Cleaning an animal shelter is hard work, and we're not going to try to tell you any different.

But you can make it easier and get good results by establishing an efficient cleaning routine and following it faithfully.

The benefits of your efforts will be enormous. A clean shelter will help you offer healthy animals for adoption. Potential adopters visiting the shelter will be able to see that the animals are well cared for and in good condition.

A clean, odor-free shelter provides employees with a pleasant workplace, and will lead to a more professional attitude and greater pride in their jobs.

Also, the public will have more respect for your total animal control program if you care enough about your own facility to keep it clean. You are setting the example for humane animal care in your community.

Continued on next page
High pressure sprayer. Illustration provided by L&A Products, Inc.

For efficient cleaning, your shelter design should include concrete floors covered with a finish resistant to stains and odors. Concrete walls should be coated with a filler for the pores and then covered with epoxy paint. Cracks in the floors and walls are potential hiding places for insects and internal parasite eggs.

The animals need a place to be held while the cages and runs are being cleaned. If your shelter has indoor-outdoor dog runs, one possible arrangement for dogs is to have them wait in one place while you clean the other.

Animals should never be allowed to get wet or be made to stay in a wet area. Never let them come in contact with disinfectant or other cleaning materials.

Before cleaning, remove all food and water dishes; they need to be cleaned and disinfected daily. A large plastic trash can is a practical and inexpensive container for soaking them in disinfectant. Self-feeders should be kept dry and checked daily for moldy or dried-up food.

Floors, walls, cages and resting boards should be cleaned with a high pressure sprayer that can dispense detergent and then disinfectant. A sprayer with a 600-pound pressure is recommended over a steam hose cleaner. The use of steam indoors creates high humidity and condensation and generally takes longer to disinfect an area. Outside runs should be pressure-cleaned and disinfected also.

Viruses are shed in the urine and feces. Because the sprayer will splatter feces on the walls and spread disease and worm eggs, make sure all fecal matter is removed before you use the sprayer.

Where there are drains, rinse each area thoroughly with a hose after cleaning and again after disinfecting. Areas without drains should be rinsed with a sponge and a bucket of clear water. Excess water should be removed with a squeegee, not a mop. Mops collect hair and germs and provide breeding places for fleas and tick eggs.

With many animals moving in and out of your shelter daily, a program of disinfection is essential. However, many disinfectants become ineffective when mixed with feces or other matter. All cage and run areas must be scrubbed first with a detergent or detergent-sanitizer and then disinfected and thoroughly rinsed.

The animals need a place to be held while the cages and runs are being cleaned. If your shelter has indoor-outdoor dog runs, one possible arrangement for dogs is to have them wait in one place while you clean the other.

Animals should never be allowed to get wet or be made to stay in a wet area. Never let them come in contact with disinfectant or other cleaning materials.

Before cleaning, remove all food and water dishes; they need to be cleaned and disinfected daily. A large plastic trash can is a practical and inexpensive container for soaking them in disinfectant. Self-feeders should be kept dry and checked daily for moldy or dried-up food.

Floors, walls, cages and resting boards should be cleaned with a high pressure sprayer that can dispense detergent and then disinfectant. A sprayer with a 600-pound pressure is recommended over a steam hose cleaner. The use of steam indoors creates high humidity and condensation and generally takes longer to disinfect an area. Outside runs should be pressure-cleaned and disinfected also.

Viruses are shed in the urine and feces. Because the sprayer will splatter feces on the walls and spread disease and worm eggs, make sure all fecal matter is removed before you use the sprayer.

Where there are drains, rinse each area thoroughly with a hose after cleaning and again after disinfecting. Areas without drains should be rinsed with a sponge and a bucket of clear water. Excess water should be removed with a squeegee, not a mop. Mops collect hair and germs and provide breeding places for fleas and tick eggs.

