

**GENERAL ORDER 48.1.1**

**Animal Control**

**GENERAL ORDER CROSS-REFERENCE: None**

**SUMMARY**

Establishes procedures for the taking and disposition of animal complaints, issuance of dog licenses, and the use of chemical capture weapons for vicious animals.

**DISCUSSION**

Complaints regarding animals are primarily handled by the animal control officer. When the animal control officer is not available, vicious animal complaints may be handled by police officers or Patrol CSO's. Guidelines for the control of dogs and other animals have been outlined along with the procedures for licensing dogs in accordance with Chapter 5.426 of the City Code.

**POLICY**

**I**

**INCIDENT REPORTING**

Citizen complaints regarding animal bites, vicious animals, cruelty to animals, and abandoned animals require a case number and incident report.

Citizen complaints regarding barking dogs, dogs running at large, and injured animals do not require a case number. Misdemeanor citations issued for the above offenses require an incident & arrest report.

**II**

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Citizen complaints of animal offenses will be handled by the animal control officer during normal city business hours, Monday through Friday excluding holidays. Police officers may be dispatched to handle animal complaints if the animal control officer is not available. The animal control officer may be called in during off-duty hours to handle exigent circumstances.

## **IV DOG BITES**

The Department investigates incidents where persons have been bitten by animals, either domestic or wild. The Department shall attempt to locate and identify the suspect animal and owner, and take necessary action.

Every victim of a dog bite shall be advised to contact his personal physician or emergency room at a hospital for treatment of injuries.

Where animal bites result in broken skin of a human being, an incident report shall be taken by the investigating officer. In cases where an animal attacks a human being but the attack does not result in broken skin, an incident report headed "Information Report" or "Vicious Dog" may be initiated, depending on the circumstances. The following information shall be included in reported animal bites:

1. Identity, description, location and type of animal.
2. Animal owner's identity, address and phone number.
3. Rabies vaccination information, date of last vaccination and name of veterinarian.
4. Animal's behavior and circumstances surrounding the attack. Was the victim teasing, handling or provoking the animal? Did the victim trespass? Does the animal act healthy or ill?
5. Victim information: name, date of birth, address, and phone number, description of the wound and location on the body. In serious injury incidents, photographs should be obtained.
6. In cases where the animal is quarantined by the owner, a brief statement as to how the animal will be quarantined.

## **V QUARANTINE**

Quarantine requires the animal be secured for a period of 10 days and be out of contact with humans and other warm-blooded animals, except for those who live in the animal's home.

The owner of an animal that has bitten a human shall be advised of the quarantine regulations. If the owner cannot provide adequate quarantine, the animal shall be seized and quarantined at an appropriate facility at the owner's expense.

In cases where the animal is a stray, effort shall be made to apprehend the animal and place it in quarantine.

In cases where the animal is wild, effort shall be made to apprehend the animal. In some instances, it may be necessary to kill the animal to facilitate a rabies test. Should circumstances dictate that the animal be killed, due caution shall be used to preserve the head of the animal for testing.

All animal related reports shall be forwarded to the animal control officer. The animal control officer shall forward a copy to Environmental Health.

## **VI DOG LICENSES**

In accordance with 5.426 of the City Code, all dogs six months of age or with permanent canine teeth shall have a current dog license. To purchase a license, the dog must have a current rabies vaccination given by a certified veterinarian. A certificate of vaccination with a description of the dog and the expiration date of the vaccination shall be presented to animal control. A copy of the license and license tag shall be given to the dog owner at the time of purchase. The fees for the licenses are set by the City Council. The animal control officer shall be responsible for issuing and tracking dog licenses.

## **VII BARKING AND AT LARGE DOGS**

If a citizen requests a dog owner be contacted regarding their dog continually barking or running at large the following procedures will be used:

Warning the dog owner - when a citizen requests a dog owner be warned regarding the dog continually barking/running at large the animal control officer shall receive from the complainant the address of the dog owner and a description of the suspect dog. The animal control officer shall attempt to contact the dog owner and advise him/her of the complaint. A written warning will be sent to the dog owner or left at the residence.

Misdemeanor citation - If a citizen requests to sign a barking dog/running at large complaint, the animal control officer shall make contact with the complainant and dog owner. Each will be given a brochure titled "Springfield Police Animal Control Process" explaining the process. The officer will write a misdemeanor citation based on information received from the dog owner and complainant.

A complaint will be prepared if the complainant makes contact within 10 calendar days.

## **VIII CHEMICAL CAPTURE**

The animal control officer is certified by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration to possess and deploy Xylazine and Telazol in order to chemically capture, or tranquilize, large or vicious animals. These drugs, which are regulated by federal law, shall be maintained in a secure and locked location under the control of the animal control officer. Deployment of these chemical tranquilizers is with a CO2 rifle capable of delivering a tranquilizer dart from a distance up to 40 yards.

The animal control officer shall maintain a log of the purchase, disposal and use of all drugs used under this policy. The Administrative Sergeant shall inspect and audit the log, and the drugs, and shall report to the Chief quarterly on the use of the chemical capture system.

The decision to utilize chemical capture shall be made by the animal control officer with the consent of the on-duty Watch Commander. Factors to be considered in the decision include the risk to the public and to officers, the size and condition of the animal, the terrain, and the availability of other options to safely capture the animal. The use of chemical capture shall be considered only after all other options have been exhausted, and shall not be used on domestic cats or small breed dogs. A veterinarian may be consulted if necessary.

When a decision is made to utilize chemical capture equipment, the animal control officer shall deploy the tranquilizer weapon. The animal control officer shall act as the primary officer for purposes of making field decisions regarding the deployment of the tranquilizer weapon. A uniformed police officer, armed with a firearm, shall act as a cover officer in all situations while the chemical capture equipment is being deployed. The cover officer is responsible for the safety of the animal control officer, for marking the spot from which the dart was fired, and for retrieving any darts which miss the intended target. The cover officer shall advise dispatch, via the radio, when chemical darts are deployed. Every reasonable effort shall be made to recover fired darts.

Any domestic animals tranquilized pursuant to this section shall be impounded and transported to a veterinarian for examination as soon as possible.

In the event that any human is accidentally injected with the chemicals used for animal capture, that person shall immediately be transported to the nearest hospital for treatment.

The animal control officer shall retain certification for the use of tranquilizing drugs and deployment systems. The animal control officer shall further qualify with the CO2 rifle, firing training darts, not less than quarterly, at distances up to 25 yards.

---

Richard L. Lewis  
Chief of Police