

1999 - 2000
Ventura County Grand Jury Report
Ventura County Department of Animal Regulation

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Background

The Ventura County Grand Jury received a citizen's complaint regarding the disposal of dead animals at the Ventura County Department of Animal Regulation facility located at the Camarillo Airport.

Methodology

The Ventura County Grand Jury made an unannounced visit to the Department of Animal Regulation facility on May 21, 2001.

Findings

- F-1. Persons bringing in dead animals are directed to drive around to the back of the facility where a refrigerated room is located next to the euthanasia building. They are instructed to place deceased animals in the 55-gallon drums stored in the refrigerated room.
- F-2. The Animal Regulation Department contracts with a Redding company for rendering services. The company replaces the 55-gallon drums weekly.
- F-3. Cages were clean and the animals appeared well cared for. Toys were available in the cages of some animals.
- F-4. Tags on the cages denoted the status of the animal and gave a profile when available.
- F-5. The facility is spacious with accommodations for 100 animal cages.
- F-6. The facility is equipped with a barn, adjustable corrals for larger animals, and pens for smaller barnyard animals.
- F-7. There is a veterinary clinic equipped for emergency surgery with a full time veterinarian and two technicians.
- F-8. The current x-ray machine is broken and beyond repair. Proposed funding appears as an item on the county's increment 2 budget, page 56A, fund no: 0001 budget unit 4600, item #2.
- F-9. The facility has a quarantine section for animals.
- F-10. The site is equipped with a dolphin pool for stabilizing injured or sick marine animals before sending them to a clinical aquarium facility.
- F-11. In case of power outages or disasters, the site is equipped with a portable generator. The generator is equipped with wheels, which makes it more flexible in responding to the department's needs.

- F-12. Revenue sources include impound, boarding and animal licensing fees. All cities, except the City of Thousand Oaks, contract with the Ventura County Department of Animal Regulation for services. The contracting cities provide a large percentage of the necessary revenue for the department.
- F-13. An independent spay and neutering clinic is set up in a trailer on the premises. The contract veterinarian charges a fee for these services, which is included in the adoption fee. Upon adoption, the spay/neutering is done that evening and the animal is available to take home the next day.
- F-14. A volunteer program is in place, to assist in presenting programs to schools and organizations. This program's goals are to reduce the number of strays or abandoned animals and to educate the public on animal care.
- F-15. A staff of 55 is now serving a population of 756,501 in 2001, compared to a staff of 65 serving a population of 653,509 in 1989.

Conclusions

- C-1. The Ventura County Department of Animal Regulation is well run.
- C-2. The staff appears to be committed to good care for the animals.
- C-3. Although a sad and unpleasant task, the disposal of dead animals is operated as efficiently and humanely as possible.
- C-4. The x-ray machine is vital to the daily operation of the veterinary clinic and needs to be replaced as soon as possible.

Recommendations

- R-1. The funding for a new x-ray machine should be approved for the veterinary clinic. (F-8, C-4)

Commendation

The Ventura County Department of Animal Regulation is to be commended for their commitment to the center.

Responses Required

CEO's Office (R-1)

Board of Supervisors (R-1)