



Animal Care & The Law

Laws relating to welfare of animals ensure that animals are treated humanely and live without undue suffering.

The laws described in this pamphlet are some of the general laws relating to humane treatment and responsible care of pets, and animals in general. Laws specific to livestock are not explained in this pamphlet.

ENFORCEMENT

- London Area Inspectors and Agents of the London Humane Society's Investigations Department are appointed to enforce laws related to the welfare of animals.
- Inspectors and Agents have the powers of a police officer for the purpose of enforcement of the Ontario SPCA Act and other laws pertaining to the welfare of, or the prevention of cruelty to, animals.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

The Criminal Code of Canada has several sections that prohibit cruelty to animals and require guardians or custodians of animals to provide proper animal care. (Please check the criminal code for complete sections.)

The Criminal Code requires:

Guardians or custodians of animals to provide suitable and adequate food, water, shelter, and care for all animals

The Criminal Code prohibits:

- Wilfully causing unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal
- Wilfully poisoning, or placing poison in an area a domestic animal can obtain the poison
- Causing injury to an animal while it is being transported
- Fighting or baiting an animal
- Abandoning an animal in distress
- The wilful (or without lawful excuse) killing or injuring an animal owned by someone else

The Criminal Code allows for fines of up to \$10,000 and/or 18 months imprisonment for a person who is convicted of an offence. The judge may also prohibit the person from owning animals for life if convicted.



The Responsibility Is Yours



Every one who commits an offence under subsection (1) is guilty of

- an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than five years; or
- an offence punishable on summary conviction and liable to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term of not more than eighteen months or to both.

Order of prohibition or restitution

447.1 (1) The court may, in addition to any other sentence that it may impose under subsection 44(2), 445(2), 445.1(2), 446(2) or 447(2),

- make an order prohibiting the accused from owning, having the custody or control of or residing in the same premises as an animal or a bird during any period that the court considers appropriate but, in the case of a second or subsequent offence, for a minimum of five years; and
- on application of the Attorney General or on its own motion, order that the accused pay to a person or an organization that has taken care of an animal or a bird as a result of the commission of the offence the reasonable costs that the person or organization incurred in respect of the animal or bird, if the costs are readily ascertainable.

ANIMAL IN DISTRESS

The Ontario SPCA Act is a provincial law that allows Inspectors and Agents to take the necessary steps to relieve an animal in distress.



"Distress" means the state of being in need of proper care, water, food, or shelter or being injured, sick or in pain or suffering, being abused or subject to undue or unnecessary hardship, privation or neglect.

The Ontario SPCA Act allows Inspectors and Agents to:

- Issue an Order requiring an animal to be taken to a veterinarian, or take the necessary steps to relieve an animal in distress
- Remove an animal if it is in distress, if the owner cannot be found, if an Order is not complied with, or if a veterinarian authorizes the removal
- Enter property without a warrant if an animal is observed in distress or to check if an Order has been complied with
- Make the owner liable for the costs the Society incurs in removing an animal
- Euthanasia of an animal if a veterinarian states it cannot live without enduring undue suffering and feels euthanasia is the most humane course of action.

VACCINATIONS

In London-Middlesex regulations require every dog & cat to be vaccinated against rabies, every year, even if your pet does not leave your house or yard. Wildlife such as bats, skunks, foxes, and raccoons could easily transmit the disease to your pets. There is no cure for rabies. A fine may result if your pet is found not vaccinated against rabies.

The London Humane Society recommends that you take your pet to a veterinarian once a year for a full set of vaccinations and a check up. Many other diseases can also be prevented if your animal is vaccinated.

ANIMAL CONTROL /LICENSING

Municipalities have laws relating to licensing and prohibiting the running at large of animals. If you own a dog or a cat, a licence or identification should at all times be on your pet. This ensures that if your pet is lost it can successfully be reunited with you. Please contact your local municipality for more information on local by-laws.



Keep your dog or cat on a leash or under control at all times whenever you take him/her outside for exercise. This will protect your pet from injuries caused by cars and other animals, from disease and theft, and will prevent him/her from being a public nuisance.

WHO TO CALL

Cruelty, neglect, and abandonment in Middlesex County:
London Humane Society / 519-451-0630 Ext.225



Stray animals, injured wildlife, licensing, and by-law violations (London ONLY) 24-hour emergency service:
London Animal Care Centre / 519-685-1330

Rabies quarantine and inspection Middlesex County:
Middlesex-London Health Unit / 519-663-5317

Rabies quarantine and inspection Elgin County:
St. Thomas-Elgin Health Unit / 519-631-9900

Poaching, illegal hunting and fishing, endangered species:

Ministry of Natural Resources / 519-773-9241

Animal transportation enforcement and inquiries regarding serious illness and disease:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency / 519-645-4025

Complaints regarding municipal pounds, livestock sales, and slaughter houses; general inquiries regarding livestock:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Affairs (OMAF) / 519-473-6480

Stray Animals Outside London:

Your local municipal office, Animal Control Office, or call London Humane Society for referral if needed

Barking dogs:

City of London By-Law Enforcement / 519-661-4660

Offences relating to firearms and animals:

London Police / 519-661-5670

O.P.P. / 1-800-265-7191

St. Thomas Police / 519-631-1330

Strathroy-Caradoc Police / 519-245-1250

This pamphlet is prepared for information purposes only. For an accurate reference to sections of the laws described, please check the most current editions of the Revised Statutes of Canada, the Revised Statutes of Ontario and your local municipal by-laws.