The time has come for all communities, regardless of size, to establish effective, responsible animal regulation programs. While animal control is a full-time necessity, smaller communities can usually get excellent results using a part-time person. In one small town that had planned a "Dog Day," a resident was employed instead to run a dog control program half-days. With a regularly assigned animal officer, the stray dog problem was greatly reduced in only two months. A local humanitarian boards the animals for five days, allowing owners to claim lost pets. The animals are then transported to a shelter in a nearby larger community to be offered for adoption.

These quotations are from news articles appearing across the nation, and they describe a disturbing and out-of-date approach to the problem of the stray dog: control by gunfire.

Generally, dog shootings such as these are carried on in small, rural communities; but the "special force" mentioned above was to be appointed in a major mid-western city.

Free-roaming dogs have become a serious problem throughout the country. Even the most gentle pet is capable of joining a pack and contributing to citizen fear and costly destruction of property -- including livestock. Unfortunately, while the dog is judged guilty and executed, the fault is with the pet owner who fails to obey the animal control law.

In cases we have investigated, town officials argued that they had no alternative but to shoot the dogs, that they were overrun with dog packs and could not afford to institute an animal control program.

In every town or city where special ordinances for shooting dogs were passed, however, we found an existing animal control ordinance. One key element was missing: enforcement. The towns generally had no designated animal control officers. The towns simply declared an "open season" day on dogs once or twice a year.

This approach is not only irresponsible as an animal control program, but is dangerous and, in most states, probably illegal. Virtually every state prohibits the unnecessary killing of dogs, and shooting dogs as a routine method of animal control is unnecessary.

There is also great danger in the shooting of dogs in any community. There is the obvious danger to citizens from stray bullets. And the destruction of a pet could place town officials in a position of civil liability for destroying personal property, especially when alternatives to the shooting are available.

There can also be adverse public reaction to control by shooting, although this is often considered unimportant to town officials. And the seemingly legal sanction of the shootings may incorrectly lead citizens of the area to believe that they too may legally shoot loose dogs.

The time has come for all communities, regardless of size, to establish effective, responsible animal regulation programs.
Pets and traps

A

Animal trapping is in the news, with state and local trapping reform legislation enacted or pending in several locations.

Trapping becomes an issue for the shelter staff particularly when you are called to rescue dogs, cats and other “non-target” animals from traps.

Veterinarian John Hayes of Marlboro, MD, advises shelters that receive or rescue a pet caught in a trap to remove the trap quickly but with caution -- the trapped animal is hurt and frightened and may bite.

If a limb is in the trap for 30 minutes or more, gangrene can occur. Hayes says a veterinarian should be called in quickly to determine if the animal can be saved and give the necessary treatment. A small amount of water or food can be offered to the animal, depending on its condition.

Hayes urges shelters to make every effort to locate the pet’s owner, and not automatically euthanize the animal. In many cases, the pet can be saved, and the owner should be given the opportunity to request treatment.

Hayes, an advocate of strict trapping regulation, points out that leghold trapping equipment is too readily available to youngsters and unlicensed adults without supervision. He also stresses that the danger of pets stumbling into traps is another reason for practicing responsible pet ownership and keeping pets under control.

Metcalf-Hatch repealed

New York Governor Hugh Carey has signed into law the repeal of the Metcalf-Hatch Act. The act, passed in 1952, required shelters and pounds to release unwanted dogs and cats to laboratories.

Such pound seizure laws have a negative effect on animal control programs, since pet owners generally will abandon an animal rather than have it used for research. Several New York humane societies gave up city and county animal control contracts rather than be forced to release animals to laboratories. Credit for the repeal goes to the Coalition to Abolish Metcalf-Hatch, made up of local and national animal welfare organizations, including The HSUS.

Laws similar to Metcalf-Hatch exist in other states including Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Iowa, Oklahoma, Utah and Illinois. Eight states prohibit pound seizure and the rest allow the individual shelters to decide.

