

Model manual available

Metropolitan Dade County (FL) Animal Control Division has a well-organized operations manual available for other groups or agencies to use as a model. The manual may be requested from the division at 7401 NW 74th St., Miami, FL 33166 -- please enclose \$1.50 to cover costs.

Division Director Ronald F. Petty considers an operations manual "essential in any sizable undertaking that employs people at various levels of responsibility or that operates on a shift basis."

In a letter to SHELTER SENSE, Petty commented, "The positive benefits of having such a manual include standardization of procedure and enhancement of employee morale and confidence since all employees know exactly what the rules are, and what the purpose of the organization is.

"The manual should be as lean and hard as possible, somewhat like the Constitution, laying down basic principles and policies, leaving details and 'how-to' procedures to memorandums or other forms of directives that can be posted on bulletin boards. A good place to find a model manual is at local law enforcement agencies."

Petty said that for both shelter managers and employees, the manual is "the basic document...that lays down the rules and regulations in clear terms at the actual working level." ■

City efforts prove successful

Hot Springs (AR) Animal Control Director John Seales (400 Kimery Lane, Hot Springs, AR 71901) reports good results from three efforts to improve animal control:

- Public image -- The Animal Control Department is a separate unit within the city government, and the officers have uniforms. Seales says the well-groomed, uniformed officers are "respected as Animal Control Officers, not dog catchers."
- Law enforcement -- When animal control officers spot a free-roaming dog, they follow it to locate the owner, since the dogs generally run home. The owner is given a courtesy warning for the first violation of the leash law. If the owner cannot be located, the dog is impounded and the owner must pay a fine to reclaim it.

The courtesy warning states in part: *"It is unlawful to let your dog run at large within the City of Hot Springs. Dogs must be kept confined on a leash, or within an enclosure on the premises of the owner...This warning has been recorded at the Animal Control Office. Any other violation will result in a summons to appear in Court...We ask for your cooperation in this matter with the hope that Hot Springs can be made a more pleasant place to live for both the people and their pets."*

On the second violation, the owner receives a summons to appear in court. The department has a solid case at this point because of the courtesy warning, and stiff fines are generally imposed.

- Education -- Animal control officers present educational programs in area schools and at civic clubs and other groups on proper care for pets and the importance of obeying the leash law. The department also has a section in the Sunday edition of the local newspaper, reporting violations of the leash law and providing animal care tips and other information. ■

Hot Springs Animal Control



Director Seales says his officers have "a cool head, a warm heart and a steady hand."