

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*1. Shelter Facilities
& Maintenance*

1. Shelter Facilities & Maintenance

General Overview

Santa Barbara County Animal Services (SBCAS) consists of three facilities throughout the 3,789 square mile county in the following locations:

- 5743 Overpass Road, Goleta,
- 548 West Foster Road, Santa Maria, and
- 1501 West Central Avenue, Lompoc.

Each facility is unique in size and accessibility and the distance between the facilities is considerable, with Santa Maria and Lompoc the closest to one another at 21 miles. At the Santa Barbara location there is one area of county land that is occupied by a partner organizations which was not extensively reviewed.

1.1 BUILDING EXTERIOR, GROUNDS AND LANDSCAPING

Observations:

The buildings and grounds at each of the SBCAS locations were well kept and maintained. Especially in the front and public facing areas, the grounds and landscaping were neat and aesthetically pleasing, and the vegetation was lush and attractive. Each of the facilities stored cages, cleaning chemicals and other miscellaneous items in outdoor and rear facing areas, as detailed below.

Santa Barbara

The team was informed that the main building was erected in the 1940s, the hexagonal building in the 1960s and the trailer where the Animal Shelter Assistance Program (ASAP) is located was erected in the early 2000s. The main dog kennel located adjacent to the main building was renovated in 2009. The paved walkways between the buildings and throughout the grounds were free and clear of debris and were observed being washed down during the site visit. The pathways inside the gated area where rabbits were housed were mulch covered ground.

A paved area behind the facility was accessible to vehicles between the main building and the ASAP building. A high chain link gate enclosed the area. Inside and to the left were two chain link dog kennels that were used by ACOs. Within this area were several sheds, two large metal, portable storage units, a double door stainless steel refrigerator and a walk-in freezer. The refrigerator and sheds were utilized by Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter (BUNS) and the sheds contained hay for the rabbits and PVC pipes and other spare parts, presumably for maintaining the rabbit housing areas. Outside the front of the shed holding PVC pipes





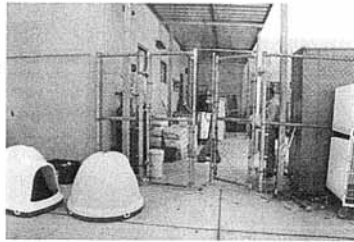
were several garbage bins also filled with PVC pipes, and lumber and other miscellaneous debris was stacked and leaning on the right of the shed. Left of the shed that stored hay were several black garbage bags piled that BUNS volunteers told the team were filled with compost that was hauled once a week to local farmers. Between the BUNS sheds and dog and cat food storage unit were stacks of cages and traps, some covered by blue tarps. To the right of the walk-in freezer were several barrels holding TripleTwo (cleaner/disinfectant), covered by a lean-to roof. Scattered

around the area were several hand trucks.

Landscaping was provided by a private company contracted by the county that came once a week. It was brought to the team's attention that the grounds were inundated with gopher holes that posed potential tripping hazards to the staff, volunteers and patrons.

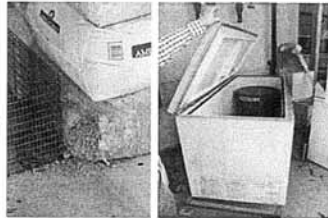
Santa Maria

The Santa Maria building was erected in 2005 by the county and is the largest and newest of the three facilities. Less than ten years in use, the facility was visibly and functionally fitting. The single level, tan structure was attractive and inviting. The paved walkways at the front of and between the buildings were free and clear of debris.



At the rear of the building was a shed where rabbits were housed, a rabbit play yard in front of the shed with a sign that read the "Rabbit Resort." Across the path from the rabbit area were several chain link enclosures where the chickens were housed. Four dog play yards occupied the land across the parameter of the building beyond this area. Each of these areas were in good condition and appeared to be well kept.

The Santa Maria location had a large, secured parking area to the right of the facility. The parking lot was surrounded by a tall chain link fence. The parking area was nicely paved and there were very few vehicles parked there during the site visit. A horse trailer, an emergency response trailer, and the Project PetSafe trailer were parked at the rear of the parking lot and facility. Inside the parking lot at the rear along the fence were a few banks of old, cat cages and an old refrigerator. A couple of sheds, a storage unit and framed tarps stored items on the other side of the chain link fence. Within a gated area nearer to the building were scattered various items, seemingly this was used as overflow storage. This area was poorly maintained and cluttered with traps, cages, carriers, an old freezer, oxygen tanks, animal bedding



and dog igloos. Some stacks of crates had standing water, the small animal bedding chips had been infiltrated presumably by rodents and the deep freezer was grimy and had an empty biohazard can inside. Landscaping was provided and arranged by the county and the grounds and landscaping were neat and aesthetically pleasing.

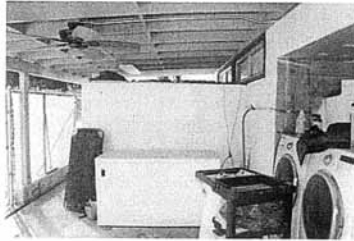
Lompoc

The Lompoc facility was renovated in 2013 and the team was told that during the 8 month renovations the operation continued in a trailer at the front of the structure. The renovations did not include remodeling or replacing the dog kennel. The walkways and areas around the throughout the facility were free and clear of debris and in good condition.



At the rear of the building was a shed used for storage, a shed where rabbits were housed, and a rabbit play yard in front of the shed. Next to the rabbit area were several enclosures where the chickens were housed. A couple of meet-and-greet yards with cinder block and chain link fences occupied the area adjacent to the dog kennel on the left side of the building, when facing the building. Dog play yards occupied the land on the opposite side of the building, the right when facing the building. Each of these areas was in good condition and appeared to be well kept.

There was a concrete padded area with a roof overhang on the right side of the building where miscellaneous items were kept, such as the deep freeze used for animal remains, an extra washer and dryer and carts utilized during cleaning. Some items cluttered the tops of the washer and dryer and a few miscellaneous items were placed there: a stretcher, a stainless steel bucket, an orange extension cord, and a blanket were piled atop the run that was formerly a night drop area.



The team was told that volunteers provide most of the landscaping and basic maintenance at the Lompoc location.

Recommendations

- SBCAS and General Services are commended for their superb landscaping.
- Clean, de-clutter and functionally organize all outdoor areas of the facilities.
 - Assign responsibility and uphold accountability to manager to maintain these areas in a manner that minimizes accumulation of debris.
- Sort and recycle, donate, sell or throw away any items currently kept outside and not in use or have an anticipated use as contingency.
 - Host two clean-up weekends per year to keep areas from re-cluttering. Engage community, volunteers, and schools in this event.
- Consider only humane alternatives to controlling the gopher problem at the Santa Barbara loca-



tion. Underground fencing may be the best technique to eliminating their presence in the lawn at the front left of the property.¹

Discussion:

Animal services facilities receive a lot of wear and tear and foot traffic by humans and animals. The responsibilities that animal services facilities carry out can be hard on the buildings and grounds they occupy and it is of utmost importance that they are maintained at an outstanding level on a very regular basis.

First impressions are lasting, and as visitors approach SBCAS, the impression they receive should be warm, friendly, and inviting. The facilities and grounds should be maintained so that they are attractive and welcoming to the public. The external maintenance levels of the physical building itself can be, or can appear to be, reflective of the strength and level of care of the internal programs. This can also be said for private and rear facing areas of facilities. Staff and volunteers deserve to work in clean and orderly environments and will perform their duties more effectively and with care if the surroundings are attractive and pleasant.

Clutter, piled debris and disorganized work spaces can pose hazards to employees, volunteers and shelter residents which can result in injuries. In addition, areas that are difficult to clean and disinfect can propagate infectious diseases and attract rodents and insects that can carry zoonotic diseases. The empty freezers, if unused and kept should have the doors removed.

Controlling clutter is the law. OSHA section 1910.22(a)(1) states: "All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition."

Clutter is the first thing OSHA compliance officers see when they walk in your door. In fact, several hundred citations are issued each year.

Appendix 1.A: Housekeeping checklist

1.2 EXTERNAL AND DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

Observations:

Signage maintenance was reported to be the responsibility of the county, but animal services employees were responsible for noting what signage might be needed and requesting the signage. Each of the facilities was easily found with GPS technology.



There was no consistent, branded directional or external signage noted.

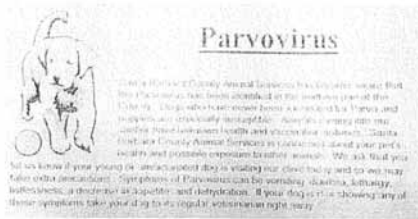
¹ <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7433.html>

Santa Barbara

Driving from N Patterson Road toward Overpass Road, there was signage at the corner of Overpass Road and S Patterson Road. The signs were printed on both sides. A faded blue sign read: "Co. Animal Shelter and Humane Society and the other read *Animal Shelter Assistance Program, K-9 Pals, and Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter.*" Overpass Road twisted and turned and approximately half way from S Patterson Road and SBCAS, another sign with address numbers 5399, read: "*Humane Society, Education Center and County Stray Animal Shelter.*" In a patch of grass on the left of the driveway into the parking lot was a sign that read: "*Santa Barbara County Animal Services*" and the chain link fence behind the sign had several banners: two for Science Diet and one for BUNS. The signage on the building near the entry doors included operating hours, where to find animals within the facility, and a welcome sign. Two encased bulletin boards included a note on volunteering, adopting and fostering and the other was used by BUNS and included photos of rabbits and guinea pigs for adoption. There was no signage or instructions for after-hours emergencies at the entrance of the facility.

Santa Maria

The team did not see signage for the facility until they turned from Orcutt Expressway, left onto West Foster Road. Fastened to a chain link fence at the driveway were two signs, one was the SBCAS-branded sign seen at each of the locations that read: "*Santa Barbara County Animal Services*" and the other had a large red arrow and read: "*Animal Shelter.*" A white sign in front of the parking lot of the building read: "*Santa Maria Animal Center, Santa Barbara County Animal Services,*" that had a different logo than the sign seen at the other locations. The building had signage along the front at each doorway that read: "*Education Center, Animal House the Wendy McCaw Animal Adoption Center, Animal Drop Off, and Animal Care Foundation Spay and Neuter Clinic.*" County signage indicating that it is illegal to abandon your animal in English and Spanish was posted under the "*Animal Drop Off*" text. To the right of the Animal Drop Off doorway and to the left of the Clinic Entrance doorway was a large glass window that had several signs posted. The signage ranged from the vaccine clinic schedule and prices of vaccines to information about licensing. An Idexx box was mounted to the Clinic Entrance doorway at eye level and a sign to the right of the door noted, "*No emergency care is available at this facility,*" and it provided information for where to go for emergency care. At the lobby entrance there were two laminated signs on the doors. On the left, a sign with the hours, and on the right a sign that read, "*Warning Parvovirus Outbreak, Keep your puppy off the ground if the dog is under 1 year of age, or the dog has not been fully vaccinated against parvo, An alarming number of parvovirus cases are being reported in the Santa Maria area, If your puppy or dog is exhibiting any signs of illness, please consult your veterinarian, Parvovirus is most commonly seen in young puppies but can effect an unvaccinated dog of any age.*" There was no date on the sign or an indication of whether or not the sign was meant for customers entering the facility with a puppy or if it was a warning for people who have puppies or dogs in general who may or may not be with them during their visit to the facility. The team was concerned that there was too much detail on the sign for the average person to absorb and



that it may not be entirely understood by a member of the public who may not understand for example what “fully vaccinated” means. There was also a flyer on the resource materials table titled “Parvovirus” that included more detailed information about parvovirus being identified in the northern part of the county.

Lompoc

The team did not see signage for the facility while on West Central Avenue and actually passed the facility not realizing where it was. The yellow, single level building is low and several vehicles were parked in front, concealing the signage. Once the team corrected their mistake, they turned around and parked on the unpaved area in front of the dog play yards to the right of the building. The team approached the building and noticed that there were several types of signage, all very different. The SBCAS-branded sign was posted on the left portion of the front of the building, an awning read: “La Paws,” and on the left of the parking lot, a banner fastened to a wooden fence where the garbage and recycling receptacles were kept read: “Companion Animal Placement Assistance, Welcome to the Lompoc Animal Shelter, Hours Mon-Fri 9-12:30, 1:30-4:30, Sat 10-4, During non-business hours search for a lost pet or find an adoptable pet visit Petharbor.com or Petfinder.com, CAPA Animal Shelter.” A red sign on the front door read: “OPEN, Monday thru Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Closed for lunch 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday – Closed.” The facility was therefore referred to in three ways: “La Purisima Animal Welfare Services” (“La PAWS,”), Santa Barbara County Animal Services and “Companion Animal Placement Assistance,” or “CAPA.” The team felt that the signage indicating three different organization names was confusing and would potentially perplex visitors. There was no signage or instructions for after-hours emergencies at the entrance of the facility.

Recommendations:

- Utilize consistent, branded, county approved, directional signage.
 - Consider adding the mileage to the facility.
 - Add highway signage directing patrons to the Santa Maria facility from all four directions. (Orcutt Expressway and East and West Clark Avenue and Orcutt Expressway at East and West Foster Road.)
 - Add signage on West Central Avenue in Lompoc in both directions toward the facility. Even though the facility is painted bright yellow, when the parking lot is full it is not easy for a new visitor to locate.
- Provide signage on the front door of Santa Barbara and Lompoc directing people to emergency resources when the shelter is closed. Include the names, phone numbers, and website of any relevant agencies, i.e., emergency veterinary hospitals, etc.
- Remove parvovirus signage from the front door at the Santa Maria facility unless there is a specific and current outbreak at the facility.
- Move the Idexx box from the clinic door to another location that is not on the door at eye level at the Santa Maria location. Perhaps mount it onto the building to the left or right of the same door.
- Condense the signage at the Lompoc location to reflect that it is Santa Barbara County Animal Services. There is a way that the county can reflect the work that partner or volunteer organizations do on behalf of SBCAS that does not contribute to confusion.



- All hand-made signs should be consistently logo'd, in a specified font, written in an appropriate tone, laminated and approved by a manager before being posted.

Discussion:

Exterior and directional signage is an important component to brand messaging, corporate identity and marketing. It is an essential piece to a business's overall marketing strategy. Signage should be specific, concise and easy to read from a distance.

Animal shelters are often the first place people seek when they need advice about any animal-related situation. Exterior signage should be designed and installed with the intention of welcoming and accommodating shelter visitors. Visitors should be able to find the shelter and access the service they desire simply by following signage. Visitors to animal shelters can sometimes be in distress due to an animal-related emergency or concern. Providing clear, prominent signage that immediately directs the visitor to the appropriate location will greatly enhance the level of client service.

Informational signage within the shelter should convey relevant content, in a manner that is friendly, understandable and succinct. Handmade signs are often necessary inside the shelter to direct visitors, display warnings and safety concerns, remind staff and volunteers of policies and to share valuable information. Despite the content, they always should be branded and neat. Signs can influence external perceptions of visitors, leave impressions about animal care as well as influence workplace atmosphere.

1.3 PARKING AREAS/WALKWAYS

The facility perimeter lighting was observed in daylight hours, with the exception of the Santa Barbara location, which was observed one evening and ample light appeared to be provided.

Santa Barbara

The paved parking lot provided 5 parking spaces in front of the main building, which included one designated handicap spot. Three more parking spaces were in front of the ASAP building. Emergency and fire zones were not marked, but the curb from the driveway to the side of the building were painted red. The driveway and parking lot was in good condition with the exception of some cracks, but with no visible need for repairs. Employees parked their vehicles in the parking lot of the humane society next door, or on street parking. Agency vehicles were also parked in the parking lot of the humane society next door. "No parking" was painted on the pavement in front of two dumpsters; however, during the site visit vehicles were parked there, presumably because there were not always enough spaces to accommodate visitors. The team was told that if the waste pick up was taking place when there were vehicles blocking the dumpsters, they would be signaled and given the opportunity to move the vehicles. There were three exterior lights on the front of the facility and several lights on the front of the ASAP building. There appeared to be adequate lighting for safety and security of the shelter.

Santa Maria

The paved parking lot provided 28 parking spaces in front of the main building, which included two designated handicap spots. Twelve more marked parking spaces were located within the secure parking lot where agency vehicles were parked. Emergency and fire zones were not marked. The driveway and parking lot was



in excellent condition. Employees parked their vehicles in the parking lot in front of the building or they could park in the secure lot. There were lights mounted on the front of the facility and five tall lights on around the front parking lot and four within the secure parking lot. There appeared to be adequate lighting for safety and security of the shelter.

Lompoc

The paved parking lot provided eight parking spaces in front of the main building, which included one designated handicap spot. Approximately six more vehicles could be parked in the gravel area in front of the dog play yards. Emergency and fire zones were marked and the driveway and parking lot was in good condition. During the site visit there were agency vehicles parked in one of the areas marked as “no parking.” There were four lights mounted to the building and one light on the flag pole. There were two street lights that were nearby that likely provided ample light at night.

Each facility had different areas for parking as well as different procedures for handling animal control functions and parking animal control vehicles. In all shelters, animal control vehicles were parked as space permitted at times using space commonly viewed as regular customer parking.

Field Services Parking - Santa Barbara

At the Santa Barbara shelter, during business hours, the vehicles would be pulled in directly in front of the main shelter entrance in an area not marked for parking (IMG0330, IMG0679). If needed, animal control vehicles were also parked inside the adjacent Humane Society lot. Vehicles would be pulled in to the rear gate to facilitating loading / unloading of animals or materials (IMG0649). ACOs also loaded / unloaded animals while parked in front of the shelter entering through the side gate nearest the dog kennels. After hours, vehicles were parked in the Humane Society lot which was secured by locked gates and fenced. The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.

There is an area in the rear of the shelter for ACOs to pull their vehicles to clean them directly adjacent to the temporary housing kennels for day drops.



Field Services Parking - Santa Maria

The Santa Maria facility has a secure fenced, access controlled, powered rolling gate parking area for animal control vehicles. In addition to the standard animal control vehicles, this area houses a large stock trailer (used to transport livestock and large supplies), a disaster response trailer (stocked with emergency supplies) and an emergency command post trailer. ACOs park vehicles inside the fenced compound when handling an-



imal control functions. The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.