Because of the adverse effect on animal control -- and since shelter animals with uncertain medical backgrounds make unreliable test subjects, anyway -- The HSUS opposes laws forcing shelters and pounds to give surplus animals to research facilities.

Workshops

Three HSUS Animal Control Workshops will be held this fall:

September 7-8 - Inn at the Quay, Vancouver, Washington. Co-sponsored by Greenhill Humane Society. For complete details, contact Charlene Drennon, Director The HSUS West Coast Regional Office, 1713 J St., Suite 4, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916)447-3295.


October 5-6 - "Mini-Workshop," Denver, Colorado. For complete information, contact Douglas Scott, Director, The HSUS Rocky Mountain Regional Office, 1780 S. Bellaire St., Suite 103, Denver, CO 80222, (303)759-8880.

Animal shelters should make this part of the overall public education program. Check with your local game warden on the trapping seasons in your area so you can issue warnings to pet owners. Also, pet owners should exercise care when walking their pets in the wild where traps are generally set. Finally, caution community residents about trying to handle animals caught in traps -- an animal professional should be called in whenever a trapped animal is discovered.

The HSUS is campaigning for trapping reform on the state and local levels. If your shelter has experience in dealing with pets and non-target animals caught in traps, please send your reports (with veterinarian medical reports, if possible) to Goy Hodge, "Traps," The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Some communities have banned the leghold trap entirely. If you are interested in working for such legislation in your area, you may request sample laws and other anti-trapping material from The HSUS at the address above.

The HSUS is campaigning for trapping reform on the state and local levels. If your shelter has experience in dealing with pets and non-target animals caught in traps, please send your reports (with veterinarian medical reports, if possible) to Goy Hodge, "Traps," The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Some communities have banned the leghold trap entirely. If you are interested in working for such legislation in your area, you may request sample laws and other anti-trapping material from The HSUS at the address above.

The HSUS is campaigning for trapping reform on the state and local levels. If your shelter has experience in dealing with pets and non-target animals caught in traps, please send your reports (with veterinarian medical reports, if possible) to Goy Hodge, "Traps," The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Some communities have banned the leghold trap entirely. If you are interested in working for such legislation in your area, you may request sample laws and other anti-trapping material from The HSUS at the address above.
The Fort Wayne (IN) Humane Shelter gives each new pet adopter from previous landlords. HSHV also maintains a housing referral service for renters with pets. (HSHV, 3100 Cherry Hill Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105) ...

The Superior Court in the county confirms the appointment after a review of the appointee's qualifications and a fingerprint check by the Department of Justice. The County Clerk then records the appointment, which is valid for three years. Humane officers should carry identification at all times to avoid any question of their authority to enforce the law.

Shelters can check with their local pet food distributor about food sacks and other items to include in adoption packages. (Fort Wayne Humane Shelter, 2225 Dwenger Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN 46803) ...

The Sacramento SPCA has worked out a program with the local American Red Cross office to provide temporary homes for animals during emergencies. If a flood or fire destroys homes, any pets involved will be housed with volunteer foster parents. Foster parents are already providing temporary care for animals recovering from injury or illness. (Sacramento SPCA, 2117 Front St., Sacramento, CA 95818) ...

Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley has ordered the city animal control officers not to carry handcuffs any longer. The order came after an area woman complained of being "manhandled and handcuffed" by officers. Officers have been carrying handcuffs in Los Angeles for two years, and the cuffs have been criticized by some officials and residents as contributing to confrontations with the public. Bradley is quoted as saying in the order letter that the city should "encourage the attitude by staff and public alike that the department is a humane service of the city."

Pets-Supplies-Marketing Magazine reports the pet industry's total sales in 1978 as $5,459 Billion. The largest growth over previous years was in bird and bird product sales, the slowest in fish sales. Cat and cat product sales are growing faster than dog sales; PSM attributes this to urbanization and more married women entering the workforce, making the litter-trained cat a more desirable pet. (PSM, 1 E. 1st St., Duluth, MN 55802) ...

