a good working relationship with area veterinarians, including getting training in animal first aid from them.

Marshall also credits local law enforcement officers with becoming increasingly helpful in animal rescue over the last few years. He says local law officers had to be convinced that humane society personnel were competent and professional and could be counted on even in situations that were unpleasant or dangerous. Once the society established this reputation, law officers began to help out more.

One highway patrolman found an injured animal on the road in a neighboring county that has no rescue service. The patrolman brought the dog to Marshall and contributed $15 to help with the animal’s care. On another occasion, Marshall was called to rescue a dog that had been hit on the highway. He arrived on the scene to find a sheriff’s deputy waiting with the dog in a driving rain, shielding it with his umbrella.

Marshall offers this advice to other organizations interested in starting rescue services: 1) Remember that your primary role is to relieve animal suffering, not to save every animal’s life. 2) Don’t start a program without careful planning and thorough training. 3) Recruit people who are professionals or who are willing to become professionals.

For a nominal fee, Marshall will give a presentation, including slides, on how to start an animal rescue service. You can contact him at Wilson County Humane Society, PO Box 7064, Wilson, NC 27893.

Checklist poster

The following two pages are a checklist that you can remove and post in your shelter receiving area. Refer to the checklist as you read the following:

PAPERWORK—is necessary to keep track of all the animals in your care. Office staff members should get in the habit of writing down all available information about the incoming animals. Don’t rely on your memory to tell you whether this dog has been spayed or that one obedience-trained. The records you keep will also help you budget money and staff time.

EXAM—is important to make sure the animals get any veterinary attention they need and to control disease in the shelter. It also helps ensure that the animals you adopt out are healthy. You may not be able to have a veterinarian available at all times to discuss the need to euthanize some animals immediately. Your animal control ordinance should authorize the shelter manager to decide when euthanasia is immediately necessary. The ordinance should provide for defending the manager against any legal actions taken by pet owners—however, the manager should also be required to keep a complete record on all animals euthanized.

The manager should also get training from a veterinarian on how to make this decision.

For everyone’s protection, the animal control ordinance should specify how long your shelter will hold animals not requiring emergency euthanasia. The HSUS recommends that you hold animals at least five working days and that you make every reasonable attempt to contact the owners, through license tag numbers or any other means available.

TEMPERAMENT—is important because the more you know about an animal’s behavior, the easier it will be for you to find a suitable home for it. Your agency’s drivers should be alert to behavior when they pick animals up. Any bit of information you have about an animal will help you at adoption time.

Here are the names and addresses of some vehicle suppliers:

- Anconco Equipment Company
  2217-21 Campbell St.
  Kansas City, MO 64108
- Field Body Company
  2656 Lashbrook Ave.
  South El Monte, CA 91733
- Mavron, Inc.
  1512 Road 225 West
  Warsaw, IN 46580
- Bob McKee, Inc.
  10864 Magnolia Blvd.
  N. Hollywood, CA 91601

For a nominal fee, Marshall will give a presentation, including slides, on how to start an animal rescue service. You can contact him at Wilson County Humane Society, PO Box 7064, Wilson, NC 27893.
Our PET Procedure for Incoming Animals

**PAPERWORK**

Complete in-ticket.

Make up kennel card.

Give animal tag or collar with shelter ID number.

Record any background information given by owner or animal control officer.

Record any veterinary care given.

Take photographs of the animal, front and side views, to keep on file.

**EXAM**

Check animal for injuries. Get veterinary assistance, if necessary.

Check for signs of illness—look at coat, eyes, ears, teeth.

Take temperature. Assign sick animals to isolation area and schedule veterinary care.

Check for tattoos.

Give vaccinations.

If immediate euthanasia is called for, discuss with veterinarian or shelter director.

**TEMPERAMENT**


If it's a dog, does it walk on a lead willingly? Sit or lie down on command? Shake hands?

Does the animal play in a friendly manner?

Does it like particular kinds of food? Particular toys?

Does it get along with children? And with both men and women?

Is it afraid of particular things (like thunderstorms)?

Any other personality traits that might interest an adopter?

Make sure all traits are recorded on in-ticket.

*Provided by SHELTER SENSE, a publication of The Humane Society of the United States*
The Iowa City Animal Shelter (410 E. Washington St., Iowa City, IA 52240) reports good results from the city’s first computerized pet license renewal campaign. The computer prints complete information about each licensed pet on a renewal postcard, which the animal shelter mails to the owner. The owner then returns the renewal card with payment for the upcoming year and a new rabies certificate, if revaccination is required. A license receipt and tag are then sent to the pet owner.

The system got underway last year when the shelter sent an information sheet explaining the pet licensing procedure to every household in Iowa City that is billed by the city for water service. The result of this mailing was a 220% increase in the number of pets licensed, generating an additional $11,154 in revenue over the previous year. Information about all the licensed pets was entered into the computer and is now being used in the renewal campaign.

Animal Control Officer Leslie Henry reports that the public has responded well to the licensing program. She says the “mail-in” method has also reduced the work load for the office staff.

The shelter has also taken advertisements in local newspapers to inform new residents and new pet owners of the licensing requirements. The ads have a coupon that can be clipped and mailed in with the fee and rabies certificate.

In Iowa City, all dogs and cats more than six months old must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the City of Iowa. All dogs and cats over the age of 6 months must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the City of Iowa. All dogs and cats over the age of 6 months must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the City of Iowa. All dogs and cats over the age of 6 months must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the City of Iowa. All dogs and cats over the age of 6 months must be vaccinated against rabies and licensed with the City of Iowa.