There is a concrete pad adjacent to the shelter located inside the secure area and outside the intake door with hose bib for washing vehicles; however, the area is not covered nor is there specific drainage for runoff. The ACOs have access to the power washing system in this area as well.

Field Services Parking - Lompoc

The Lompoc Valley facility has a secure fenced areas adjacent to the shelter (IMG5612, IMG5615); however, vehicles are parked in front of the shelter unless loading / unloading animals / materials. Vehicles were observed parked in the "NO PARKING" red-lined areas immediately in front of the shelter entrance (IMG 5614). The standby ACO approved to take home a vehicle would park it on the street at their residence.



ACOs generally offload only fractious animals through the side entrance. Deceased animals are unloaded on the side adjacent to CAPA and the exercise yards. There are no covered areas for unloading. A hose is available adjacent to the CAPA area for vehicle cleaning.



Recommendations:

- Designated areas for ACO parking should be established, clearly marked, and utilized for that purpose.
- Covered areas should be created to allow for ACOs to unload animals / materials as well as clean vehicles in all weather conditions.
- Vehicles should not be parked in "No Parking" areas.
- Contact the Fire Department on the proper designation of emergency parking for fire and emergency equipment and ensure that the areas are marked accordingly at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations.
- Designate employee and volunteer parking areas allowing patrons and visitors access to the most convenient spots.



Discussion:

Agency vehicles should not violate parking ordinances or block fire lanes or egress points.

Ample, convenient parking for patrons is good customer service.

American Disability Act has requirements for the design of parking spaces. Section 4.1.1(5) of the Standards specifies the minimum number of accessible parking spaces to be provided including van accessible parking spaces.



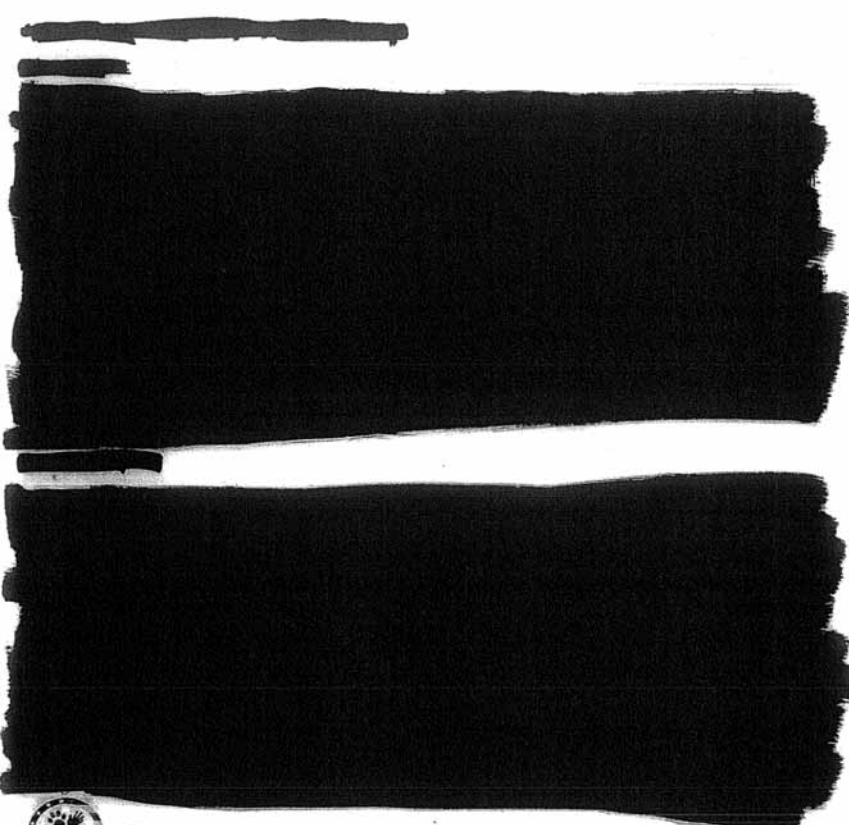
1.4 ADA COMPLIANCE/HANDICAPPED ACCESS

Observations:

SBCAS appeared to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Doorways throughout the facilities were sufficiently wide, thresholds did not present obstacles, and the floor surface was level. The handicapped parking signs and spaces met measurement and visibility guidelines. There were no automatic door openers on the entrances. Each facility had satisfactory wheelchair access. The facilities were on one level; there were no obstacles that would have restricted handicapped access.

Recommendations:

None at this time



[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]





1.6 INTERNAL SIGNAGE

Observations:

Internal signage throughout the facilities was mostly professionally produced or computer generated, but some consisted of handmade signs. Signs posted throughout the facilities were a mix of computer generated signs on 8.5 x 11 sheets of white paper taped to doors and walls, metal reflective signs, plastic signs and handmade signs. Some of the signs did not present a professional appearance and were outdated or not dated at all.

Recommendations:

- Create handmade sign template with the SBCAS logo.
- Replace all signs with new template, laminate and hang using velcro tabs.
- Evaluate the message tone and strategic placements for important messages.
- Add dates to signs that require them
- Assign a staff member to approve all signs prior to posting.
- Ensure that internal signs comply with the ADAAG, which has requirements for character proportion and height placement.³

Discussion:

Signage, even handmade, presents an opportunity to communicate consistent brand messaging and can set the tone of the organization. Their purpose is to share important information in a manner that is helpful and engaging. Interior signage should be clear, noticeable and standardized with a common color, shape and size. Signage should assist clients as well as employees and volunteers using positive images and language.

1.7 LOBBY/RECEPTION AREA

Observations:

Santa Barbara

Clients entered the lobby through one of two doors. The door to the left opened to a small area where there

² www.pearsonitcertification.com/articles/article.aspx?p=30077&seqNum=6

³ www.access-board.gov



was access to a restroom, the staff room, the outside rear of the building, the administrative offices and small lobby to the reception desk. The door to the right entered directly into the small lobby and reception desk. This was the only public entrance into the building and was, therefore, used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The lobby had a small, but open atmosphere with more than ample space for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. There was no seating available in the lobby. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. Some educational and other materials were available at the front desk.

Santa Maria

Clients entered the lobby through double glass doors. These doors and the door to the spay and neuter clinic were the only public entrances into the building. The lobby was used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The lobby's atmosphere was bright and cheery with more than ample space for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. The employees behind the front desk were somewhat hidden behind the high counter. Employees had to make an effort to look and in some cases stand up to see and greet visitors. There was some seating available in the lobby, to the left near a table with informational materials. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. A lot of educational and other materials were available opposite the front desk on a table and in a rack.

Opposite the front counter and educational materials were the adoptable cat areas. Two large chain link cages were placed in the lobby to the left where some adoptable cats were housed. Beyond the adoptable cats and to the left were public restrooms.

Lompoc

Clients entered the front of the building through a single door. The small area inside the door was more like an entryway than a lobby and this area was used for stray reclaims, adoptions, and relinquishments. The entryway was enclosed by a counter and behind the counter were desks and other office equipment. The atmosphere was bright and cheery and while it was small, it was large enough for the level of activity observed while the team was on-site. There was no seating available nor would there have been space for seating. Traffic flow was light during the site visit, so the area never seemed crowded. The team determined that if there were more than a couple of transactions taking place, they would be required to use other spaces within the facility to manage them. The entryway/lobby lacked educational and resource materials such as posters and pamphlets. Opposite of the front counter was a hallway to the public restroom which was easily accessible. When the team arrived a cage of adoptable rats was on the front desk counter.

Recommendations:

- Increase the selection of educational materials in the lobbies. Make sure to include information in Spanish and English regarding rabies vaccination, spay/neuter, laws pertaining to animals, responsible pet ownership, behavior and training, list of local veterinarians, and upcoming events. Providing written materials is an easy way to educate the public. Continually develop educational and informational materials for public use, or take advantage of materials made available by national organizations.
- Remove some of the clutter atop of the front desk at the Santa Maria location. The counter is a bit high and somewhat camouflages the employees. Employees should make extra effort to greet all



visitors because of this design.

- Ensure that all educational materials are branded with the name and address of SBCAS.
- Implement cleaning and closing check list so the area is kept pristine at all times of day.
- Replace tower information racks with attractive commercial display units that hang on the walls. Good utilization of wall space will free floor space as well as reduce obstacles for effective floor maintenance.
- All homemade signs should be laminated when possible, properly logo'd and neatly displayed.

Discussion:

A lobby is often a visitor's first impression and can create a lasting positive effect. Lobbies should be welcoming, odor-free, neat and comfortable and have educational materials available but displayed in a manner that does not overwhelm the client.

A cheerful, helpful staff member or volunteer, wearing a clean, logo'd uniform, greeting the public will also have a favorable impact, and the organization will be seen by the community as user-friendly and professional.

1.8 OFFICE AND DISPATCH AREAS

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures 3.42 "Work Stations," included responsibilities on keeping work stations clean, neat and organized. The team observed that public facing work stations in each of the facilities was neat and organized.

Santa Barbara

The main, administrative building included a front desk area, two cubicles and two offices with doors that were for the Director and the Supervisor. The two cubicles had three desks and were shared by ACOs and other employees. The front desk area included an L-shaped desk and provided what appeared to be ample room for the tasks performed there.

Santa Maria

There were a number of offices throughout the expansive facility. Behind the front desk was an office for the Supervisor. On the opposite side of the building was a line of offices. The offices were of ample size and appeared comfortable and provided what the employees required. A large education room located opposite the public restrooms was equipped with tables and chairs and was a nice space for staff, community or volunteer meetings.

Lompoc

In the lobby beyond the front desk area, were two desk areas and a conference room. A small office to the left was for the Supervisor. A small desk area was available for people to fill out lost or found reports, or adoption applications.



Dispatch area

There was no designated dispatch area for any facility. Clerical assistants, officers and supervisors entered calls into the Chameleon software from various locations including desktops and laptops (both in the office and in the field).

Recommendations:

- Dispatch concerns will be addressed in the Field Services Section

1.9 STAFF BREAK ROOMS

Observations:

Santa Barbara

The staff break room was located directly off of the entryway of the building to the left. A restroom, storage/data room and the small dog behavior evaluation room connected to the staff break room. A conference table, rolling chairs, refrigerator, kitchenette and metal employee lockers filled the room.

Santa Maria

The staff break room was located along the hallway opposite the adoptable dog kennel, on the side of the building where the education room and administrative offices were located. The room had a full kitchen and a round table with chairs. The kitchen and table areas appeared to be clean and orderly. The inside of the refrigerator did not appear to have been cleared out or cleaned any time recently.

Lompoc

The staff break room was located along the hallway opposite the dog kennel on the way to the exam room and cat rooms. The room had a kitchenette, restroom and small table and chairs. A spray bottle of bug spray was observed on top of the refrigerator in between two boxes of cereal and peanut butter. The sign outside the door identifying the room read "Break Room, Cleaning." The double sink to the right as you enter the room had a hand written sign that said, "This sink animal use only please." The only other sinks in the building were in the restrooms, dog kennel, euthanasia room and conference room.



Recommendations:

- Develop a cleaning schedule for the break rooms and ensure that the refrigerators are cleaned out and old items discarded weekly.
- Discontinue utilizing the sink in the break room to clean up animal items such as bowls and litter boxes. Consider utilizing one of the sinks available in the other areas of the facility, or have a sink installed in the intake room. This is an OSHA Violation.
- Do not store toxic chemicals, cleaning supplies or solution or any other such item next to or in the same areas as human food. This is an OSHA violation.

Discussion:

Space is at a premium in most animal facilities. Employers are not required to provide a break room for staff. However, if the employer allows staff to store, prepare or consume food on the premises, then the employer must provide a space that is free from biological and chemical hazards.

1.10 WASTE DISPOSAL/STORAGE

Observations:

There was no SOP on general waste disposal, but SBCAS had policy 6.06 “Disposal of Medical Waste and Sharp Objects,” and each facility maintained proper receptacles for disposing of needles, scalpel blades and other sharp objects. Each of the facilities had extra storage units on the facility grounds, but items tended to pile up even outside of those storage units. While some of the storage sheds were organized and neat, others were piled with clutter of various items. There also appeared to be ample cabinet space in the animal food preparation areas, exam rooms, and other rooms at each location while at the same time items cluttered the counter tops.



Santa Barbara



Santa Maria



Lompoc

Santa Barbara

There were two dumpsters in public view in a dedicated space in the parking lot between the ASAP building and the dog play yards adjacent to the four public parking spaces. One was for general waste and the other was recycling. The team was told that the county was responsible for waste pick-up. It appeared to the team that the county contracted out waste management and recycling services to a local company whose information was on the dumpsters. The dumpster was reported to be emptied once a week, on Thursdays, but the team was told that they sometimes came twice a week. The site visit took place on a Monday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.

Dog and cat food was stored in two main areas at the facility: a large, portable storage unit in the back area of the facility and a small shed at the rear of the dog kennel.

Santa Maria

There were two dumpsters inside a roof covered, walled area to the right of the secured parking lot. One was for general waste and the other was recycling. The team was told that the city was responsible for waste pick-up and the receptacles were labeled, “City of Santa Maria.” The dumpster was reported to be emptied twice a week. The site visit took place on a Tuesday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.



The waste dumpster was near empty, and the recycling dumpster was over full.

Dog and cat food was stored in a storage room off of a hallway beyond the medical suite. In-use dog and cat food bags



appeared to be left out, in open bags at all times near kennels and cat rooms. The team observed the open bags and bins on Tuesday both in the morning and evening at closing and again on Thursday.

Lompoc

The city provided three 50 gallon rolling garbage bins at the Lompoc location. They were stored next to a wooden fence to the far left of the parking lot in front of the building. There was a large, green recycling bin in the street; presumably, it remained there at all times. The team was told that the city was responsible for waste pick-up and the garbage was reported to be emptied twice a week and the recycling once a week. The site visit took place on a Wednesday and there was no noticeable odor coming from the area.

Animal food was stored in a storage room at the back of the facility that also stored old paperwork and various other kennel, cleaning and office supplies.

Recommendations:

- The team commends SBCAS for designating a concealed area for waste and recycling at the Santa Maria location. Similar efforts should be made at the other locations.
- Implement SOPs for waste disposal and storage in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and best practices for employee, volunteer, and visitor safety.
- Immediately implement precautions for animal food storage that requires secure covering of all food containers.
- Put in place a rotation system in the food storage areas to reduce the risk of spoilage and infestation. Ensure that when new food supply arrives that the new food is placed at the bottom of the pile. Date the bags when they arrive with the date that they arrive and use them in date order.
- Provide proper storage areas of equipment and supplies by their use.
- Dispose of any supplies or products that are not regularly utilized.
- Review the items that need to be stored. Designate space for needed items and do not accumulate obsolete items.
- Create inventories of items in storage. An inventory is especially critical to emergency preparedness and an evacuation plan. Inventories are also required when any kind of audit and/or review are completed. Having inventories of equipment and items in storage would be beneficial during

the budgeting process as well as understanding if there was loss of resources.

- Inventory management should be an assigned task.
- Chameleon has an inventory management system included in the shelter software

Discussion:

Good waste management and storage habits are imperative in an animal shelter. Employees will benefit from having what they need on hand, in an environment that is clean and orderly. Do not be afraid to throw out what you may never use.

Clutter makes work areas difficult to disinfect and can contribute to the spread of disease. Clutter can also pose a workplace hazard for employees and volunteers and may increase risk for OSHA citations. Clutter reduces employee efficiency and productivity.

Storage areas provide for a means to control inventory and reduce waste. Employee theft must be mitigated by securing high value items, such as food and medical supplies. Inventory management systems are imperative to reduce operating expenses, preventing overages and shortages and allows for accurate yearly budgeting.

Appendix 1.D: Veterinary Inventory Management Guide

1.11 GENERAL FACILITY MAINTENANCE

Observations:

Service requests were submitted by Supervisors to General Services via the county website. Requests could then be monitored via the online system. The team was informed that General Services promptly responded to their maintenance requests and that they were pleased with their relationships with General Services and the various contractors. If General Services were unable to maintain or repair something within the facilities, they contracted private companies. No preventative maintenance records were kept onsite at any of the facilities and the employees were not aware of schedules for regular or annual preventative maintenance of items such as HVAC (heating, ventilating, air conditioning) filter changes, or plumbing and electrical maintenance.

The walk in cooler at the Santa Barbara location was in physical disrepair at the door and hinges, and the cooler at the Santa Maria location, while newer, was not set at a high enough temperature and the team smelled the decaying remains of animals when they arrived onsite and throughout the day when they were in the corridor near the euthanasia room. The cooler was located outside on the other side of the euthanasia room and there was no direct access from the building to the cooler.

The Santa Maria facility was much larger than the other facilities and for that reason required more staffing, not only to provide for the animals, but also to keep the facility in good working order. The team was told that prior to the site visit a deep clean of the facility and grounds was conducted. Despite this, the team noted a few areas that needed attention, such as the overall cleanliness of the euthanasia room whose floor did not appear to have been swept or washed down recently. The cleanliness of the insides of the refrigerators and freezers also needed attention. For example, one freezer that contained human food had a large amount



of dead ants.



Each facility had other areas of improvement for maintenance, organization and cleanliness as outlined in sections Waste Disposal/Storage, Dog Housing and Cleaning and Disinfecting.

Recommendations:

- Develop a written protocol for maintenance requests to include how staff should communicate maintenance issues to management. Maintain a written log of all requested and completed repairs. Hold the staff and volunteers responsible for communicating maintenance issues.
- Develop SOP for daily cleaning of each area, to include a check list and sign off sheet. Assign accountability and conclude each day with a closing walk-through.
- Address cooler temperature setting in Santa Maria.
- Reach out to General Services to determine which items have a preventive maintenance schedule for each facility. Establish preventative maintenance schedule calendar. Management should walk through the facility on a monthly basis and inspect kennels, cages, floors, walls, doors, equipment, lights, and the HVAC system, including the vents.
- Develop a plan for maintenance and cleaning of all drains and the septic system with daily, weekly, and monthly checks and procedures.
 - Maintain drains and trenches by checking them daily. Treat drains with a bio-enzyme to promote safe drainage and prevent clogging. Bio-enzyme treatment of drains will also help prevent odor emanation and curtail expenses by proactively addressing drainage issues and lessening repairs.⁴

Discussion:

Animal Services facilities, like other municipal buildings, require constant attention and funds to be adequately maintained. Routine problems, such as drains clogging, guillotine doors not functioning properly, hoses breaking, and light bulbs burning out, commonly occur and must be addressed. Animal Services facilities can be difficult to maintain due to the high volume of animals and people utilizing them. The County has a responsibility to ensure that the facility is kept in a manner that is functional, safe, and attractive, and that crucial equipment is maintained and in good operating condition.