Shelters receive many former pets because landlords refused to allow them in rental units. Recognizing that landlords must protect themselves from possible extensive property damage by pets (or people), Humane Society of Huron Valley (MI) is asking area landlords to allow pet tenants on these conditions: the pet must be sterilized (eliminating many behavior problems), wear an ID tag, have a regular veterinarian and bring references from previous landlords. HHSV also maintains a housing referral service for renters with pets. (HHSV, 3100 Cherry Hill Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105) ...

Shelters can check with their local pet food distributor about food sacks and other items to include in adoption packages. (Fort Wayne Humane Shelter, 2225 Dwenger Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN 46803) ...

And finally, eight states have now outlawed the use of the high altitude decompression chamber for animal euthanasia: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Connecticut and Virginia.

HSUS field staff members report a growing interest throughout the country in stopping the use of the decompression chamber in favor of alternate methods of euthanasia. A detailed report on "Why The HSUS is Opposed to the Use of the High Altitude Decompression Chamber for Animal Euthanasia" is available for 50¢ from The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037. SHELTER SENSE urges all interested persons to read this report. And The HSUS will gladly assist any organization in switching from decompression to an alternate euthanasia method.
Cages can be wiped dry with a clean sponge. Drains and gutters should be cleaned and disinfected daily also, since they collect hair and attract insects.

The shelter should be cleaned daily and disinfected a minimum of three times a week. Disinfect cages when animals are permanently removed before new animals come in. Also, remember to apply disinfectant on the cage doors and gates where animals tend to put their noses.

After the daily cleaning, pick up feces from dog runs and cat litter boxes throughout the day. Cages for puppies and small dogs can be lined with shredded newspaper which absorbs waste and can easily be discarded when soiled. Some shelters have purchased paper shredders for this purpose -- one group uses shredded paper from the local tax office!

You may wish to invest in a commercial-size "wet and dry" vacuum cleaner to help keep hair and dust from accumulating and to remove water from runs and floors.

Disinfection is essential to control animal disease in the shelter. One of the diseases you must reckon with is canine parvovirus -- a variant of feline panleukopenia (FPL) or cat distemper. Symptoms are vomiting and diarrhea, and reportedly, the best treatment is large doses of fluid and antibiotics.

Dr. Frederick Scott of Cornell has written to The HSUS that "the proper use of disinfectants in shelters can greatly reduce the overall population of viruses in the shelter." Cornell has tested the effects of various disinfectants on feline coronavirus. One of the disinfectants most effective against FPL, feline calicivirus (FCV) and feline viral rhinotracheitis (herpesvirus or FVR) was Clorox (sodium hypochlorite), available at supermarkets or janitorial supply houses, diluted with water in a 1-32 solution. Sodium hypochlorite is a strong disinfectant when used on clean surfaces. It is generally non-toxic to tissue and is inexpensive.

Dr. Scott comments that FPL is the most stable of viruses and that disinfectants effective against FPL will be effective against all viruses that come into shelters.

The disinfectant you choose should be able to kill disease germs within 10 minutes of contact. In addition to destroying viruses, many disinfectants also help control fungus growth.

It is essential to use disinfectants according to the instructions from manufacturers. Using a stronger solution of disinfectant than is recommended will not be more effective. Instead, it can be a skin irritant for shelter workers and to the animals, and can even corrode shelter cages.

Disinfectant is expensive -- don't waste money by using a stronger solution of it than is recommended. Disinfectant can be affected by the "hardness" of the water, and the manufacturers' instructions will help you make any necessary adjustments in the solution according to your local water supply.

The animals in your care deserve the best possible chance to get a good home. By keeping the shelter sanitary, you can ensure their good health while you make the shelter a more appealing place for potential adopters.

And you and your co-workers deserve a clean and pleasant workplace. A regular sanitation program will accomplish that, too.

(Products mentioned above are included as an information service to our readers; The HSUS, by policy, does not endorse commercial products.)