In the previous year, the shelter received $10.00/year for unaltered females or males. $0.25/year for puppies or kittens under 6 months. The shelter has also taken advertisements in local newspapers to advertise. Limit to 25 words plus entrance fee.

To Guarantee the Return of Lost Pets:

Simple justice

The man had been given the choice of staying the two full nights at the dump or paying a fine of $200; because he did not complete the two-night stay, he will have to pay the fine. The judge in the case said he thought of the unusual sentence because he wanted the man to “get a taste” of the way the puppies had been treated.

Parvovirus

There have been newspaper reports of outbreaks of parvovirus on the West Coast, but authorities at Cornell University's Baker Institute for Animal Health tell SHELTER SENSE that these incidents are not a new wave of disease.

An Institute spokesman says there are areas where parvovirus has not yet appeared, and pet owners have not had dogs vaccinated. As the disease makes its way around the country, these unprotected animals will contract it. This creates the appearance of a new outbreak.

There have also been reports that a deadlier strain of parvovirus has developed. Although researchers are looking into this possibility, the Baker Institute has no evidence that such a new strain exists.

A Berlin, New Hampshire, man was sentenced to spending two nights at the city dump for abandoning four puppies there in subzero cold, reports Associated Press. The man began his sentence the night of February 11, with the temperature falling to 10 degrees, but he stayed only 1½ hours because it was rumored that a rowdy group was coming to the dump to harass him.

The man had left four puppies at the dump where they were found the next morning by a truck driver. The truck driver took the puppies to the police station, and one of the officers recognized them and identified the owner.

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The Michigan Federation of Humane Societies will sponsor a workshop in Lansing April 23-25. Guest participants will include HSUS President John Hoyt; Phyllis Wright, Director of Animal Sheltering and Control; Sandy Round, Great Lakes Regional Director; and Tim Greyhavens, Field Investigator for the Great Lakes Regional Office. Contact Margaret Sarna, 1561 Caliper, Troy, MI 48084 for complete information.

The New England Federation of Humane Societies annual conference will be held May 19-21 in Framingham, MA. Among the speakers will be Dr. Michael Fox, Director of HSUS’s Institute for the Study of Animal Problems; Kathy Savesky, Director of HSUS’s National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education; and John Donners, New England Regional Director. Contact the New England Federation of Humane Societies, PO Box 255, Boston, MA 02117 for complete information.
An animal control training seminar will be held June 24-26, sponsored by the Southeastern Animal Control Association and the National Animal Control Association. Hurt "Bill" Smith, Director of HSUS's Animal Control Academy, and HSUS Director of Investigations Frantz Dantzler will be participants. For complete information, contact James Carmichael, Columbus College, Continuing Education Division, Columbus, GA 31993.

April has been named Pets Are Wonderful Month by the Pets Are Wonderful Council, 500 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 836-7145. If you have not received your free kit of materials from PAW, contact them again, you should build in funds for major maintenance projects such as these, suggested by Bill Meade, HSUS Gulf States Regional Director and shelter architect:

- All interior areas should be repainted every two to four years, depending on how worn they become. In kennel areas, epoxy paint holds up best; however, if the kennel is already painted, make sure the wall surface is prepared correctly for repainting with epoxy. Your paint supplier will help you. You may also wish to use vinyl wallpaper in the office and public areas to add a bright new look.
- --Floor coverings need to be refinished or replaced every six to eight years, depending on the material used and how it wears. Seamless, no-wax vinyl tile is very easy to install and public areas and will give your building a fresh look. Carpets wear at different rates, depending on material and use. Make a thorough inspection of carpeting periodically to determine when replacement will be necessary.
- --If suspended acoustical tile ceilings have become stained or darkened, you can repaint them easily with flat white paint in a spray gun.
- --Floor and wall tiles will need special attention every four to six months. If the tiles are plain, in the office and public areas and will give your building a fresh look. Carpets wear at different rates, depending on material and use. Make a thorough inspection of carpeting periodically to determine when replacement will be necessary.
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When you climb into the driver's seat of an animal control truck, you accept an important role for your agency and your community.

You accept responsibility for taking good care of animals and for dealing courteously and effectively with people. It's a job in which your techniques for public relations will be as important as your knowledge of animal care and handling.

Every animal control driver faces the image problem reflected in the old joke, "I wouldn't vote for him (or her!) for dogcatcher." But I believe your own attitude about yourself has a lot to do with the way other people regard you. If you think of yourself as a dogcatcher, so will everyone else. The answer is to think of yourself as a professional animal control officer and respond that way in your job.

First, you need to look like a professional. Your uniform can be as simple and inexpensive as a clean tan shirt or blouse, dark pants (neatly pressed) and a patch or badge identifying you and your agency. Your local police department should be able to give you the names of patch and badge suppliers.

The inside of your vehicle must be kept clean for the health and comfort of the animals, but the outside should be kept clean also to present a professional image. Your agency should work out a regular maintenance schedule for vehicles and stick to it. Gas, oil and tires should be checked each day before you go out on the road.

You must acquire the habit of careful driving, with courtesy toward others on the road. When you are tempted to step on the gas to get through that yellow light, remember that you are carrying live animals—bystanders are certainly going to wonder what's happening to the poor animals in your truck if you screech through an intersection.

The equipment you carry should be kept clean and in good working order. Remember to carry plenty of educational material to hand out to people.

Finally, be aware that you are setting an example for the community by the way you handle animals. Take the time to do it properly (see SHELTER SENSE, December 1980, "First you catch them...").