⁴ www.htproducts.net

A higher price will be paid to make up for months or years of neglect. Routine inspections will decrease the number of costly repairs that have to be initiated because something was overlooked. It is much more cost effective to have a solid, preventative maintenance program in place rather than wait until something breaks or is constantly deteriorating.

1.12 HVAC (VENTILATION/TEMPERATURE) SYSTEM AND AIR EXCHANGE

Observations:

As previously mentioned, facility maintenance, including HVAC systems, were managed by General Services. There were no specs available nor was there an SOP related to air flow and management; each facility was unique in the systems it employed. Employees were not aware of fresh air exchanges per hour in the animal areas where HVAC was supplied. Santa Barbara County enjoys a temperate climate. With low precipitation and mild temperatures, SBCAS is able to take advantage of the climate to the benefit of the animals' health and wellbeing. For the year 2014, the maximum average temperature was 78 degrees and the minimum average temperature was 52 degrees.⁵ During the AHA site visit in January, the temperature was as high as 70 degrees during the day and as low as 41 degrees at night.

Santa Barbara

Vents were present in the main kennel, but the team did not determine if the system was utilized. A thermostat was present in the center aisle of the kennel and venting was supplied the length of the building. Dutch doors were on both sides of the kennel and the tops were kept open during the day and the guillotine doors in the runs were kept open overnight; therefore, it is assumed that the system may have only been used for heating if temperatures dropped or cooling if temperatures were unnaturally high. No HVAC was observed by the team in the hexagonal building. A wall heater and fans were observed, but they were not being utilized during the site visit. It was reported to the team that there was no air conditioning in administrative building; fans were utilized when they were needed.

Santa Maria

SBCAS' newest facility was entirely air controlled. Large amounts of dust were observed on the vents and walls around the vents at the Santa Maria facility. The team was told that employees often vacuum the dust from the vents. HVAC units were on the roof of the building. The team did not access the roof to inspect the units.

Lompoc

Heating was supplied in the dog kennel, but cooling was not possible. It was reported to the team that there was no air conditioning in the lobby, but that would be added soon. The building did not have trees or any other natural covering from the sun, which shined directly into the main lobby for most of the day and reportedly became very hot in the summer especially. The rear of the facility did not receive as much direct sunlight and therefore did not naturally get as hot. For this reason, no ventilation was being added to the

⁵ www.wunderground.com



medical room or euthanasia room. The cat rooms were located at the front of the building as well; however, they had air conditioning and ventilation.

Recommendations:

- Review the air systems with an HVAC specialist from General Services. Technical data about the air handling systems should be reviewed and understood for each facility. It is essential to understand how the air moves within the shelter environment, because it plays a major role in managing disease and providing animal and human comfort. If there are disease outbreaks in any animal population, knowledge of the air system will help to correct the problem.
- Provide the following air changes per hour:
 - Public areas: minimum of 6–8 changes per hour
 - Animal housing areas: minimum of 12–14 changes per hour
- The best environment would be created using 100% fresh air. Where fresh air is prohibitive, filters and other purification systems should be utilized to purify returned air.
- Maintain an ambient air temperature between 68 and 72 degrees in the lobbies, administrative areas, and areas housing puppies and kittens. Install lockable thermostat covers to minimize the changing of temperatures in animal housing areas and prevent anyone from turning vents on and off.
- Ensure that the filters are being changed every month on a regular schedule.
- Put into place a preventative maintenance program for all air handlers and vents.
- Review recommended air exchange rates for animal housing facilities. Compare existing design specifications and make adjustments where possible.⁶
- Consider building a screened outdoor area that is safe and secure to be used for cats so that they can also enjoy access to fresh air on occasion. Ensure that the area is free from sound and sight of dogs and barking. If there is no viable option, keep this in mind for future building or remodeling projects.

Discussion:

Santa Barbara County is fortunate to have a mild climate and therefore maintains a comfortable temperature year-round. Many residents and businesses function without the use of air conditioning as a result of the temperate climate.

Even a well-designed kennel or cattery is only as effective as the air circulation and ventilation it employs. Many diseases in a shelter setting are airborne, and when these diseases are spread to other populations in the facility, the entire shelter is put at risk. No amount of cleaning will prevent the spread of disease in the face of an inadequate ventilation system.

Air quality is a very important aspect of maintaining animal health in facilities that house many animals. Enclosed animal housing areas that do not move air at an appropriate exchange rate can pose a greater risk of

⁶ www.designlearned.com



disease because re-circulated and exhaust air can harbor infectious agents. Providing good quality air is essential and well worth the investment.

Heating, cooling and humidity control systems should be serviced regularly as part of a facility's preventive maintenance program. These systems are crucial, not only to provide for the animals' health and comfort, but also for that of the staff and visiting public. A means of circulating the air must always be in operation in all enclosed animal housing areas.

The inability to control temperature in the shelter may also contribute to disease problems. There are advantages to having indoor/outdoor kennels and moving fresh air through animal spaces, but there are also disadvantages, such as not being able to eliminate moisture and the introduction of dirt, dust, and pollutants. SBCAS is fortunate that it has a temperate climate whereby the use of indoor/outdoor kennels at Lompoc and Santa Barbara gives the dogs constant access to fresh air and contributes to their good health.

1.13 DOG HOUSING

Observations:

Santa Barbara

There were two free standing dog kennels—the main kennel and the hexagonal kennel—and adjacent to the main kennel there were five chain link outdoor kennels with a lean-to roof over them. Renovated in 2009, the main kennel was a similar color and style to the administrative building and the building that ASAP occupied, tan with brown borders. It consisted of 36 indoor/outdoor runs that were numbered inside and outside 1-18 on one side and 19-36 on the other. There were two Shor-line banks in the center walkway with 2 cages each. The team was told that sometimes small dogs were housed in these cages. At the time of the site visit, only one cage was occupied. The dog runs were T Kennel brand with four foot high walls with fencing above that and topped. The inside run size was 46 inches wide to 52 inches deep and the outdoor portion was 46 inches wide and 67 inches deep. A four foot high chain link fence with a fastened fabric visual barrier spanned the length of the outside of the kennel, which prevented visitors from touching the dogs. The fence was approximately four feet from the front of the dog runs, creating a sufficiently wide walkway to access the dogs for walks and the runs during cleaning. Trench drains were located under the guillotine doors and covered with a stainless steel plate. The floors throughout the kennel were pitched toward the trenches and were composed of unpainted concrete which appeared to be in good condition. Florescent tube lighting was provided in the walkway inside the kennel and sky lights provided light to both the inside and outer portion of the dog runs. The tops of the runs and tops of the Shor-line cages were observed to be somewhat cluttered and not recently cleaned. While the team did not observe any protruding or sharp objects in the runs, during the site visit a dog (Maple A383291) cut her paw pad inside the run. The team was told that she appeared to be stressed out and was "tearing up" her run. A staff member immediately brought it to the attention of the Supervisor.

The hexagonal building, which was referred to as the "Pillsbury building," housed protective custody case dogs. During the site visit there was a dog who required cage rest for a medical issue who was housed in this kennel because the runs were smaller than those in the main kennel and the dog needed a smaller enclosure for cage rest. The kennel had 8 indoor/outdoor dog runs numbered 37-44. The runs were made of chain link and their inside dimensions varied and were oddly shaped due to the shape of the building, but were approx-

imately 27-31 inches wide and 40 inches deep and the outside dimensions were 35-44 inches wide and 5 feet deep. This building also included a kitchen and a small room with a bank of two Shor-line cages. No animals were housed in the Shor-line cages during the site visit. The team thought that the Pillsbury building was challenging in terms of its overall condition and design as it related to providing animals with appropriate sized housing and utilizing space well within the complex. The building did not appear to have been renovated or improved in many years and the structure itself was in a state of degeneration and disrepair that, for example, prevented the floors from being effectively cleaned and disinfected due to wall edges eroding or completely missing from the perimeter of the room.

The five chain link runs adjacent to the main kennel were positioned on a large concrete pad. It was reported to the team that a private nonprofit organization who has had a relationship with SBCAS for many years erected the kennels for the purpose of providing a larger space for dogs to spend time outside of their runs; however, the team was told that the runs had been used as permanent housing for quite some time. The concrete pad did not appear to have any drains or trenches. When the team observed cleaning, the water and cleaner/disinfectant that was rinsed and washed away rolled off of the side of the pad and onto the ground where there was a fence; on the other side of the fence was Overpass Road. The team was told that the concrete pad was poorly sloped and that fluids such as urine tended to pass from one run to the next. The team was told that volunteers from the group who erected the five runs provide the daily cleaning and care to the dogs who reside in those runs. See more in the section "Cleaning and Disinfecting."

Santa Maria

There were two kennel areas for dogs, one where adoptable dogs were housed and the other where stray dogs and dogs which were not yet ready for adoption were housed. There were also three dog isolation rooms with four T Kennels in each room. The team was given an overview map that was labeled "Cat Cage Numbering," that also had some of the dog, rabbit and barn animal locations. The map did not include a layout of the dog kennels, but the team noted from the animal inventory that there were runs numbered 1-71 for dogs. There also were 12 dog runs in a kennel off of the clinic.

Like the Santa Barbara location, T-Kennels with guillotine doors were used; however, the runs at Santa Maria were indoors. The smaller side of the runs measured 46 inches wide and 36 inches deep and the larger side was the same width and 70 inches deep. Some of the kennels had covers over them (the same bars as the sides and doors) and others did not have covers. On a few kennels the team observed sheets of plywood balanced over the top of the runs, presumably to deter dogs from jumping and/or climbing out of the runs. There were trench drains under the guillotine door that were covered by a stainless steel plate.

Speakers were placed in each of the kennels and music piped through. The kennels and runs were in decent repair; however, the plates that covered the plumbing in several of the kennels had fallen off of the wall and were propped against the wall on the floor, leaving a hole in the wall with visible plumbing. Bunches of lavender were on the walls in the adoptions kennel, but most of them had long dried and were not emanating a scent. One of the plastic vases that the lavender had been placed in fell off the floor and someone had placed the lavender in the hole in the wall with the plumbing. When the hoses were not in use, they were loosely coiled around the plumbing pipes.

In the center of the building was a courtyard that was open to the outdoors. In the courtyard was a small dog play yard with a patch of grass and dirt and in the center of the yard was a concrete pad with four dog yards

separated by iron gating and each had a dog igloo inside. During the site visit the team only saw one dog in one of those yards throughout the entire day. That particular dog was out for several hours and appeared to be enjoying himself in the fresh air. There did not appear to be drains on the concrete pad, but there was a drain in one of the flower beds near the concrete pad.

Lompoc

The dog kennel consisted of 30 indoor/outdoor runs with guillotine doors. Runs 1-9 and 16-24 were in the front part of the kennel and beyond that there was a hallway that was referred to as "the hub" that had been recently renovated and updated to include state of the art stainless steel tables, a large bathing sink, grooming table, hot water heater, washer and dryer and a few other appliances. On the other side of "the hub" were runs 10-15 and 25-30. The trench drains were positioned in front of the kennels on the inside and on the fence side of the walkway on the outside. Like at Santa Barbara, a four foot high chain link fence with a fastened fabric visual barrier spanned the length of the outside of the kennel, which prevented visitors from touching the dogs. There was no quarantine for dogs.

The dog kennel was in poor condition. The chain link and poles were rusted in many areas, paint was chipping off of the cinder block walls, and the cement walkways were cracked in many areas. The inside portion of the runs ranged in sizes and were approximately 42 inches wide and 36 inches deep, and the outside portions measured 35-73 inches wide and up to 10 feet deep. The runs all had barriers between them so that dogs were not nose to nose. The inside barriers were cinder block and were 48 inches high and 5 ½ inches thick. The outside runs had either cinder block barriers or composite material appropriate for dog kennel use. The condition that the kennel was in was not ideal for the dogs and also is not such that it can be cleaned and sanitized effectively, as there are cracks and crevices that were impossible to effectively clean.

Recommendations:

- Clearly designate areas and create SOPs for:
 - Adoptions - healthy animals available for adoption
 - Healthy Holding - strays and owner surrenders until able to be moved to adoption. These animals can be viewed by public prior to release date.
 - Isolation- animals who are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious disease.
 - Quarantine - ideally two designated areas, one for bite holds and the other for animals that were exposed to infectious disease.
- Separate young animals (< 5 months) from general population.
- Create SOP and decision matrix on where dogs are placed after intake. (Adoptions, holding, isolation, quarantine)
- Create SOP for each area to include:
 - Maximum capacity of animals allowed
 - Clear definition of who is responsible for cleaning, feeding, monitoring.

- Create a cleaning work station in each kennel. Attach animal handling and cleaning equipment to the walls. Brooms, dustpans and animal restraint equipment sitting on the floors in the corners of the rooms can create obstacles. I
- Implement deep cleaning SOP and schedule. Deep clean and degrease kennels once a week, including removing dust, dirt and miscellaneous items from the tops of cages and runs. See section "Cleaning and Disinfecting" for more information.
- Create SOP for group housing with clear guidelines on selection
- Repair any cracked and/or peeling concrete in the dog kennels at the Santa Barbara and Lompoc locations.
- Repurpose or rebuild the "Pillsbury" building at the Santa Barbara location. The hexagonal building is in poor condition and the cost in updating the building would not be worth the result. The building is inadequately designed to meet animal housing requirements and it may serve the county best to demolish the building and replace it with proper dog isolation and quarantine, as the facility currently does not have isolation for dogs or a way to separate dogs who should not be housed with the general population for medical issues. See the section "Isolation and Separation" for more information.
- Contact General Services to determine the need for drainage on the concrete pads at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations.
- Immediately discontinue coiling hoses and storing them in the kennels on the plumbing at the Santa Maria location. It is likely that this practice is what caused the metal plates to come off the wall. Purchase wall mounted hose reels or holders for hoses.
- Contact General Services about repairing the plates on the kennel walls where the plumbing is exposed.
- Commence discussions and planning on replacing the old dog kennel at the Lompoc facility. The AHA commends the county for renovating the facility; however, the dog kennel does not meet the needs of the dogs in the way of size on the inside portions of the runs, and cleaning and sanitation due to the deteriorating concrete, cinder block, and chain link. If the county is not able to replace the kennel within the coming two to three years, see the recommendations below.
 - Repaint the kennel and run walls using a high quality coating that will stand up to hard use, daily cleaning, and harsh cleaning compounds. Consider using colors and patterns to help improve the aesthetics which will improve the environment.
 - Ensure that any items within the dog runs with excessive rust are replaced.
 - Regularly inspect the dog runs and ensure that there are no protruding parts that could injure a dog.

Discussion:

Shelters must provide an environment that supports the physical and mental health of the animals it houses.



The efficient and effective configuration is one that provides for separation of animals by species, age, medical status, behavior and predator-prey relationship. The enclosure should be free from hazards that may cause injury, limit visual and physical contact between animals, minimize disease transmission and provide comfort and security for the animals as they spend a large percentage of their time in these enclosures. The condition of the kennels also influences an animals' mental and emotional well being. Loud, chaotic environments contribute to stress. Stress is a precipitant of disease.

The kennel area is also where employees and volunteers spend a large degree of their time and this area is often open to the public. Creating a serene, quiet, safe environment that is functional and efficient will improve employee productivity. Minimize fomites by designating cleaning and feeding stations.

Segregation of animals based on age, medical condition, adoption availability increases flow through of animals and assists the management in managing shelter population. Additional information will be provided in the Population/Census Management section.

Caging, flooring, and lighting are often given less importance when other urgent needs of animal sheltering facilities arise. In an animal shelter, proper design of flooring and drainage, as well as design and placement of runs, etc., can be a powerful tool in the fight against disease, odors, and safety-related hazards for animals, staff, and the visiting public. The quality of animal housing is one of the most important aspects of preventive health care and disease control.

Animals in a shelter environment will also experience some level of stress due to the change in environment, separation from family, and daily handling by strangers. Shelter animals must be housed in a way that minimizes stress, provides for their special needs, affords protection from the elements, provides adequate ventilation, and minimizes the spread of disease and parasites. Additional information will be provided in the Behavior and Enrichment section.

1.14 CAT HOUSING

Observations:

Santa Barbara

Cat housing and care was provided by ASAP employees and volunteers in a building on the same property. The team was offered a tour and open access to the facility. The team observed three outdoor cat play rooms, 76 cages in the adoptions area and three smaller rooms that were used for new arrivals, isolation and separation for illnesses. One of the outdoor screened rooms contained a lot of porous items such as wood and wooden structures for the cats to jump and play on. The wooden structures had been significantly degraded and scratched over time. Inside a cabinet in the adoption room were small 3-4 ounce containers with an orange substance that were not labeled. The team determined that the substance was premixed Trifectant (cleaner/disinfectant). Overall, it appeared to the team that the facility and operations provided for the cats appropriately and effectively.

Santa Maria

The Santa Maria facility housed cats in several locations within the facility. Cats available for adoption were housed off of the lobby to the left in a series of 4 rooms, two with white Shor-line cage banks that had storage underneath and two small colony rooms, and a couple of free standing chain link cages housed a few cats



in the lobby. More cats were housed in the same white, composite Shor-line cages farther down the hall to the right, opposite the volunteer room. Opposite that wall were two small stainless steel banks of cages. Portals had been installed in the stainless steel cages to allow more space for the cats. The stainless steel cage banks were free-standing, on wheels. This left the top and the spaces between the cages vulnerable to dust and general debris. Across the outdoor courtyard at the rear of the facility were three more cat rooms which held 10 cages per room. These stainless steel Shor-line cages were built onto the wall, approximately two feet off of the ground. At the time of the site visit the room with cages 101-110 was being utilized for cats for adoption. Feral cats were housed in the rooms next to this room. On the side of the building where the stray dog kennel was there were three more cat rooms: two isolation and one feral cat room. During the site visit there were a couple of cats in the isolation room and the feral cat room was housing one cat. When the team asked why the feral cats were not being housed in the feral cat room, they were told that it was because it was noisier where the feral cat room was located. There was a room within the clinic that had a bank of 10 cat cages.