**Materials**

**Living With Pets**

Pet Food Institute sponsors Responsible Pet Care Week, to be observed this year September 16-22. PFI has these materials available: idea book for organizations with suggestions on events and publicity (free); responsible pet ownership poster (free); brochure on choosing a pet (up to 1000 copies free); youth education kit for grades 5 and 6, titled "Living With Pets," (free to teachers); a filmstrip titled "A Pet is a Special Friend" ($5).

These materials should be ordered as quickly as possible from Pet Food Institute, 1101 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036.

"Pet Tails" is a 14-minute film promoting humane pet care and responsible pet ownership. Produced by the City of Milwaukee Health Department, the film is directed to younger children but has been shown to high school audiences with success.

"Pet Tails" is available for purchase from Sorgel-Lee-Riordan, Inc., 205 West Highland Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53203. The film is $140 (plus $1.50 for shipping), 3/4" videocassette is $85, and Beta cassette and VHS cassette are $65 (all plus $1.25 for shipping).

Products International Company of Phoenix, AZ, will send on request samples of their shelter products: K9 Tab Bands for animal identification, waterproof cage cards and cage holders. For samples, prices and ordering information, write PIC, 2520 W. Holly St., Phoenix, AZ 85009. (Please note that SHELTER SENSE does not endorse any commercial products, but offers this information as a service to our readers.)
Animal Control Academy opens

SHELTER SENSE is pleased to announce the opening of The Animal Control Academy in Tuscaloosa, AL. The Academy is a cooperative program of The HSUS and the University of Alabama under Dr. Bill Bryan, Dean, Division of Continuing Education.

The program combines the teaching facilities and learning atmosphere of the University with the animal control expertise of The HSUS and its individual staff members.

The Academy will provide in-depth training and certification in the field of animal control. Participants will learn about new techniques and programs and will share problems and solutions with other animal control professionals. The topics range from the animal control ordinance to the barking dog, from identifying dog breeds to dealing with an irate pet owner.

Participants will be certified as Animal Control Professionals, Euthanasia Technicians or Education Resource Persons when they successfully complete the appropriate sessions. The 3-day sessions for Euthanasia Technicians and Education Resource Persons will begin early in 1980.

Animal Control Certification will open this September, with a 100-hour program offered in four 3-day sessions: A, B, C, and D. The schedule allows participants to take the entire 100 hours in two consecutive weeks or to take the sessions individually as time permits. The 1979 schedule is:

- October 22, 23, 24: Session A (25 hrs.) first half of session
- October 25, 26, 27: Session B (25 hrs.) second half of session
- December 3, 4, 5: Session A (repeat) first half of session
- December 6, 7, 8: Session B (repeat) second half of session
- Early 1980: Sessions A, B, C, D total program in two weeks

The Academy fees are $50 for one 3-day session, $100 for two consecutive 3-day sessions and $200 for the total 2-week program. Lodging is available at an area hotel for $4.50 per night, double occupancy. Meals are available for $9 a day (two meals at the hotel for $6, lunch at the University for $3).

If you have any questions about the Academy or wish to reserve a place in the 1979 schedule, contact Academy Director Hurt "Bill" Smith, 4831 Springhill Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35405, or telephone (205)533-8665.

Academy Director Hurt "Bill" Smith made the following comments recently concerning the opening of the Academy:

Animal control agents have realized that our profession can be better if we make it so. And the place to start is between our own two ears. Our attitude -- that's first!

We cannot convince others that we are professionals unless we believe it ourselves. We must resolve to do our work in such a way that the public will become aware that we are a service agency, that we have taken our place alongside other community service agencies such as fire and police departments, and that we are solving problems.

We must resolve: to deal respectfully with citizens who resent us instead of accepting responsibility for pet overpopulation themselves; to encourage co-workers in animal control to strive for professionalism; to make life better for the animals with which we are entrusted as well as for the people in our communities; and, finally, to educate the public and increase their understanding of the animal problem as a result of human irresponsibility.

Is Animal Control an "honorable profession?" You bet it is -- if we make it so!

Job announcements

WANTED - Shelter supervisor for humane society in Gainesville, GA, growing city in foothills of northern Georgia mountains, to start September 1. Will deal with all aspects of humane society work. Candidate with veterinary technician background preferred, but experience will be the major factor in choice. Send resume to Hall County Humane Society, 875 Ridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30501 (attn: Stan Tillman) or phone (404)532-6617.

WANTED - Manager to improve overall program at animal shelter in Central New Jersey. Background in animal sheltering preferred. Salary will be based on experience. Send resumes to Victor Russomanno, 19 Wooley Pl., W. Long Branch, NJ 07764.

WANTED - Executive director for recently organized humane society. Duties to include fund raising, public relations, contract negotiations and administration. Send resume and salary requirements to Dr. LeRoy Neitzel, 413 N. Race St., Urbana, IL 61801.
Survey results

SHelter SENSE has received 33 completed surveys from the April issue.
Readers were asked to estimate the total number of dogs and cats in their areas; these estimates ranged in general from 20% to 50% of the human population in the area. Numbers of licensed dogs ranged from 30% to 45% of the total number of animals.
Most of the responding shelters handle more dogs than cats, but a higher percentage of the cats are being euthanized.
Euthanasia rates for dogs range from 65-84% of the total dogs handled -- for cats 70-94%.
Twenty-eight respondents report sterilization of adopted animals, and nine report this requirement is part of the local ordinance. From the statistics supplied, this requirement does not appear to reduce the number of animals adopted.
Eighteen of the respondents report lower license fees for neutered animals; fifteen report higher fees for repeated violations of the ordinance.

The Iowa City (IA) Animal Shelter included with the survey a chart on trends in impoundments, animal complaints, and bite incidents for 1971. Shelter Director Beverly Horton credits the significant decrease in dog complaints to an active patrol and law enforcement program.
The first violation, and shelter records show that a large part of the impoundment revenues are coming from repeat violators.
The number of dogs turned in by owners is decreasing, and the shelter credits this to a public education program on pet owner responsibility. Increasing cat complaints have been curbed by pet owner education and the availability of humane traps.
Bites continue to be a problem but a licensing-rabies vaccination program scheduled for 1980 is expected to reduce the need for anti-rabies treatments as a result of bites. (Iowa City Animal Shelter, 410 E. Washington, Iowa City, IA 52240)

This sampling will help SHelter SENSE meet the needs of our readers, and we thank those who took the time to return the survey. If you have not responded to the survey in the April issue, please complete and return it to SHelter SENSE, The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Prove your love for your dog by being a responsible pet owner and following these guidelines from The Humane Society of the United States:

1. Keep your dog on your property at all times, except when walking him or her on a leash.
2. Buy a dog license, as required by your local government.
3. Get an identification tag with your address and phone number, and keep it on your dog at all times.
4. Have your dog vaccinated against rabies and distemper.

Prepare by The Humane Society of the United States for animal welfare groups and animal control agencies.
In order to put "teeth" into your animal control program, your community should have a sound animal control ordinance. A comprehensive ordinance gives you the authority to do what is necessary to solve long-range animal problems. It demonstrates to the community that responsible pet ownership is the law and cannot be ignored. The animal control ordinance should penalize the owner rather than the animal when the animal is allowed to roam, breed and create problems.

The ordinance should:

---- Allow animal control officers to issue citations to violators in lieu of impounding the animal;
---- Provide lower license fees for neutered animals;
---- Require animals adopted from shelters to be sterilized;
---- Prohibit keeping wild animals as pets;
---- Provide for enforcement of laws against cruelty to and abandonment of animals;
---- Regulate pet shops, kennels, guard dog businesses, animal exhibits and other commercial animal facilities;
---- Require licensing of cats.