Lompoc

There were two cat rooms at the Lompoc facility, one adoption room and one stray cat room and one CD&E (?) cat cage in the hallway on the way to the rooms. The cat adoption room had a bank of white, composite Shor-line cat cages on wheels with portals and the portals were open to allow the cats two spaces. One of the cage doors was missing. Cats were also free roaming in the room. The stray room held two free-standing banks of stainless steel Shor-line cages on wheels. This left the top and the spaces between the cages vulnerable to dust and general debris. This room also allowed cats to free roam, mostly during cleaning. See the section, "Cleaning and Disinfecting" for more information.

Both cat rooms were part of the recent renovation and were in excellent condition. The walls were painted yellow and the floors were covered with blue welded sheet flooring, most likely some brand of vinyl or similar flexible, non-porous material. The flooring is rolled about five inches up the walls to help create a smooth cove where the walls and floors meet in the corners of the rooms and at the base of the door frames. The floors were in superb condition and free of marks or any other damage. The cat rooms had plenty of natural light and also had florescent light fixtures which provided ample light.

A room beyond the reception area and to the right was called, "Cat Clinic." There was a bank of old, composite cat cages in the room. The team was told that the room was used as a treatment room and for the contract veterinarians.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS for the adequate housing provided for cats at each of the facilities, including at ASAP. See section, "Dog and Cat Care" for more information on the care of cats as it relates to housing.
- Clearly designate, in all locations, and create SOPs for:
 - Adoptions - healthy animals available for adoption
 - Healthy Holding - strays and owner surrenders until able to be moved to adoption. These animals can be viewed by public prior to release date.
 - Isolation- animals who are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious disease.



- Quarantine - ideally two designated areas, one for bite holds and the other for animals that were exposed to infectious disease.
- Feral Cat room - though keeping feral cats caged indefinitely can be inhumane.
- Separate young animals (< 5 months) from general population.
- Create SOP and decision matrix on where cats are placed after intake. (Adoptions, holding, isolation, quarantine, feral)
- Create SOP for each area to include:
 - Maximum capacity of animals allowed
 - Clear definition of who is responsible for cleaning, feeding, monitoring.
- Create a cleaning work station in each kennel. Attach animal handling and cleaning equipment to the walls. Fomite control in cat areas is very important in minimizing disease transmission.
- Implement cleaning SOP and schedule. It is very important to keep cat rooms clutter free for ease of cleaning and reducing disease transmission.
- Consider replacing porous items in the outdoor cat play yard. Non-porous surfaces that can be easily disinfected and are durable enough to withstand repeated cleaning are ideally only used in areas housing kittens or cats who are infectious or who are newly admitted with an unknown health history.
- Over time, consider transitioning from the stainless steel cat cages to the composite double cages, and add portals to stainless steel cages, as much as possible.

Discussion:

Cat housing places a crucial role in maintaining health and emotional well-being. SBCAS has made a concerted effort to ensure that adequate housing standards for felines are met. Cage size has been proven to have a correlation to behavioral health and disease incidence.

Feral cat housing has unique requirements as these animals often can't be touched. Adequate hiding space is mandatory, providing visual barriers to humans and other cats (Hide Perch and Go boxes, grocery bags, feral cat dens). Double sided cages allow for safe cleaning. Feral cats should only be housed long term if there is a clear behavior plan for socialization and rehoming. Keep the lights off, the noise minimized, and the activity to a minimum. Feral cats will be discussed in detail in the Behavior and Enrichment section.

Learn more: Shelter Guidelines: Housing for health and wellness -

<http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2011-06-30-000000/shelter-guidelines-housing-health-and-wellness>

Appendix 1.E: Isolation

Appendix 1.F: Population Segregation



1.15 SMALL ANIMAL HOUSING

Observations:

The team was informed that at all three facilities they had ample storage of specialty caging for all types of animals and the team observed everything from humane traps to large parrot cages. There were no dedicated rooms for any species with the exception of rabbits and guinea pigs; therefore, they had to “make do with what they had.” This resulted in housing animals in human areas at some of the locations, such as in the staff room at the Santa Barbara location. The rabbit cages at each of the facilities varied in size, but most were approximately 30” x 30” x 18” galvanized steel cages.

Santa Barbara

Rabbit and guinea pig housing and care was provided by BUNS volunteers in an area on the same property. The AHA team was offered a tour and open access to the area. The team observed 24 rabbit play yards of which three had rabbit hutches within them and several wood and metal rabbit hutches with approximately 82 housing units. The ground in this area of the complex, including the walkways, was of mulch. The rabbit play yard ground was also of mulch. This provided a comfortable walking path, but it occurred to the team that the area could not be cleaned or disinfected. The rabbit play yards were padded with layers of hay and mulch and when the team pulled up some of the material it was wet and damp underneath.

Santa Maria

As previously noted, rabbits were housed at the “Rabbit Resort,” in a large shed located at the back of the property near where the chickens were housed. The inviting area was decorated with nice potted plants and had a fence around the front area where the play pens were located. Each pen was named a different city, state or area of the world, such as “New York,” “Hollywood,” and the “North Pole.” There were 36 enclosures in the shed.

The cages were made of galvanized wire with wire floors that allowed droppings to fall into the sliding metal trays below the floors. Water bottles hung on the sides of the cages, and the lower portions of the cage walls had a 3-inch metal splash guard to help prevent debris from falling from one cage into the cages below. Cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the sliding trays were lined with paper. The rabbits were given flattened cardboard and a litter box with Timothy hay to serve as resting areas.

The only other small animals being cared for at the Santa Maria location were a few adoptable rats and a few parrots. When the team arrived the rats were in cages within one of the stainless steel Shor-line banks outside the cat adoption room. Later in the day, they were moved to a table near the door leading to the courtyard on the adoptable dog side of the building. A small x-pen was placed around the cages and the team was told that visitors often stick their fingers in the cages. One employee told the team that the large, brown rat was not friendly and would try to bite. The parrots were being housed in the clinic in appropriate caging.

Lompoc

Rabbits were housed in a shed located at the back of the property near where the cocks and hens were housed. There were 24 cages and 2 hutches within the shed. Water bottles and food dishes hung on the sides of the cages, and the lower portions of the cage walls had a 3-inch metal splash guard to help prevent debris from falling from one cage into the cages below. Cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the sliding trays were lined with paper. The rabbits were given a litter box with Timothy hay to serve as



resting areas. The shed was well insulated and had ample natural light coming in from the windows and sky lights.

A few young, adoptable rats were available for adoption. When the team arrived the rats were in one small cage positioned on the front desk. During the site visit the team observed an Animal Welfare Attendant upgrading them to a larger cage.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that appropriate caging is available for each species of small or exotic animals that SBCAS may be required to house. Create a supply inventory in order to determine what is in stock and what may be required for the future. Include where the items are stored; discard any housing that is not suitable.
- Phase out the use of wooden rabbit hutches. Rabbits like to chew on wood and it is important that they chew on untreated wood. Wood is also porous and cannot be properly cleaned and sanitized.
- Increase the size of the rabbit cages. The minimum recommended cage space for a single rabbit is 2' x 2' x 4'.
- Replace the mulch and hay in the rabbit play yards on a regular basis. Avoid adding layers upon layers as the materials build up over time and may retain moisture which may lead to mold growth, which may affect the health of the rabbits.
- Ensure adequate separation of predator-prey species.

Discussion:

Small animals, pocket pets and birds have unique requirements for housing and temperature control. These are prey species that stress easily.

Learn more about avian care at:

<http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-01-22-200000/overview-avian-care-shelters>

1.16 WILDLIFE/EXOTIC HOUSING

Observations:

The department handles wildlife calls on a routine basis for injured, nuisance and deceased animals. They entered this operation when state and local agencies stepped back and later discontinued most services. During the site visit, the ACOs responded to trapped skunks, deceased raccoons and deceased skunk calls on a regular basis. They utilized improvised equipment including towels / blankets, appropriate traps and disposal bags where necessary.

Wildlife was either release on scene or transported to the appropriate shelter for euthanasia. Deceased animals were transported to the shelter for storage and later disposal.

There was no housing or housing area for wildlife at any of the SBCAS locations.

Recommendations:



- As noted in the field section, SBAS should discontinue provision of this service and refer callers to appropriately licensed and permitted nuisance wildlife services, state game officials or local solid waste agencies in the cases of deceased animals.
- Create a separate area to temporarily house wildlife. There may be times when a rehabilitator or veterinarian cannot accept wildlife immediately, and such animals would require temporary housing at the facility.

Discussion:

The housing and care of wild animals typically is regulated by fish and game and permits may be necessary. The issue of animal control responding to wildlife calls will be addressed in the Field Services section of this report.

1.17 LIVESTOCK/EQUINE HOUSING

Observations:

There were no livestock or horse barns or suitable housing available for these animals at any of the SBCAS facilities. There was no SOP available for livestock or equine housing. The team was informed that land next to the Santa Maria facility could accommodate a barn that would meet the needs of the livestock and equine that the county handles; however, due to the California tiger salamander, which is an endangered species native to Santa Barbara and Sonoma counties, the land there was not permitted to be developed.⁷

SBCAS had a horse trailer that could accommodate four horses that was stored at the Santa Maria facility. The team was told that most of the equine cases were neglect cases and year to year it varied how many horses were taken in. The team was told that last year there were approximately 27 horses, but a couple of years before that they rehomed 660 wild mustangs. Horses are boarded at various facilities in the county including in foster homes. Many of the foster homes eventually adopt the horses. Depending on the cases, the boarding costs were covered either by the county or private donors. The team was told that there were nine horses in custody during the site visit; however, the animal inventory that the team received on January 14th, 2015 included only four horses (A368974, A368979, A356180 and A375510) one of whom had been in care for 735 days.

Chickens were housed at all three facilities during the site visit. They were housed at the rear of the facilities each in different types of pens. The set up at the Santa Barbara facility included two small wooden hutchers with x-pens around them. At the Santa Maria facility they were housed in chain link pens with tarps covering the tops, and at the Lompoc facility they were housed in pens with fitted roof tarps. Even though there were chickens observed at each location, the animal inventory did not reflect that there were any currently in care.

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 2, 2.11 “Activities - Loose Livestock” stated “Small livestock, such as goats, sheep and pigs, can generally be transported on the animal control truck and be housed at Animal Services.” The team was informed that livestock such as goats were temporarily kept in the dog play yards behind the facility at Santa Maria and to the right of the facility in the dog play yards at the Lompoc

⁷ ecos.fws.gov



location.

Recommendations:

- Develop an SOP for the housing of livestock and equine and adopt it for each facility, with the exception of Santa Barbara. Each species should have housing and feeding guidelines that provide for their respective needs.
- Consider housing all chickens at the Santa Maria and Lompoc facilities because the housing quality and space is the most ideal at those locations.
- Take steps to determine alternatives to erecting a barn next to the Santa Maria facility if building there is prohibited. Assess the statistics of stray and impounded livestock and equine in order to determine if building a county barn is necessary.

Discussion:

If the SBCAS is designated as the lead agency for housing and care of livestock and horses then establishing MOU's with local farms in advance may be worthwhile. If outside farms are tending to these animals while in the custody of the county, assurances must be in place that adequate housing and care are being provided. Systems must be in place for rehoming and permanent adoptions as long term care of these species is costly.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

2.0 Shelter
Operations

2. Shelter Operations

General Overview

Santa Barbara County Animal Services has an in-depth policy and procedures manual that covers many areas of general shelter operations. However, the employees and volunteers seem unclear on many of the procedures and there is conflict and difference of opinion as to what are best practices. In addition, there are two internal partners providing animal care on the Goleta property that have their own standard operating procedures.

2.1 AFTER-HOURS SURRENDERS

Observations:

SBCAS discontinued the use of night surrender drop boxes a few years ago at each location. The team was informed that after the change, once in a while, citizens left animals on the property after hours, but that practice has been minimal. The AHA team commends SBCAS for discontinuing the use of night surrender drop boxes.

The animal welfare community is moving in the direction of encouraging shelters to provide services that correspond to regular working hours and an organization's resources that also have the best interest of citizens and their pets in mind. Many animal shelters are implementing intake by appointment programs in order to better counsel owners who may be seeking to relinquish their pets, obtain quality background history on pets, and ensure a manageable flow of incoming animals. See section "Animal Intake" for more information on intakes by appointment.

Recommendations: None

Discussion: None

2.2 INTAKE - ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION AND PROCEDURES

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, 4.01 "Animal Impounds at the Shelter." Few animal intakes were observed by the AHA team during the site visit; therefore, each step of the process was not evaluated. Animals were able to be accepted during business hours which were posted on the front of each facility. All animal intakes took place in the main lobbies of each of the facilities. The team spoke with employees at each location to determine what steps were taken at intake; the steps were consistent at each facility with the exception of facility-related differences, namely animal housing. SBCAS had a "Pet Relinquishment Form" that was used for all intakes (stray, owner relinquish, or euthanasia request). Other intake forms included dog, cat and rabbit background information forms, a protective custody intake form, and an equine identification form. The cat background form ("Cat Owner Turn-In Information Sheet") was basic and could have gone into more depth. Only two of the forms were translated into Spanish. A large sign in each of the facility lobbies indicated the fees associated with several services including relinquishment, which was \$49 for dogs and cats. Animals were not fitted with identification of any kind after being taken in.



As previously mentioned, two cage cards were printed and one was placed on the animal's enclosure and one was kept at the front office. These cards were generated in Chameleon and an identification number was generated for the animal and a photo was taken and included in the record. The team did not observe an owner relinquishment during the site visit; however, they were told that employee communication to the former owner regarding disposition was not consistent each time an animal was relinquished between facilities and among employees at the same facility. Each facility Supervisor expressed interest in employees being able to spend more time counseling owners who visit the facilities to relinquish their pets. They each felt that if they were able to spend more time counseling, they may be more successful with helping keep the animals in their loving homes.

SBCAS Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.01 "Animal Impounds at the Shelter," thoroughly described the intake procedures. Section D, number 6, stated "Housing the animal in the appropriate location in the shelter. Do not kennel animals that appear similar in appearance in the same kennel." Section P, "Housing" stated "Animals should be housed in the appropriate area of the kennel and with compatible animals, if not housed singly." Number 1 stated, "Healthy puppies 4 months and younger should be housed with puppies of compatible size and temperament in the main kennel." Number 4 stated, "Healthy male dogs should be housed alone or with other compatible male dogs in the main kennel in the Stray section." There were not separate SOPs that apply to each location for the intake process. During the site visit all dog runs were occupied in each of the facilities. Many small dogs were paired up and large dogs were housed singly.

Santa Barbara

The team did not observe any animal intakes during the site visit at the Santa Barbara facility. The SOP applied to all of the facilities; however, it referred to "the Stray section," which Santa Barbara did not have. The SOP also referred to handling and housing cats, which is under the care of ASAP at the Santa Barbara facility. The team was told that when a dog is relinquished at the front desk, the Kennel Attendants are summoned by a ringing that broadcasts over the property and they then go retrieve the dog to be placed in the kennel. The team did not observe or gain a verbal account of the steps that were taken between moving the animals from the front desk to their respective housing.

Santa Maria

The team observed one intake during the site visit. A stray dog was being dropped off after closing time. The team and employees were in the lobby in the process of leaving the facility and one of the employees who had just left came back in and got a form and a clipboard and went back to the parking lot. A few minutes later, he came back in with a small dog and the paperwork indicating where the dog was found. The team observed the dog's intake exam, vaccinations and dewormer being administered, as well as him being placed in a kennel. Because there were no available runs, the dog was placed in a run with another small dog. The Santa Maria facility had an entryway that was separate from the main lobby that said "Animal Drop Off." That doorway was blocked off, not in use for its intended purpose, and the team was told that the room beyond the door was utilized sometimes for conversations with owners who were surrendering their pet and also for dog behavior evaluations. The team was told that when an animal is relinquished at the front desk, the Kennel Attendants are summoned on their hand radios and they then go retrieve the animal to be placed in



their respective area.

Lompoc

The team did not observe any animal intakes during the site visit, but they were informed that once an animal is taken in, the employee takes the animal to the Exam Room and completes a cursory exam and administers vaccines and anti-parasitics. The animal would then be placed in the appropriate housing for the species and size.

Recommendations:

- Create intake SOPs for each facility so that they are consistent and relevant to each. The majority of the procedures will be exactly the same, but when there is information that is not relevant to one location or another it may result in employees not following procedures effectively due to there being too much or irrelevant information.
- Standardize all intake forms, and include as much background information on the animals behavior and medical conditions. This information assists in the delegation of fast track or slow track animals, determines where the animal should be housed after intake, and helps establish an adopter profile.
- Train employees on surrender counseling. Ensure that all employees at all locations are delivering consistent messaging to relinquished pet owners. Transparent, consistent messaging will give citizens confidence in the process, or will allow them to make other plans for their pets if they choose not to relinquish at SBCAS. This can reduce intakes if these counsellors can solve problems for the pet owner.
- Track and regularly assess the reasons owners provide for surrendering or returning their pets. Knowing why people relinquish their pets can help SBCAS determine what type of community outreach is needed. For example, if a large number of owners are relinquishing pets due to behavior issues, SBCAS may consider developing an educational training program to help guardians resolve basic behavior problems that can interfere with the human/animal bond. Such information can be highly publicized within the community and can provide pet guardians the information they need before they become frustrated and turn over their pets to the shelter. Understanding the reasons for pet relinquishments can help SBCAS create intervention programs or refer them to other organizations or businesses in order to help keep people and their pets together.
- Translate all intake and background forms into Spanish. 2013 census data states that 44.1% of Santa Barbara County residents are Hispanic or Latino.¹
- Place identification bands on all animals upon intake and include the identification number on the band. There are several types of collars available and SBCAS should decide which will work best. The most commonly used can be purchased from ACES.² Cage cards are not a reliable method of

¹ quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06083.html

² www.animal-care.com/index.cfm/id/10/?keywords=bands&category=&search=Go



identification when housing large numbers of animals. Paperwork can easily be lost, switched, or become damaged or faded and animals of the same breed and color, such as black cats or black labs, can look alike. It is imperative that animals be properly identified. Identification is invaluable if an animal is moved without a cage card or if he or she were to escape, and it also prevents errors such as accidental euthanasia.

- Consider using Martingale collars for dogs to prevent them from backing out of them. The benefits are that dogs will not tear off the collars and that volunteers will not have to put a collar on a dog each time they take him or her out (risking a poor fit and a dog escaping). When the dog leaves the shelter, the collar can be removed, washed and reused for another dog.
- Discontinue placing newly arrived animals into kennels with other animals without performing an introduction in a neutral area and conducting a thorough medical exam. This practice is unsafe both for behavior and medical reasons. See section, “Animal Handling and Care” for more information.
- Consider developing a program for relinquishments by appointment. Many humane societies, including those with government contracts, are developing and instituting such programs as a way to manage the intake flow of owned animals.³

Discussion:

Ideally, animal intakes should be separate from adoptions. Many clients are under emotional stress when admitting their animals to a shelter; therefore, they are best served in a more private area. Also, new sights, sounds, and smells at animal facilities stress arriving animals, which may cause them to react abnormally out of fear. Admissions staff must counsel owners upon intake, ask questions about the animal's behavior, and any special needs that their pet may have. This information is invaluable in re-homing pets and requires focused attention.

Adopters also benefit from a separate space where adoption staff can give the new owners their undivided attention. Adoption personnel act as counselors as well, taking the opportunity to educate new owners on pet ownership, providing details on the adoption process, and offering additional information such as behavior training programs. The focus here is on giving new owners everything available to help keep the pet in the new home. The more separate intakes are from adoptions the better, so it is in the best interests of SBCAS to attempt to work with what they have currently to do this and consider this change in any future remodeling.

Intake by appointment programs require such resources that dedicated employees are managing them and animals would receive behavior assessments and intake exams while the owner is still present (but not in the same room). By allowing owners to be present at the time of the animal's evaluation for placement, it means they can take a more active role in the future of their pet. They know their pet better than anyone, and by providing as much information as possible about them the owner will: 1) Have a clear understanding of how a shelter can assist them and their pet; 2) Ensure that the shelter can provide the best possible care for their

³ <http://www.animalhumanesociety.org/admissions/surrender-your-pet>



pet; 3) Allow SBCAS to move their pet more quickly through the shelter and into a new home. Without these programs, shelters have no control over the number of animals coming into their care each day. This can lead to a flood of animals into facilities on individual days, which causes increased stress and illness and reduced ability to find new homes for animals. The appointment process allows shelters to have a space ready for pets when they arrive.

Appendix 2.A Establishing a Re-homing Service

Appendix 2.B Surrender Counseling

Appendix 2.C Sample Re-homing packet

Appendix 2.I Intake Check List

Good webinar on how to counsel owner surrenders:

<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/webinars/1-800-my-cat-is-nutz>

2.3 ADOPTION SELECTION CRITERIA AND BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.13 “Care and Evaluation Committee Procedures,” included the following sections: background information, care and evaluation. SBCAS also had policy 4.21 “Feral Cat Temperament Testing and Assessment.” Procedure 4.21 provided instructions for assessing “fearful” cats to determine if they were feral or lost or abandoned pets. A Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form was to be filled out for each fearful cat. Behavior evaluations did not take place during the site visit therefore the team did not have the opportunity to observe.

Procedure 4.13 “The Care and Evaluation Committee Procedures” was a detailed document that included what the committee’s purpose and functions were as well as definitions of key terms such as adoptable, treatable and unadoptable. The concept of this committee appeared to be an effort of SBCAS toward managing the shelter population alongside volunteers, giving volunteers equal input in decisions made about individual animals and population management in general. While this appeared to be an admirable effort on behalf of the shelter, the team recognized that the endeavors of the committee did not appear to result in the stated goals, especially at the Santa Barbara location. While this is addressed in another section of the report in more detail, the team perceived that volunteers obtained far more influence and authority at SBCAS than similar animal services counterparts that the team’s breadth of experience in animal welfare had experience with. The team noted the following sections of procedure 4.13 that require reassessment with regard to compliance and implementation:

“Animal Services has a responsibility not to place potentially dangerous animals into new homes or to compromise the health and wellbeing of adoptable animals by holding animals with identified health or behavior issues for prolonged holding periods.”

“The group will discuss animals in the kennel that are of concern in regard to their adoptability. This



includes evaluation of recent arrivals and the ongoing evaluation of animals that are kennel long term and are of concern.”

“The goal is for a consensus decision for recommended treatment, behavioral evaluation, observation of kennel stress or lethargy, release to adoption partners, or euthanasia.”

“Dominant dog breeds shall have a temperament evaluation and will not be placed up for adoption unless the following criteria are met: Kennel well with no cage aggression; no repetitive spinning, tail chasing or other neurotic behaviors, Friendly towards all people, including children, Get along well with other dogs of both genders, Have a low prey drive, Enjoy physical touch and handling.”

“Animal euthanasia is authorized by the Supervising Animal Control Officer or designee, based on input from the Care and Evaluation Committee and the judgment of the Supervising Animal Control Officer or designee.”

The AHA team was told that dog behavior evaluations were completed by volunteers at each of the locations. SBCAS facilities utilized four different Dog Behavior Evaluation forms. A Feline Behavioral Assessment form existed; however, the team did not observe these forms with the paperwork that went along with the cat records at the front offices at Santa Maria or Lompoc and was unsure if they were utilized—though the team was told that they were used when deciding on which cats to move to the adoption floor—at the Santa Maria location. The team did not observe the Feral Cat Temperament Assessment forms with the feral cat records. The Dog Behavior Evaluation form that was sent to the team prior to the site visit was labeled in the footnote “Santa Maria Animal Shelter Feb. 2011.” The team observed a similar, but slightly edited version of that form being utilized at the Santa Barbara location labeled “SBCAS Goleta Dog Eval Form 1 06032013.” And two completely different dog forms were utilized at the Lompoc facility (Dog Behavior Evaluation and Power Breed and Power Breed Mix Behavior Evaluation) were labeled “CAPA Sept, 22 2011” and “CAPA Lompoc Animal Shelter 12/14/10,” respectively. There were also forms in use at the Santa Barbara facility that appeared to be utilized for documenting behavior issues that included a space for the dog name and identification number, kennel number, dog handler name and the behavior issue. The term “power breed” was utilized in each of the facilities; however, when the team asked which breeds were included in that the answers somewhat differed. One staff member told the team with regard to SBCAS behavior evaluations and forms “we are all in different worlds.” The team reviewed the various Dog Behavior Evaluation forms and noted that the forms utilized at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria facilities were more comprehensive and would provide a good point-in-time evaluation. The forms utilized at the Lompoc facility were a mixed combination of assessment and recommendations for a future home.

Santa Barbara

As mentioned previously, the AHA team was concerned with the welfare of some of the dogs that were being housed long term at the Santa Barbara facility. The behavior evaluations that the team reviewed had taken place a few days after their arrivals, which in some cases had been a year to two years previous. The team was informed that behavior evaluations were performed in a small room off of the staff room. Volunteers were given authority to perform dog behavior evaluations and make recommendations on disposition. Prior to the site visit the team received information from a community stakeholder survey and several of the



comments included feedback that there was concern about the competency and experience of those who SBCCAS had given authority to conduct behavior evaluations.

Santa Maria

Behavior evaluations were performed down the hall from the Supervisor's office that had originally been an intake room that could be entered from the front of the building. Volunteers were given authority to perform dog behavior evaluations and make recommendations on disposition at the Santa Maria facility as well. The team was told that the volunteers were well trained and the team was not concerned with any behaviors dogs in the adoption areas exhibited. The team was told that the care and evaluation meeting focuses on questionable dogs and that the volunteers who attended the meeting tended not to spend too much time volunteering at the shelter. The Supervisor at the Santa Maria location expressed satisfaction with the weekly meetings and stated that they ended them only when there was agreement, however long that took.

Lompoc

The team was told that behavior evaluations were performed usually after hours by volunteers who were well trained to perform behavior evaluations. The team was not concerned with any behaviors that dogs exhibited at the facility. The team was told that volunteers never went to the care and evaluation meetings at the Lompoc location, but that they generally tend to give accurate, helpful feedback on their dog behavior observations. The Supervisor at the Lompoc location articulated concerns about placing aggressive or dangerous animals in the community and strongly believed it was SBCCAS responsibility to ensure that aggressive animals are not rehomed. The team was told that staff and volunteers supported and concurred with this and preferred that all animals who are adopted are safe. The team was told that "power breeds" were given additional scrutiny; the evaluation form noted:

"Must go home with breed experience, or dog savvy owner unless otherwise noted. All Power breeds and power breed mixes must be thoroughly tested with cats, small dogs and medium or large dogs. All potential power breed/ power breed mix owners must agree to supply dog with plenty of daily exercise, except in special circumstances, i.e. geriatrics is a factor, handicap or hospice dog."

The regular evaluation and the breed specific evaluation were very similar except that the "power breed" evaluation included: barrier aggression-cage fighting, excitability in kennel, noise level of tolerance; and the other evaluation included: housing, new adopter's level of dog experience, mental/ physical daily exercise needs, escape oriented and additional training/ socialization needs. The portions of the evaluation that were more suited as recommendations (for a new home/ experience of adopter) included: housing, new adopter's level of dog experience, mental/ physical daily exercise needs, and additional training/ socialization needs.

Recommendations:

- Hire a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT) experienced in shelter animals. Or,
- Ensure that trained staff members conduct behavior evaluations. Ensure that those conducting behavior evaluations have received training specific to evaluating animals in the shelter environment. Organizations that develop their own evaluation should do so in consultation with a veterinarian or behaviorist familiar with the science and theory of behavior assessments.



- Provide animals with treatable behavior conditions the opportunity to improve by creating and ensuring behavior plans are carried out consistently and within the prescribed timeline. The dogs that the team were told were “project dogs” at the Santa Barbara location did not have information about a “plan” or “timeframe for expected results” recorded in their paperwork.
- Review each Dog Behavior Evaluation form and create one form, for all breeds to be utilized at each of the SBCAS facilities so that there is a unified strategy and consistency throughout the county. Assess resource materials from other organizations and entities to create a SBCAS approved evaluation and process.⁴
- Review ASPCA’s Meet Your Match program and consider assigning animals a Canine-ality and Feline-ality color code. This will help match potential adopters as well as assign volunteers to handle these animals.
- Make actionable decisions on all long term residents. (More information in Population Management section)
 - Assess and determine next steps for improvement of the following items at the Santa Barbara location: who is conducting behavior evaluations and if the results are effective, how and why dogs are being kenneled for prolonged periods of time, how and who determines and approves euthanasia decisions (see more in section of the report covering this topic), and how the care and evaluation committee meeting procedures may or may not be leading to productive and effective population management.
- Consider modifying the goals and procedures of the care and evaluation committee meetings. It is uncommon that all staff members come to a consensus and absolute agreement about the disposition of animals in the care of shelters. Volunteers may not have valuable and necessary information that is required when making such decisions. Insights and knowledge of the organization’s resources including staffing (time and experience), foster parent availability and finances are such resources that are considered and those vary from shelter to shelter and in some cases day to day depending on the animal population at a given time. It is the county’s responsibility to provide staffing and resources to care for the animals in its charge. Volunteers must commit to support the county and SBCAS employees who are charged with this responsibility and the county must provide the resources required to manage and operate progressive and effective animal services facilities.
- Review and edit the care and evaluation committee meeting procedures and define such items as “potentially dangerous” as noted in section H. 3. of the document.
- Discontinue using language such as “dominant dog breeds” and “power breeds.” Any breed of dog can exhibit dominance and using terminology to describe specific breeds amounts to breed discrimination. It is important to primarily focus on the behaviors of dogs in tandem with their sizes to determine whether or not they would be safe pets in the community. Most adopters would like

⁴ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_2003/behavior_evaluation_resources.html



a dog without the following qualities, despite their breed or size: “Kennel well with no cage aggression; no repetitive spinning, tail chasing or other neurotic behaviors, Friendly towards all people, including children, Get along well with other dogs of both genders, Have a low prey drive, Enjoy physical touch and handling.”

- Enlist an experienced staff member or volunteer to conduct temperament evaluations of “fearful” cats, to help distinguish the fearful from the truly feral. Utilize the Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form and ensure the form is kept with the cat’s paperwork.
- Ensure that relevant staff members and volunteers watch the webinar “Friendly vs Frightened Pet”⁵ and read about the research project “Is That Cat Feral?”⁶

Discussion:

Behavior evaluations may help supervisors make euthanasia decisions, but the evaluations alone should not be the only input considered. Owner surrender surveys, experience the staff had during intake, veterinary reports and information from volunteers and fosters should be considered for making adoption and euthanasia decisions.

Behavior evaluations should only be carried out by trained staff, and conducted in a consistent manner to provide the most accurate information. Documentation of these evaluations should be kept electronically using shelter software. Behavior evaluations should occur routinely on all animals with increasing length of stays.

Daily Care and Evaluation Rounds with a committee that is properly appointed will help ensure that each animal receive a “decision memo” and resources are committed to moving that animal expediently to it’s final outcome.

Additional Resources:

Meet your Match <http://www.aspcapro.org/meet-your-match-resources>

2.4 ADOPTION PROCESS AND POLICIES

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures included the following procedures regarding adoptions process and policies: 3.15 “Pet Adoption Procedures,” 3.16 “Adoption of Animals with

⁵ <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2010-09-15-000000/feral-vs-frightened-pet>

⁶ <http://aspcapro.org/node/72247>



Medical Conditions,” 3.17 “Adoption of Animals with a History of Bite or Aggression,” and 3.18 “Placing a Hold (Wanted) on an Animal.” Chapter 1, 1.36 “Animal Adoptions by Staff Members” detailed the parameters for SBCA employees adopting to ensure that the same policies and procedures are followed as they are for non-employee adoptions.

Procedure 3.15, “Pet Adoption Procedures” included the adoption procedures, requirements and restrictions. Animals could be adopted with a bite history or medical issues and a waiver was required to be signed. Adoption applications were to be filled out, approved and then appropriate fees collected. Staff members and trained volunteers conducted adoptions. There did not appear to be a dedicated adoption staff for handling adoptions at any of the facilities. Applications were taken on a first come, first served basis for “qualified adopters,” though “qualified” was not specifically defined in the procedure. The procedure noted that landlord approval, meeting all family members and other dogs already in the home were required. Yard checks were required for “power breeds” or at the discretion of the adoption counselor or Supervisor. All animals were required to be spayed or neutered prior to going to their new homes.

Animals were allowed to have holds placed on them (first, second and third hold). Finders had the option to place the first hold for adoption unless they were a staff member on duty or a volunteer. Exceptions were if the animal was being fostered.

Animals who were approved for adoption and who were “ready to go” were able to go home on the same day. Others who, for example, had not yet been spayed or neutered were added to the surgery schedule for the next possible date and were able to leave for their new home within 2-3 days. The team did not observe adoptions taking place during the site visit with the exception of the scenarios mentioned below.

The team reviewed the adoption applications for rabbits, cats, dogs and birds. The Santa Maria location had a small form “Adoption Wish List” which was a pet request form. The team did not determine if many adoptions resulted from the form or if the form was utilized often.

Santa Maria

The team observed a customer place a first hold on a puppy who would become available in a few days on January 17th, 2015. The customer provided an adoption application and the employees began processing the application. The landlord was called and a message was left.

Lompoc

The team observed customers who were interested in a dog in kennel number 9. The staff member working at the front desk pulled the kennel card and told them that they could fill out an application. The customer asked how much it would cost and the staff member replied “\$122 including the license.” The staff member explained that the dog hadn’t been evaluated yet. The staff member answered the customer’s questions, but did not add any more information such as when the evaluation would take place or when the dog might be available. After the customer asked more questions such as how old the dog was and if she was healthy, the staff member explained that she would be spayed and vaccinated and that would also be covered in the adoption fee. The customers left without filling out an application.



Recommendations:

- Read the article in Animal Sheltering Magazine's "Who Let the Dogs Out?" The article discusses how you can skip rigid adoption criteria and focus instead on a conversation to determine how a potential match might work. According to the 2014 PetSmart Charities U.S. Shelter Pet Report, 12 percent of people who chose not to adopt in 2014 said the reason was because the adoption process was too difficult. Take some time to re-evaluate your organization's policies and recognize who you could be turning away. See what changes you can make to let more adopters in and get more cats and dogs out of the shelter and into a happy home.⁷
- Read articles about and watch webinars and attend conferences on "open adoptions."⁸
- After evaluating "open adoptions" and if the decision is made to update adoption policies and procedures, revise the adoption applications to coincide with changes.
- Implement a consistent adoption program and counseling process with a full time staff person in charge at the Santa Maria location. This staff member could liaise with Supervisors at the other facilities and train staff to embody excellent client service skills and have a genuine desire to help people. This program would include helping adopters select the right pet for their lifestyle, approving the adoption paperwork, and providing follow-up after adoption to ensure a smooth transition into the new home. Volunteers could also be trained to participate.
- Implement a process whereby staff and volunteers work with the public to match individual animals in the shelter that are known to have the characteristics that a potential adopter is seeking. For example, a customer who is active and enjoys running can be directed towards dogs who have a lot of energy and also enjoy running. Cats with special needs, such as a shyness or fearfulness, can be placed with an experienced owner in an environment that will provide socialization necessary to develop the cat's full potential.
- Promote animals who generally get overlooked. Read how other shelters around the country have highlighted these animals in the articles, "Highlighting the Wallflowers" and "Overlooked No More" in Animal Sheltering magazine.⁹

Discussion:

A progressive adoption program does not put obstacles in place for potential adopters to overcome. While it is important to have guidelines to protect animals and ensure that each adopted animal is placed in a responsible home, it is also important to consider that strict adoption regulations means fewer adoptions. Although certain adoption criteria (such as whether or not a landlord will allow pets) are absolute, most are meant to serve as guidelines, enabling adoption counselors to work within each set of circumstances

⁷ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jan-feb-2015/who-let-the-dogs-out.html>

⁸ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar_apr_2008/opening_up.pdf

⁹ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/mar_apr_2007/101_highlighting_the_wallflowers.pdf,
<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jan-feb-2014/Overlooked-No-More.pdf>



individually. Exceptions to policies can be made by consulting with a supervisor. A consistent approach to exceptions is required in order to avoid any false allegations that the agency is either arbitrary or discriminatory. Evaluation of potential adopters can be based on three basic criteria: commitment to the life and needs of the pet; a desire for pet companionship; and understanding of providing the essentials for a healthy, happy pet.