It may not be easy to get these provisions passed by your city or county government, because animal control is often low on the municipal priority list. An article in a recent issue of The American City and County magazine said, "Too many local officials simply view the problem as unsolved. They have the impression that this 'nuisance' will plague them regardless of how much expertise or money is put into its solution."

You cannot assume that sound legislation will be passed because it is needed from the point of view of your agency or organization. You must demonstrate that the entire community has a stake in strengthening the law.

First, prepare a fact sheet on the extent of animal control problems in your area. How much does it cost the community to handle the surplus of pets?

Talk to local people to find out what the animal-related problems are. What are the statistics on dog bites in your area? How many strays does the school system find on school grounds? How many confrontations do mail carriers have with unrestrained pets?

How much time is spent collecting trash from cans overturned by stray dogs? How many claims do area insurance agents receive as a result of damage caused by animals? Try to obtain specific facts and figures, dates and places.

When you have identified how animal overpopulation is affecting your specific community, you can draft an ordinance that will address your local problems. (The HSUS offers a model ordinance with our recommended basic provisions that you can adapt to your local needs. Send $1 to The HSUS, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC, 20037, and ask for "Responsible Animal Regulation").

Then you should arrange an appointment with one member of the city council or county commission -- a member whose record indicates an interest in environmental issues. With your fact sheet in hand, you can convince the member that the ordinance warrants a hearing before the council or commission.

When a hearing is scheduled, be prepared again with complete facts and figures on how much the animal overpopulation problem is costing the community. Arrange for testimony from responsible persons who are significantly affected by animal problems. Try to anticipate the objections that may come up during the hearing and be prepared to answer them. The hearing is your opportunity to present your case courteously but firmly and to urge that the ordinance be passed and put into effect.

The ordinance in Stevens Pt., WI, was amended in 1978 to require that adopted pets be sterilized and that commercial animal facilities meet specified animal care standards. Portage County Humane Society has the animal control contract and campaigned for the amendments. Shelter manager Kathy Simonis says the amendments were passed because the society was thoroughly prepared at the hearing before the city council. The society showed that more community funding would be needed for expanded shelter facilities in the future if a population control program did not begin now.

Simonis recommends that animal agencies trying to upgrade ordinances get in touch with communities of the same size to compare problems and solutions (Stevens Point has about 30,000 people). She also notes the importance of speaking to the needs of the community. Rural dwellers are not as moved by the need for...
animal protection as urban pet owners, but the rural community will respond to the need to restrain dogs and cats for disease control and livestock protection.

In Easton, MD, the Talbot County Humane Society successfully worked for passage of new provisions in the county law -- a sterilization requirement for adopted animals, anti-cruelty provisions and a requirement that female pets in heat be confined. Some of these are already in the state law, but their being in the county law means easier enforcement.

Society shelter manager Patricia Roberts reports that area state attorneys have been reluctant to go to court on animal cases. Now violators can be given a summons, plead guilty and pay the fine without a court case being necessary.

The Humane Society of Manatee County in Bradenton, FL, is campaigning for an upgraded ordinance; however, county officials have been reluctant to commit funds to enforcement since they believe the local SPCA shelter should handle the problem.

Society president Trudy Pratt says the commissioners admit that animal problems are among the most common citizen complaints yet the animal ordinance "is on the bottom of the list along with sanitation and garbage disposal."

Pratt says the proposed ordinance will be self-supporting with license, vaccination and adoption fees and violation fines sustaining a humane animal control program.

The ordinance would require the county to set up an animal advisory board, appoint a cruelty investigator with enforcement powers, and conduct a local census of dogs and cats to plan a licensing program.

A sound animal control law can help you deal with animal-related problems in a more professional manner. But in order to get effective laws passed, you must approach the task professionally to gain the attention and respect of your local legislative body.

Your efforts now will pay off in a better animal program for the entire community that will protect animals and people!