With progressive programs, like ASPCA's Meet your Match, (reference resource in 2.3) shelters are proactively assisting potential adopters to find a pet that aligns with their lifestyle reducing the number of animals returned to the shelter.

Appendix 2.D Report on Adoption Forum

Appendix 2.E Adoption Counselling

2.5 ADOPTION FOLLOW-UP AND COMPLIANCE

Observations:

SBCAS did not have an adoption follow-up program. The Supervisors at each of the facilities expressed interest in implementing such a program if time permitted, as they understood the merit of such a program. The team observed and understood that the resources did not exist during the time of the site visit for a program such as this to succeed. Even if managed by volunteers, there were no staff members that the team observed had the bandwidth to take on oversight of another program.

Recommendations:

- Develop an adoption follow up program. Place follow up calls on all adopted animals at one week and one month post adoption. Follow up calls will ensure that the placement has been successful and can proactively address behavioral problems or medical issues. Alternatively follow-ups could be conducted via online applications¹⁰ or through email
 - Create standard list of questions to ask new owner. Log answers in permanent record.
 - Assign staff or volunteer responsible for making calls
 - Establish call calendar
 - Create action plan if a problem or behavior is noted during these calls.
 - Take advantage pet behavior tip sheets from national organizations, which can be used to help counsel adopters on particular behavior issues they may be having with their new pet. SBCAS can put their own contact information on the back of these sheets, which can be emailed or mailed to adopters.
 - Maintain a list of area dog trainers and behaviorists that can be given as a

¹⁰ www.surveymonkey.com, www.questionpro.com, www.zoomerang.com



reference if an adopter is having a behavior issue with a newly adopted pet.

This list can also be used for those who call the shelter and are thinking about relinquishing a pet due to behavior issues. The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) website allows one to search for members by zip code.

- During the adoption process inform the adopter that a follow-up call will be placed in a set timeframe and that if before then they have any questions they can call.
- Ask adopters to provide a photo of their new pet in his or her new home for SBCAS's "adoption successes bulletin board," which can be placed in the lobbies. Success stories show potential adopters that SBCAS is determined to providing good pets to homes and good homes to pets.

Discussion:

Adopters and community members are looking to SBCAS for direction and leadership. A simple adoption follow up program to address any behavior concerns or offer training advice, can move SBCAS toward that goal. Building relationships with adopters will lead them to feeling supported and to understanding that SBCAS cares about the animals and the community. Successful adoptions often lead to longtime supporters and donors. Adopters can become strong supporters of the shelter both financially and verbally, and if you develop a relationship early, you can keep them engaged and interested in your programs.

Link to adoption follow up questionnaire:

http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/nov_dec_1999/adoption_followup.html

<http://www.paws.org/cats-and-dogs/after-you-adopt/follow-up-survey/>

2.6 RELEASING AGENCY AND COMMUNITY ADOPTION PARTNERS

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, 3.52 "Adoption Partners," included information on the policies and procedures for how SBCAS worked with adoption partners. During the site visit the procedure was in the process of being re-finalized after going through a thorough editing process which included feedback from adoption partners within the county. Adoption partners were required to apply and become approved prior to being authorized to have animals released to them. A form was to be filled out and copies of their 501c3 paperwork, mission statement and a reference were required. Fees were charged per animal and spay/neuter requirements were in place. Animals eligible for the adoption partner program were to be approved by the RVT or Shelter Supervisor prior to the groups being contacted. Animals with severe behavioral issues were not authorized to be offered to adoption partners. The Community Outreach Coordinator was listed in the procedure document as the one who was "often the point of contact" for adoption partners. Transportation to the adoption partners was carried out by the adoption partners, by SBCAS if the group was out of the county or by volunteers.



The team reviewed the draft “Adoption Partner Program” procedure 3.52. The document was updated and was far more comprehensive than the first version. Qualifications for approved adoption partners were enhanced to include the following: be organized and operated for the purpose of animal adoptions, have no criminal or administrative violations regarding animals, be in compliance with all laws related to animals, be in good standing with the local animal control agency. In addition, SBCAS would keep the following additional items on file: IRS determination letter, organization’s Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and online status report from the Secretary of State, copy of current adoption agreement, list of individuals authorized to transport animals on behalf of the adoption partner (full name, address, phone number), a list of authorized foster homes used by the agency (full name, address, phone number and number of animals housed at the location), a list of current board of directors, references from one veterinarian and one animal care and control agency or open admission humane society/SPCA, and a statement of financial viability. In addition to the aforementioned additional inclusions that approved adoption partners must meet, the following were also required: dogs placed in foster homes within Santa Barbara County for over 30 days must be licensed to the adoption partner, dog licenses for adopted animals must be obtained within 30 days of when the new owner takes possession of the dog, owner information including name, address, phone number and microchip number were to be provided to SBCAS within 30 days of the animal being placed, adoption partners would remain liable for animals until the new owner information is submitted to SBCAS and adoption partners must renew their paperwork and agreement every two years or as requested by SBCAS.

Revisions to the original procedure with regard to approved animals for the adoption partner program included that 1) the Shelter Supervisor must approve animals before the adoption partner is contacted, 2) animals with a bite history were not permitted to be offered as well as the following: those irremediably suffering, those surrendered as owner request euthanasia, and dogs with a history of aggression or who were determined to be potentially dangerous or vicious by a judicial or hearing office pursuant to county code, 3) animals must be picked up by adoption partners within 3 days of notification of the animal, and 4) unweaned animals required pick up on the same business day.

In addition to newly defined office procedures, the updated document included a section on adoption partner relations that required staff to interact courteously and professionally with the adoption partners and noted that disruptions by adoption partners would be referred to the Shelter Supervisor. The team was told that there were approximately 100 groups that SBCAS has worked with over time, many of them breed specific groups. The transfer fees were as follows:

Recommendations:

- The team commends SBCAS for working with community adoption partners and for revising the policy and procedures so that practices can be more proactive and relationships improved. It is important for SBCAS to hold adoption partners accountable to agreements, laws and routine procedures so that strong and effective partnerships can be maintained.
- Establish an immediate notification system by which Adoption Partners are notified when animals with emergent needs are brought in.
- Establish a notification system with Adoption Partners to give access to animals with profiles that would be considered less adoptable, or animals that are at high risk for shelter breakdown.



- Once the final copy of the new procedure 3.52 is officially approved by the county, all policies, procedures and forms should be presented to all interested parties and consistently followed.
- Continue to endeavor toward improving relationships with adoption partners. Maintaining community relationships requires acts and assumptions of good will on all sides as well as open communication and transparency. “A strong alliance of animal welfare groups can help improve the lives of animals and people in numerous ways.”¹¹
- Consider classifying the partnerships/ relationships that SBCAS has with certain groups as adoption partners or contract services to the groups such as with BUNS, ASAP, K9-Pals and DAWG. See section “Governance, Management and Leadership” for more information and recommendations.

Discussion:

Animal shelters have established formal working relationships with adoption partners in many communities across the country. In order for these relationships to work acceptably, clearly stated expectations and a written formal agreement executed between all parties are necessary. Prior to the release of an animal to an adoption partner, shelters must be assured that the transfer is in the best interest of the animal and community. Differences of opinion, philosophical disagreements, mission-based differences, and high emotions may stand in the way of complete harmony, but it is considered necessary for placement partners and shelters to work well together.

Adoption partners can be strategically utilized to manage the shelter population. A proactive approach to moving animals out of the shelter, will reduce shelter census and length of stay.

2.7 LOST AND FOUND PROCEDURES

Observations:

Santa Barbara County’s website devoted one page to lost and found pets and included information and contact information for each facility. The webpage included information on how to connect with the shelters and search for and fill out lost reports and also offered some pet recovery tips.

The SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 2, Field Operations, 2.06 “Impounded Identified Animals,” Chapter 3, 3.06 “Lost and Found Animal Reports,” 3.07 “Lost and Found Hotline (Santa Barbara Shelter Only),” 3.11 “Identified Animals,” 3.13 “Reclaim of Animals (Redemption),” 3.14 “Waiving or Reduction Fees on Redemptions – Balance Due,” 3.32 “Reclaim of Animal After Regular Business Hours,” and Chapter 4, 4.10 “Release of Owner Animals.” The team did not observe lost or found reports being taken during the site visit; the team reviewed the binders where lost and found reports were maintained.

The team observed the lost and found procedures to be overall consistent between facilities, including that

¹¹ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_2009/101_strength_in_numbers.pdf



match making between lost reports and animal inventory was done “when there is time.” Procedure 2.06 clarified the role of ACOs upon picking up an animal with traceable identification including steps to return the animal to the home rather than taking them directly to the facilities. Animals with identification were required to be held for 10 days; animals without identification were held for 5 days. A red star is to be placed on the kennel card to identify animals who arrived with identification. Procedure 3.06 explained how lost reports, found reports and matches made were to be managed. The procedure stated that a “daily list” was maintained for lost and found reports and that the lost and found report forms are maintained in a binder. During the site visit the team observed the binders, but did not observe a separate list. Owners seeking a lost pet were to be encouraged to visit the facilities to seek their pet. By county code, citizens who find animals are required to turn them in within 24 hours. This procedure noted that “staff and volunteers shall assist in trying to match sheltered stray animals to lost and found reports, whenever time permits.”

Procedure 3.11 was the procedure to follow after 2.06. The procedure stated that if a match is made owners were to be notified immediately by phone, in person, door hanger or U.S. mail. Owner information and attempts made at contacting the owner was then to be recorded in the animal record in the comment or memo section in Chameleon. This procedure stated, “Kennel staff is responsible for alerting the office staff of an animal wearing a tag so they can be traced and following up on the animals that have not been reclaimed in a timely manner. They should communicate with the customer care staff to check on the status of the animal.” Procedure 3.07 pertained to the Santa Barbara location only. A lost and found hotline was in place to assist the public during non-business hours, which was paid for by the Santa Barbara Humane Society. An answering service took calls and faxed the information to SBCAS each day at 8:00 a.m. That fax was then faxed to Santa Barbara Humane Society. SBCAS staff were then required to manually create reports for the lost and found binder. Lost and found for cats at the Santa Barbara location was managed by ASAP.

The team was told that at the Santa Barbara and Lompoc locations there was no daily system in place for cross referencing the lost and found binders with the animals in care. The team was told that a certain employee at the Santa Maria location organized and maintained the lost and found binder and conducted daily cross checks. The team was not able to observe cross checking on the day of the site visit.

The statistical reports provided to the team included information on numbers of dogs and cats redeemed, adopted, euthanized and other outcome types.

For FY13-14 SBCAS received 1,343 owner relinquished animals and 5,525 stray animals. 66.6% of the animals SBCAS received in FY 13-14 were stray.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS on its return to owner rates, which are higher than the national average.¹²
- SBCAS is also commended for prioritizing returning animals to their owners before resorting to bringing them in to the shelter. This protocol helps reduce the number of animals entering the

¹² <https://www.aspc.org/about-us/faq/pet-statistics>



- shelter and also eliminates the need for owners to come to the shelter to search for their pet.
- Prioritize the lost and found program and rather than noting “whenever there is time,” in the Policy and Procedures Manual, require lost and found matches to be scanned on a daily basis, without fail.
 - Require one staff member to be responsible for the daily checking of lost reports against the animals in the facilities. This process can be added to the daily rounds that should be conducted. See section, “Animal Handling and Care” for more on daily population rounds.
 - Ensure that an employee scans all active lost reports for every stray animal entering the facility upon intake for possible matches.
 - Utilize Chameleon to track lost and found reports. Electronically managing lost and found provides for a much more efficient process than utilizing manual papers and binders. Any animal management software should have the ability to perform functions that are required of managing a lost and found program. If more software knowledge is required, reach out to Chameleon for instructions and/or training on using that part of the software.
 - Consider developing a program that focuses on working with pet owners who have lost their pet. Many animal services agencies have had overwhelming success with such programs, resulting in greatly increased return to owner rates. Staff and well-trained volunteers can do the following toward this effort:
 - Greet and assist visitors in completing lost reports
 - Escort pet owners through the shelter
 - Ensure that visitors review the DOA and “found pet” reports
 - Provide advice and counseling on how best to look for their pets
 - Maintain and update both the lost and found files
 - Perform daily lost and found checks on stray animals in the facility
 - Gather and assess articles and suggestions from groups around the country on best practices for lost and found programs. Develop processes around SB CAS capabilities and continue to build onto them on an ongoing basis.¹³
 - The Center for Lost Pets (thecenterforlostpets.com) provides a central location where people who have lost or found pets can connect. Pet owners can post lost pets and search for postings of found pets. Shelters can upload photos of stray animals arriving at the shelter. The site also provides advice and resources for how to find a lost pet. All services on the site are free.
 - Missing Pet Partnership (missingpetpartnership.org) is a national nonprofit devoted to reuniting lost pets with their families. The website includes recovery tips and a guide to finding pet detectives.
 - Create and utilize a Facebook page as a community Lost and Found resource.¹⁴

¹³ http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep_oct_2009/many_happy_returns_to_owners.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/LostFoundDogs.VA>



Discussion:

Most municipal animal services facilities have high rates of stray animal intakes, in some cases close to 80% of animals are stray. For this reason, having a proactive lost and found program is essential to increase return to owner rates and decrease the shelter population. Animal shelters are moving toward taking a proactive role by assisting owners to find their lost pets.

Reuniting pets with their owners is a vital shelter service. The lost and found program must be taken seriously and time must be committed to its development. A successful lost and found program is crucial. Increasing the reclaim rate improves staff morale, helps to reduce the pressures on holding requirements, reduces animal care workloads, and helps relieve the pressures for space in the shelter.

2.8 FOSTER PROGRAM

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual included, Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.14 “Foster Care Program.” The procedure stated that foster parents were screened and approved and that fostered animals remained the property of Santa Barbara County Animal Services. The procedure further stated that Supervising Animal Control Officer or RVT approved animals for the foster program. Reasons for foster included: too young for adoption, pregnant, injured or sick, if shelter is at capacity, and socialization/ behavior modification. Responsibility of the program was the Supervising Animal Control Officer, RVT and Community Outreach Coordinator. Foster parents were responsible for ensuring proper medical treatment and maintaining accurate records and all health concerns were to be brought to the attention of the RVT and Supervising Animal Control Officer. After hours urgent medical issues would be facilitated by the foster but approval is required for payment to be rendered by SBCAS. While this appeared to be the policy for the entire organization it is only applicable to Santa Maria.

Ninety five percent of animals in foster are kittens. In SB Love at Home provides foster services for dog and ASAP provides foster services for cats. In Lompoc, CAPA provides foster homes for dogs and VIVA for cats. These groups abide by their own standard operating, recruitment and training procedures for foster care, despite the foster animal being under the legal jurisdiction of the county. It should be mentioned that while these standards are not those of SBCAS, they are in fact exemplary, as in the case of ASAP.

It is the primary job of the SM Community Outreach Coordinator to find and train foster parents in SM. When foster families can not be found in SM, the COC will reach out to SB groups for assistance. This has come with severe criticism by the SB groups that this program is not growing sufficiently to meet the demands.

A second COC was hired in SB but left hastily citing reasons indicating a perceived toxic environment cultivated and fostered by the dysfunctional dynamic between the volunteers, external influencers and County Leaders and the bullying of staff by volunteers that was not able to be addressed by shelter



management. That position is open and currently being recruited for.

Recruitment for SM foster parents is an ongoing process assigned to the Community Outreach Coordinator. Regular orientations are held, two per month, but turn out is low, with two being the maximum number participating. Sometimes no one shows up. Engagement in the community has been challenging as the demographics suggest that this is a working class population with the inability to commit to fostering nursing/orphaned kittens which is what is in the highest demand. And, when identified foster parents are needed to pick up animals, they are often unavailable or unreachable, thus preventing rapid transport of animals out of the shelter.

The team reviewed the foster parent application, the foster parent contract, foster manual and equine foster care agreement. The materials were sufficiently detailed and comprehensive and provided a strong foundation for a burgeoning foster program. The team was told that there was some training for fosters, such as for kitten foster parents.

The team was told that during the summer sometimes there are as many as 100 animals in foster homes.

Record keeping for foster care animals was difficult to assess due to the differences of program administration between all the various groups. It was not clear that all foster records were kept in Chameleon and available for the adopters. When running the Chameleon foster care inventory report it was not consistent with a paper log provided to the team in January.

Recommendations:

- Create an organization wide Foster Care Manual and Policy by collaborating with all internal partners to establish best practices for recruitment, training, identifying foster candidates, animal care, record keeping and medical management. This program should be standardized across all three sites no matter who is implementing it.
- Provide appropriate, standardized training to foster volunteers
- Accurately track foster animal inventory in Chameleon.
- Establish a coordinated plan and tracking system to ensure all foster animals receive the medical care they require to be immediately placed on the adoption floor once they become available.
- Engage in active marketing for foster recruitment in Santa Maria.
- Create “Foster On Deck” program (see appendix)

Discussion:

Animals who are candidates for foster care are those that are not ready for adoption due to age, medical condition or behavior quirks. These animals also would be at risk if placed into the shelter system as the resources available are not adequate to meet their special needs. Unweaned kittens/puppies present the largest challenge in terms of resource requirements and they are the most susceptible population in terms of



infectious diseases. Maintaining an active foster program saves lives and decreases the burden of animal care on the shelter.

Not only does a robust foster care program increase adoption rates and decreases the number of animals euthanized it can boost employee morale and enhance public relations within the community. Foster parents become adopters and supporters of the shelter.

A shelter's foster program is a tool to actively manage the shelter population and census. However, it entails an actively engaged foster community who can respond at a moments notices as every minute this susceptible population remains in the shelter it is an opportunity for them to get sick. Animals placed directly into foster care leaves cage space open which increases the capacity for care, decreases the infectious disease rate, allows more time for enrichment of sheltered animals and decreased staff burden.

Appendix 2.H Foster on Deck Program - Animal Rescue League of Boston.

2.9 FERAL CATS/ TNR/ COMMUNITY CATS

Observations:

SBCAS did not have a written procedure for how they handled community cats or worked with local feral cat/ trap-neuter-return groups. The county rented traps to citizens, but it was unclear if citizens were educated to the extent that they understood the limitation that the county had on live outcome possibilities for feral cats. The California Food and Agriculture Code established mandates for assessing cat behavior and specific holding requirements for feral cats in shelters. In a shelter environment it can be quite difficult to determine whether a cat is truly feral or simply a terrified house pet. The team observed that all efforts were made to provide a quiet environment with minimum stimuli at the Santa Maria facility, but that the housing became long term and without a solid plan for those cats.

Please refer to sections "Cat Housing," "Dog and Cat Care" and "Adoption Selection Criteria and Behavioral Assessments" for more information on feral cats.

Santa Barbara

The team was told that community cats are less of an issue in the south part of the county. ASAP took on the responsibility of performing TNR in the Santa Barbara area; fewer than 100 cats were TNRd in 2014. The criteria that must be met for a cat to qualify for TNR is the following: single cats only when there is one caretaker and a yard, there must be an indoor area for the cat to go at night to protect them from Coyotes, a site visit must be performed, and if the cat is being relocated she must stay in an enclosure in the area for 2 weeks before being released.

Santa Maria

The team determined during the site visit that while SBCAS was intent on finding placements for feral cats, the resources were not readily available. Volunteers assisted SBCAS in providing ideals for outlets as well as



providing assistance on researching wineries and ranches in the county and reaching out to them to determine if they would be willing to take in feral cats to their barns. SBCAS had a charming flyer that said “Got Mice? Feral cats will work for food!!!” The flyer stated that SBCAS was looking for citizens who could provide safe ranch, barn or warehouse homes for these cats. It further explained that they were spayed or neutered, up to date on vaccinations, healthy and would only need caretakers willing to feed them and provide their basic needs. In addition, training and support was offered.

The team inquired as to why cats were held long term and were told that it was a combination of the idea that housing long term was not problematic and that some volunteers did not want the feral cats euthanized. When the team asked if it was reasonable to think that volunteers would understand if it was explained that there were no live outcome options and that housing feral cats long term is inhumane, the response was that they would understand.

The team was told that they had been fairly effective with releasing cats back to the area where they were trapped and that many citizens were interested once they learned more about community cats and how their presence can benefit communities.

Lompoc

Feral cats were not trapped, neutered and returned by ACOs or any SBCAS employees directly from the Lompoc facility. The team was told that they were fortunate to have the group “Viva” locally and that they provided the area with the much needed pathway for feral cats.

Recommendations:

- Obtain a copy of “Managing Community Cats: A Guide for Municipal Leaders.” The PDF version is free.¹⁵
- Strengthen relationships with community cat groups in the county and provide community education concerning the problem of feral cats and solutions.^{16,17} Build off of the clever flyer “Got Mice?” and create a campaign around the effort of placing these cats in ranches, barns and warehouses in the county. Most citizens are not interested in trapping cats and kittens so that they are euthanized. Citizens who take responsibility can make a huge difference by monitoring colonies or a cat or two and providing daily care for them. It is important that neighbors are consulted and given an explanation of this process and the benefits.
- Consider contracting for TNR services in the cities that have TNR ordinances.
- Maintain accurate records of feral cats and kittens handled by SBCAS including their disposition. Over time, this data will help determine where resources are currently going and where they might be more useful.
- Elicit open dialogue with staff and volunteers regarding state code, humane housing of feral cats in

¹⁵ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/cats/managing-community-cats.html>

¹⁶ http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/feral_cats/

¹⁷ http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/feral_cats/tips/help_outdoor_cats_individuals.html?credit=web_id212453451



shelters and the resources available within the community. Recall that the code states “If the cat is determined to be truly feral, the cat may be euthanized or relinquished to a nonprofit, as defined in Section 501.”

Discussion:

Feral cats should not be housed long term in a shelter, as this is considered to be an inhumane practice unless there is a mechanism for socialization and behavior modification. SBCAS would be best served by providing trap, neuter, release programs and hosting seminars on the care and feeding of community cats. This will reduce shelter intake numbers, feline euthanasia, census and length of stay statistics.

Appendix 2.G - Feral Freedom, Creating a Community Cat Program

2.10 GIFT SHOP/ SHELTER STORE

Observations:

SBCAS did not have gift shops in their facilities, nor did they maintain displayed items for sale for adopters such as leashes and collars.

Recommendations:

- At this time, the sale of pet supplies is not a priority. No action is recommended.
- At some point, consider setting up a portion of the lobby as a store front for pet merchandise.

Discussion:

Providing a store front of even a few items may bring the shelter to another level of client service. Not only would this provide clients with an adopted pet, it would also increase the new owner's education of animals by having a selection of merchandise that would provide comfort for each pet—a martingale or gentle leader for a dog that pulls, crates for puppies that need to be house-trained, or litter boxes and items for cats such as toys and beds. The merchandise would be available to new adopters as well as the general public who may then see the shelter as a resource for pet supplies. If managed effectively, a retail store could generate some revenue to be utilized for SBCAS animal programs.

Appendix 2.F: Getting the edge in retail

2.11 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

Observations:

Santa Barbara County Animal Services Policy and Procedures Manual included six sections: Chapter 1 – General Administrative Procedures, Chapter 2 – Field Operations, Chapter 3 – Office Operations, Chapter 4 – Kennel Operations, Chapter 5 – Volunteer Services, Chapter 6 – Veterinary Procedures. The table of contents for each chapter noted that they were created from 2008-2011. The team was informed that the manual was currently under review and that SBCAS had held off on making changes to some procedures in anticipation of the AHA consultation so that recommendations could be utilized to edit the manual.

The manual was written in Microsoft Word and the layout was clear and easy to follow. The policies and



procedures were detailed, uniform, professional and sufficiently comprehensive. The content of some of the procedures required updating and those recommendations are included below or in the sections of the report where applicable. Each facility had multiple copies of the manual and all of the employees that the team spoke with were aware of the manual and where to find it.

While Standard Operating Procedures existed for some processes, they were not developed for all process, as this report identifies several areas where they are lacking.

There was no identified method of ensuring the SOP's were communicated to staff and volunteers.

Recommendations:

- The AHA team commends SBCAS for developing and maintaining a comprehensive Policy and Procedures Manual. Standard operating procedures are always a work in progress take a serious commitment from management and staff to develop, train and keep them up to date.
- Continue to develop new SOPs and update current SOPs, as required. All current procedures and practices must be turned into written SOPs.
- Consider developing diagrams to supplement some of the procedure documents. Many people learn visually and for some complex processes a flow chart or diagram would be beneficial.¹⁸
- Develop and SOP on how SOPs are communicated to staff and volunteers so that all are trained to the same level. Provide training if needed to ensure all staff and volunteers are trained to the standard required in the procedure.
- Consider the following definitions while revising the SBCAS manual:
 - Policy. A high level statement; a formal, brief statement that embraces an organization's general beliefs, goals, objectives and acceptable procedures for a specified subject area
 - Procedure. Describes a process that supports a "policy directive;" designed to describe who, what, where, when and why, by means of establishing organizational accountability in support of the implementation of a policy
 - Work instruction. Describes how to perform a process; process descriptions include details about the inputs, the outputs, and the feedback necessary to ensure consistent results
 - Checklist. A "to do" list¹⁹
 - Guideline. Aims to streamline particular processes; is not binding and is not enforced; allows for individual and subjective discretion; can be used to create a new procedure if there is an absence of one
 - Workflow. An orchestrated and repeatable pattern of activity enabled by the systematic organization of resources into processes that transform materials, provide services or process information

¹⁸www.lucidchart.com

¹⁹<http://atulgawande.com/book/the-checklist-manifesto>



Discussion:

A Standard Operating Procedures manual is one of the most useful documents that assist in streamlining responsibilities and ushering organizations toward operational excellence. SOP manuals list all of the tasks that are essential for success, how to do the tasks, and who is responsible for the tasks. SOPs are supportive toward: training new employees, ensuring continuity, and ensuring staff, volunteers and customers are getting the best possible experience.

The communication plan to effectively train the staff on a SOP is just as important as the document itself.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ANIMAL
SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*3.0 Animal Care
and Capacity*

3.0 Animal Care and Capacity

General Overview

The cage capacity for all three facilities are as follows (assume one animal per cage and appropriately double-sized cat cages.)

Location	Dogs	Cats
Santa Barbara	48	162
Santa Maria	76	75
Lompoc	30	20

It is common practice during peak seasons to house more than one dog to a kennel and to decrease the cage space for cats by inserting the dividers which allow for less than optimal room to lay down, stretch, and have sufficient distance between food, sleeping areas and litter box.

SBCAS and its internal partners should be commended on their relatively low incidence of disease that often results from over-population.

3.1 DOGS/ CATS

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.06 “Kennel Duty Assignment” included a list of general duties and assignments as it pertained to animal care. The assignments ranged from an early morning walk through to check on animals to sanitizing and cleaning and feeding. Many of the assignments had separate, lengthy work instruction documents themselves, such as “E. Sanitize dog kennel” and “Clean and feed the miscellaneous animal.” Information and recommendations on those assignments will be covered in other sections of the report.

Santa Barbara

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 55 dogs in care (1 was in foster care) and 70 cats (7 were in foster care). The average length of stay for dogs was 200 days and for cats was 79 days. As previously mentioned, cat care was provided by ASAP.

Dogs were provided oval, plastic beds with blankets. The team did not see many enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit because the kennel was observed during the cleaning process, but noticed that there were Kongs, balls and other stuff toys in the area at the back of the main kennel. Stainless steel buckets supplied water for the dogs and stainless steel bowls for food. Dogs were walked and taken to the play yards throughout the day by staff and volunteers.



Codes were utilized to classify the dogs so that staff and volunteers were aware of who was permitted to handle certain dogs: “E” for Easy, “I” for Intermediate, “A” for Advanced and “I+” for Intermediate+. The team observed a few dogs who were exhibiting concerning behavior. A few appeared to be barrier aggressive, another (Tyson) was scared and shut down, hanging his head over, crouched in the back of his kennel, avoiding eye contact and avoiding attention when it was given. Tyson A357333 (categorized as “I+”) resided in the main dog kennel in run 001. He arrived at SBCAS March 22nd, 2013. The noises of the other dogs barking and noises in the kennel in general appeared to overstimulate him. Upon approach he softened and appeared to be a sweet dog who just happened to be overwhelmed in his surroundings to the point that his comfort level was minimal. Tyson’s paperwork from the main office included hand written notes from April 4, 2013 to October 7, 2014. His formal behavior evaluation had been conducted on April 1, 2013. The hand written notes consisted of information from volunteers about jaunts he was taken on alone and in large groups of dogs to events and to the beach. In February 2014 he was taken by a volunteer overnight. The notes in his record suggested that he is a high energy dog who got along well with people and other dogs and who required an experienced handler who would be assertive with him.

Marlena A368524 in run 013 appeared to exhibit severe kennel stress and barrier frustration; she arrived at SBCAS on November 22, 2013 and had the classification “I.” Marlena’s behavior evaluation was completed on December 2, 2013 and there were three handwritten notes in her record with the dates January 27, 2014, May 24, 2014 and June 1, 2014. The note from January 27 described a hike at the beach that noted, “Liked every person and dog that she met. Even walked with [person name] (her nemesis) for half the time.” The note from June 1, stated the following: “Walked one mile up State Street and reacted badly (bark-lunge) at every new dog. Likely wanted to meet them but too amped to do correctly. Did well with group of dogs at top of State Street. No bad reactions. Ran down State Street with no bad reactions. Did really well in crowd of people – dogs and finish line. Good in car.” During the site visit the team was told that Marlena is a “project dog” and that she presents aggressively at the kennel, but is okay with most people outside of the kennel. The team was told that the volunteer who she is not comfortable with is able to walk her if someone else hands them the leash once she is out of the kennel.

Santa Maria

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 89 dogs in care (9 were in foster care) and 58 cats (3 were in foster care and 4 were at PetSmart). The average length of stay for dogs was 89 days and for cats was 58 days.

Dogs were provided short, plastic platform beds with blankets. The team did not see enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit. Stainless steel buckets and bowls supplied water for the dogs and flat, wide metal trays that were built with the T-Kennels were utilized for feeding. Only one dog was observed being taken out of his run during cleaning and placed in one of the four play yards in the courtyard.

Due to the low number of cats in care at the time of the site visit, most cats were provided two or three cages by way of the open portals. This allowed the cats to have separate areas for their food dishes, litterbox and bed. The cats appeared comfortable and were provided enrichment items such as small toys and stretch and scratch cage scratchers. Cats in the colony rooms were provided scratching posts as well as all of the items offered to the cats in cages. The team was impressed with the quality of care and enrichment provided to the cats in the adoption areas.



The team observed that several cats were being housed in the two cat holding rooms with the cage banks C201-210 and C301-310. As previously mentioned, these cats were feral (or were categorized as feral when they arrived) and were housed in these rooms because the feral cat room was noisy. According to the animal inventory there were 10 cats in these two rooms. These cats were given “hide boxes” or feral cat dens to hide in. Procedure 4.21 “Feral Cat Temperament Testing and Assessment” will be discussed in the section “Adoption Selection Criteria and Behavioral Assessment”.

The team reviewed the kennel cards of these 10 cats who were all FIV/FelV snap tested, fully vaccinated, and altered (except for an already ear-tipped cat and a new arrival). The records did not include a completed Feral Cat Temperament Assessment form, which was noted in Procedure 4.21 to be required with each fearful, potentially feral cat record.

Name, Identification	Intake Date	Notes on the records
No name, A378151	7/29/14	“Mother cat feral, kittens feral”
Demonia, A380249	9/16/14	None
Spookarella, A381408	10/14/14	None
Nora, A382426	11/11/14	Went to CARE for head trauma injury and received radiographs and bloodwork. Medication record card notes “* Caution*” and “very fractious striking and hissing” on the first full date of a course of medications 11/13/14.
Tonic, A382805	11/22/14	Note on Cat Veterinary Form “feral”
Gin, A382806	11/22/14	Note on Cat Veterinary Form “feral” and “nervous but able to scruff and pet”
Meowster, A383171	12/5/14	Box for feral checked off, comments: “no TNR”
Lily, A383259	12/9/14	Came from same location as “Meowster” and box for feral checked off and “(NTR)” written on relinquishment form
No name, A383921	12/29/14	Box for “feral” checked off on relinquishment form



Name, Identification	Intake Date	Notes on the records
Nightlife, A384353	1/12/15	Box for “injured” checked off on relinquishment form and box checked off “feral” with a question mark next to it. Comments: “Has been roaming neighborhood;” note on Cat Veterinary Form “nice cat”

Lompoc

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 40 dogs in care (3 were in foster care) and 17 cats (1 was in foster care). The average length of stay for dogs was 40 days and for cats was 91 days.

Dogs were provided PVC or aluminum Kuranda beds with blankets. The team did not see many enrichment items in the dog runs during the site visit because the kennel was observed during the cleaning process, but noticed that there were Kongs and balls in “the hub.” Stainless steel bowls supplied water and food for the dogs.

The team was told that cat intakes declined since the renovation took place; during the renovation cats were taken to the Santa Maria facility. Like the Santa Maria facility, due to the low number of cats in care at the time of the site visit, most cats were provided two or three cages by way of the open portals. The cats appeared comfortable and some were provided enrichment items such as small toys and some were given “hide boxes.” The cats in the adoption and stray hold room who had been there for a while were allowed to roam the room during the cleaning process (for more see the section “Cleaning and Disinfecting”). The team was impressed with the quality of care and enrichment provided to the cats.

Three of the cats were listed as being located in receiving, three were listed in the adoption room and 10 were listed in the stray room. The team observed 4 cats in the stray room and the remainder in the adoption room (and one in the hallway cage and one loose in the conference room, “Dei” A374322). This indicated to the team that the locations of the cats needed to be updated in Chameleon.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement SOPs for all aspects of dog and cat care, designed to increase staff awareness and requirement beyond routine, cleaning and feeding. Utilize the Five Freedoms to start the process of educating each other and the community on basic animal welfare tenets.^{1,2}
- Allow all cats adequate space, with proper population management there should be no need to insert the cage dividers.

¹ <http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care/five-freedoms>

² <http://www.maddiesfund.org/behavior-problems-and-long-term-housing.htm>



- Consider contracting with the partner groups who have full care responsibility of SBCAS animals. SBCAS must either assume full responsibility of the animals in their care, or outsource to another entity rather than retaining custody and thereby creating a perplexing environment for visitors and a struggling relationship with the groups.
- Immediately develop a plan for re-evaluating all long term animals who have been in the care of SBCAS for more than 90 days at each facility. Develop solutions for each animal which may include any of the following options:
 - Behavior plan including who, how and when it will be implemented; a clear goal must be decided and if that goal is not achieved, other arrangements must be made within a specified timeframe.
 - Foster home to further determine “home-ability”³ and provide more information for the shelters or potential adopters (Dr. Emily Weiss suggests that shelter animals could be potentially labeled as “unadoptable,” but are often dogs and cats who may just be “un-shelterable” (or shelter challenged) and are quite home-able).
 - House dogs with barrier aggression only in foster homes; they do not present well in a shelter setting, create a stressful environment for other animals around them and are unlikely to attract adopters.
 - Transfer to an adoption partner who has resources and ability to provide the behavior or other type of care required.
 - Adoption specials for particular animals; develop an “overlooked animal” tracking system and push for live outcomes of those pets who are overlooked, but who are home-able. See section “Adoption Process and Policies” for more.
 - Perform euthanasia in cases where the animal is not treatable/ manageable behaviorally or medically based on care equivalent to the care typically provided to pets by reasonable and caring pet owners/ guardians in your community.
- Utilize materials from the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program to calculate humane capacity and target length of stay for fast and slow tracking for each facility.⁴
- Provide training for all staff and volunteers on recognizing, reducing, and preventing stress in dogs which can cause a decline in health and adoptability.^{5, 6, 7} Document animals who are exhibiting signs of stress and what the signs are and develop behavior plans to improve their quality of life. If

³ <http://www.aspcapro.org/blog/2015/01/28/home-able>

⁴ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/37>

⁵ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/something.pdf>, “When Something Must Be Done,” Rondout Valley Kennels

⁶ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/stress.pdf>, “Stress Signals Checklist,” Rondout Valley Kennels

⁷ <http://www.animalsforadoption.org/rvaa/sites/default/files/files/sforms/shelter.pdf>, “How Can Learning About Dog Behavior and Training Benefit Your Shelter?”, Rondout Valley Kennels



- housing in a shelter setting is not possible for some of the animals, prioritize moving them into foster homes with trained foster parents who have the ability to work with and rehabilitate them.
- Discontinue long term housing of feral cats at the Santa Maria location. Progressive community cat programs provide basic medical care and spay and neuter cats and release them within 24 hours of surgery. If the SBCAS does not currently have immediate outlets for feral cats, consider euthanasia after the stray holding period rather than utilizing resources for these cats and holding them long term. Housing feral cats in a shelter environment long term is not humane and ensuring staff safety handling fractious animals is challenging. Safely caring for a feral cat in a typical shelter cage is also terribly stressful for the cat.
 - Determine the dispositions of the cats housed in the two cat holding rooms with the cage banks C201-210 and C301-310. Consider reaching out to local TNR groups for assistance placing the cats currently in care, if not adoption candidates.
 - Maintain a list of willing recipients of feral cats and as soon as a feral cat enters the system contact the recipient to prepare for transport after surgery. If the SBCAS is not able to proactively plan placements for feral cats, the alternative cannot be to institutionally house them and wait indefinitely for an opportunity to arise.
 - When housing feral cats, for example, during the stray holding period, utilize feral cat dens.^{8,9}
 - Rotate dogs in the play yards in the courtyard at the Santa Maria facility. Do this by creating a formal outdoor activity chart. Dog rotations will be helpful for those dogs who are house-trained because they will stay on a schedule, which will attract potential adopters. Do not allow puppies to enter the play yard until they have been fully vaccinated.
 - Create enrichment programs for all animals for each location.^{10,11} Give all dogs a Kong or other washable toys every day. Toys provide vital enrichment for the dogs, and those who have a toy and a blanket in their run are more appealing to potential adopters. If toys are given to dogs who are sharing a run, those who guard their resources should be housed separate from other dogs. This will be discussed, in depth, in the Behavior and Enrichment Section
 - Add a towel or pillow case to the doors of the stainless steel Shor-line cages for small dogs in the center walkway in the main kennel at the Santa Barbara location. This way, these small dogs can have an area to avoid visual contact with other animals.

Discussion:

In general, SBCAS meets the basic physical needs of the animals in their care. The animals are provided with

⁸ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/73310>

⁹ <http://aspcapro.org/segregating-populations-5-tips-for-housing-feral-cats>

¹⁰ www.aspcapro.org (search "enrichment")

¹¹ www.openpaw.org



food, water, shelter, a clean environment and a cadre of staff and volunteers that are dedicated to their well-being.

During the site visit in January 2015, all three shelters were operating at or above their cage capacity for dogs, and well below their cage capacity for cats.

In today's progressive sheltering movement, we need to set objectives to exceed the basic physical needs and incorporate emotional and behavior needs as part of the standards of care. In order for the animals to maintain their sociability in the shelter environment they must be provided not only with quality care, but also quality enrichment and exercise. It is here, SBCAS, has work to be done and this will be addressed in detail in the Behavior and Enrichment section of the report. This is especially true when average length of stay for dogs begins to exceed 2 to 3 months as is the case at SBCAS.

Dogs at the Santa Barbara facility and feral cats at the Santa Maria facility were of concern to the AHA team. A flyer written by Roundout Valley Kennels says the following, "With long term kenneling, it becomes unacceptable to merely provide for the physical health and needs of dogs in shelters. It is not enough to just hope for more adoptions, as the days pass by and the dogs deteriorate mentally. The behavioral and emotional wellbeing of the dogs in your care must be addressed daily, and their status at least maintained—but as the animal's shelter goal—improved. Without intervention, the dog will become less and less adoptable and its chances for a longer and longer shelter life will increase." UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program also states that long-term confinement of any animal, including feral or aggressive animals, who cannot be provided with basic care, daily enrichment and exercise without inducing stress, is unacceptable. Decisions must be made on these animals.

A shelter's capacity is not measured by the number of open cages, nor by square footage. It is calculated based on the resources available and the number of staff and volunteers assigned to animal care. Humane Society of the United States estimates an average of 15 minutes per animal to clean, feed and water. This does not include the essential time needed to address emotional and behavioral well-being.

Focusing on population wellness and humane capacity and developing processes and systems in order to maintain a steady flow of animals through the facilities is of utmost importance. Population Management will be addressed in another section. These enhancements signal to the community that SBCAS ensures that all animal's needs are being met and they will be more desirable pets as a result.

More Information:

Know your Capacity for Humane Care

<http://www.maddiesfund.org/know-your-capacity-for-humane-care.htm>

Maddies Fund Webinar - Fixing the Feline Housing Crisis <http://www.maddiesfund.org/fixing-the-feline-housing-crisis.htm>

Appendix 3.A: Calculating Shelter Capacity

Appendix 3.B: ASV Facility & Environment PPT

3.2 SMALL ANIMALS AND EXOTICS

Observations:



Rabbits were plentiful at each of the SBCAS facilities. As previously mentioned, cages were clean, water bottles and food dishes were full, and the team observed that the rabbits received appropriate care at each of the facilities.

Each of the facilities housed and handled exotic animals under the same set of practices. The team was informed that basically they “make do with what they have” and go purchase specialty food or other items if they did not have it on hand. Each of the facilities appeared to have storage of many types of specialty cages and tanks; however, with the exception of a few rats available at the Santa Maria and Lompoc locations, none were in use during the site visit. At the Santa Barbara facility, the exotic animals were housed in the staff room, at the Santa Maria facility, either in the medical suite, the grooming room, or if available for adoption, in the lobby. At the Lompoc facility, the exotic animals were housed in the euthanasia room or if available for adoption, in the lobby. Exotic animals were either adopted from each of the facilities or transferred to adoption partner groups.

The team received feedback from stakeholders prior to the site visit that included concern for SBCAS ability to provide appropriate housing and care for exotic animals such as reptiles. The team would agree that the facilities were lacking in their resources to provide appropriate housing and care, most especially the Santa Barbara location whereby housing in the staff room was required due to space constraints.

The longest lengths of stay for a species at each facility were the rabbits. The rabbit length of stay was more consistent with a sanctuary rather than a robust rabbit adoption program. The team wondered if the sheer number of rabbits made adoptions challenging.

Santa Barbara

It appeared to the team that the care and operations provided for the rabbits and guinea pigs by BUNS was appropriate. During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 63 rabbits in care (3 were in foster care). Twelve of those had been in care for more than a year and three of the twelve had been in care for more than two years (one for nearly five years, “Petunia” A308214). There were 4 guinea pigs on the animal inventory from January 14th, 2015. The average length of stay for rabbits was 231 days.

Santa Maria

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 31 rabbits in care (4 were in foster care). Their lengths of stay ranged from 1 day to 786 days (at 786 days “Hothot” A354419). The team was informed that a volunteer cleaned and cared for the rabbits on a daily basis. When the team asked what happened if that volunteer was unable to make it in, they were told that the rabbits were assigned to one of the Kennel Attendants. During the site visit the volunteer cleaned and cared for the rabbits; however, the team was unable to observe or meet with the volunteer. The average length of stay for rabbits was 239 days.

Lompoc

During the site visit the animal inventory indicated that there were 15 rabbits in care (3 were in foster). Their lengths of stay ranged from 34 days to 656 days (at 656 days, “Charlie” and “Sally” A359315 and A359316 were in foster care, and “Puri:ima” A372878 was onsite for 306 days). The average length of stay for rabbits was 229 days.



Recommendations:

- Limit the number of rabbits shown in the facilities as available for adoption at a given time. Interestingly, limiting the number of animals shown on the adoption floor often increases the number of adoptions.¹²
- Implement a robust adoption program for rabbits. Investigate adoption partners to inquire about placement of some of the long-term bunnies.
- Consider contracting rabbit and guinea pig care and sheltering to a private organization located in a centralized area within the county.
- Train all staff in proper safe handling techniques for small and exotic animals to minimize potential injury to staff and the animals.
- Dedicate a space that has some flexibility so SBCAS can accommodate the needs of the various animals they may find in their care. House small animals and exotics in a low traffic area that is as quiet as possible. Most small animals and exotics are easily stressed, and any holding or adoption space should be located out of high traffic and noisy areas of the shelter. Staff access should be restricted to those who are trained to care for small and exotic animals. Housing, care and enrichment for small mammals and exotics is just as important as for dogs, cats and other pets.¹³

Discussion:

These exotic animals are typically prey species and have unique needs within the sheltering environment. A dedicated housing area needs to be identified.

Rabbit adoptions seem to be stagnant and the base census of rabbits with long length of stays is high. Aggressive marketing and promotion of these animals and other exotics that are difficult to adopt should be investigated as well as the option of transferring them to partners that specialize in these species.

For additional information:

<http://rabbit.org/working-with-pet-stores-to-promote-rabbit-adoptions-over-rabbit-sales/>

3.3 WILDLIFE

Observations:

SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 3, 3.48 "Activities Involving Injured, Sick or Dead Marine Animal:" included the reporting and handling procedures for marine animals. Marine mammals were never housed or cared for at the SBCAS facilities.

At the time of the site visit there was no wildlife on the premises. Non-mammal wildlife cases were

¹² <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-adoption-marketing-research-data/aspcapro-research-less-more-adoption-floor>

¹³ <https://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption/other-pet-adoption/facts-small-mammals-pets/>



transferred to California Fish and Game. They utilize educational resources from the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, a local organization that rescues, rehabilitates and returns birds and small mammals that are native to Santa Barbara county to the wild. This group also was able to transfer in animals from SBCAS. The team was told that if wildlife is brought to one of the facilities by a member of the community or an ACO and it is too late in the day for a transport to a wildlife facility, the animal would be kept in a transport cage and transported first thing the next morning.

Recommendations:

- Create SOPs for handling wildlife to ensure the safety of the ACO □ Prohibit volunteers from handling wildlife.
- Provide annual training to those individuals that will be called to handle wildlife, including zoonotic potential
- Ensure all those employees handling wildlife have rabies vaccines or current titers.

Discussion:

It is inevitable that animal control will be called to handle wildlife. Keeping employees safe and reducing risk of bites and infectious disease transmission is imperative and likely an OSHA requirement.

3.4 LIVESTOCK AND EQUINE

Observations:

There was no SOP available for livestock or equine care. There were no livestock or equine being housed at any of the SBCAS locations during the site visit, with the exception of some chickens. The chickens at the Santa Barbara facility were provided a make shift area behind the main, administrative building which was not ideal. During the site visit there were two birds and one of them did not have access to water for part of the day. Both the structures and care provided to the chickens at the other two facilities were more ideal for longer term confinement of these birds. Each bird, or birds if housed together, were provided with a “dog house” or igloo, hay, dirt, water and food.

As mentioned in the section “Livestock/Equine Housing,” horses were cared for at either boarding facilities or in foster homes. SBCAS had an information sheet “Large Animal Resource” which included information on large animal veterinarians in the county, emergency housing, transporting and remains disposal (for owners of deceased animals). SBCAS also had on hand the following forms: large animal initial investigation checklist, equine veterinary form, equine identification form and equine foster care agreement.

Recommendations:

- Develop an SOP for the care and handling of livestock and equine and adopt it for each facility, with the exception of Santa Barbara where they should not be housed.
- Animals housed at boarding facilities should have periodic in-home checks to determine that they are being treated at the standard of care set by SBCAS. If MOU □ are not in place with these facilities, draft and implement.



Discussion:

It is important to ensure that these animals, while not directly under the care and supervision of employees, are being given appropriate care. If these animals remain in the custody of SBCAS, measures need to be in place to ensure limiting legal liability in the event that they cause harm to humans or property.

3.5 HUMANE CAPACITY

As part of the review of animal handling and care the team examined humane capacity by reviewing length of stay and population management practices. Observations and recommendations related to these concepts can be found throughout this report.

The animal population was observed to be managed passively rather than proactively, most notably at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria locations. Passive animal population management was most obvious with dogs and rabbits whose lengths of stay for some individuals exceeded a year and many several years. Noted in the respective sections above is the average length of stay for dogs, cats and rabbits based on the animals who were active and in care on the animal inventory dated January 14th, 2015.

Dog and rabbit capacity appeared to be the most challenging at each of the facilities. As previously mentioned, there were no empty dog runs during the site visit. The team observed that when an open run was needed, dogs were doubled or tripled up to accommodate a new intake. Either dogs who had been in residence were paired up, or a new intake was placed in a run with another dog. Anecdotal reports from volunteers and staff indicated that at one time, as many as 115 dogs have been housed in Santa Barbara.

By observation and through interviews, SBCAS operates on average above humane capacity, and this practice has become an acceptable culture. Partly due to the complex relationship between staff and volunteer organizations, animals are being allowed to remain sheltered for periods of time exceeding humane standards. In some instances, these animals are exhibiting behaviors indicating emotional distress and breakdown.

Appendix 3.C Behavior Problems with Long Term Housing

Recommendations:

- Calculate the humane capacity for each of the facilities. Utilize resources provided by the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program to determine humane capacity.^{14,15} Operating beyond an organization's capacity for care is an unacceptable practice. This will need to factor in employee and volunteer hours.
- Using Chameleon Software calculate and review the length of stay for each species monthly and annually. Length of stay by room should also be reviewed to determine if certain areas of the facilities have lower or higher lengths of stay than others. Determine target length of stay for dogs and cats and include the information in the humane capacity spreadsheet provided by UC Davis

¹⁴ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com>

¹⁵ <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care/calculating-your-humane-capacity>



Koret Shelter Medicine Program.¹⁶

- Institute daily population wellness rounds as a way to begin a proactive animal management program.^{17,1819} Create pathways for each animal upon intake.²⁰
- Institute fast tracking in order to maximize life-saving capacity.²¹
- Develop an Intake and Adoption Decision Making Criteria matrix.²² Dr. Kate Hurley at the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program provides the context for creating a decision criteria matrix:

Every year, hundreds or even thousands of animals enter the typical shelter. For each animal, multiple decisions are required: where to house the animal; whether rescue contact should be initiated; whether additional investment in the animal, such as medical treatment, is needed and affordable; whether the animal is a safe candidate for adoption or poses a risk to the public; etc. This easily amounts to dozens of decisions required each day. The most important and difficult decision that sometimes has to be made is the one to euthanize an animal. For shelters that limit intake, a similar dilemma is faced with the choice to admit an animal or not. We owe it to the animals and ourselves to ensure that these critical choices are made based on a well-thought-out set of criteria; developed in a rational manner with input from appropriate stakeholders; and designed to maximize the number of animals released alive while minimizing the holding time and suffering of animals that will ultimately be euthanized.

Discussion:

Dr. Kate Hurley explains the importance of humane capacity in the following way: “Understanding and maintaining shelter capacity is fundamental to provide humane standards of care, maintain animal health and maximize live release. Given the great number of homeless pets in need of care, it can be difficult to imagine defining, let alone providing, “sufficient” capacity for this seemingly infinite population. However, the problem of homeless animals is not really one of holding capacity, but one of flow through capacity. Of course we know this already: if a shelter simply admitted all animals that came through the door and never released them, virtually all facilities would soon be impossibly overcrowded. We know that ultimately the problem must be largely solved by reducing the number of animals in need of shelter through preventive programs, and by ensuring that the remaining homeless animals pass through shelters successfully to a

¹⁶ <http://www.aspcapro.org/stay>

¹⁷ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/78728>

¹⁸ <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/population-wellness-rounds>

¹⁹ http://www.aspcapro.org/sites/default/files/aspca_asv_population_management_assessment_checksheet_0.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/48>

²¹ <http://www.aspcapro.org/node/78849>

²² <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/developing-intake-and-adoption-decision-making-criteria>



positive outcome. Fortunately, sufficient capacity is a much more attainable goal once we realize that we do not need to “huddle our way out of overpopulation” but simply provide humane conditions for a finite number of animals as they pass through our care.”

We have added a section on Population Management to address this in depth.

3.6 ANIMAL HANDLING

Observations:

The SBCAS Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, 4.02 “Animal Handling and Restraint,” 4.03 “Use of Restraint Equipment,” and 4.11 “Moving Impounded Animals.” Chapter 4, 4.22 “Moving Animals to the Adoption Areas (Santa Maria Animal Center),” included instructions on flow of animals from holding areas to adoption areas. Basic animal handling and restraint was included on the list of trainings in the “training academy” curriculum. The Care and Evaluation Committee will be discussed in the section of the report on Adoptions.

The team did not have the opportunity to observe employees or volunteers handling aggressive or fractious animals during the site visit. Each facility appeared to have some handling equipment, though where the equipment was kept was not consistent between the facilities and it was not clear if all employees were aware of where they would find the equipment if it was needed. Procedure 4.02 noted that the facilities should have the following equipment on hand: leash, trap, rolling cages, carrier, catch pole, Welborne or Freeman net, Snake hook or tongs, Cat grasper, Nets of various sizes, Muzzles, Gloves, Towels and blankets, Snappy snare. Procedure 4.03 detailed in what circumstances to use and how to use: leash, control stick, Welborne or Freeman Net Pole, Muzzle, Gloves, Blankets and towels, Assess-a-Hand, Easy Nabber. The team did not observe all of these items at the facilities. If they were present at the facilities, they were stored in various locations.

“A. Reasons to move animals include,” in Procedure 4.11, listed, “1. Creating space for incoming strays (this may be done by the impounding Officer).”

Santa Barbara

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees and volunteers handling dogs, cats and rabbits during the site visit. The team observed a drawer filled with prong collars at the back of the main dog kennel, but did not observe them being utilized. During the site visit there was some concern that prong collars would be utilized at SBCAS. There were no written procedures on the use of prong collars.

Santa Maria

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees handling dogs, cats and birds during the site visit. It was reported to the team that one employee is not appropriately trained to handle or care for cats and despite this is assigned to cats. The team was told that one staff member utilizes a syringe pole to encourage cats to move from one side of the cage to the other so that the divider can be added prior to cleaning. The team observed a drawer filled with prong collars in the stainless steel storage cabinet area off of the hallway near the stray dog kennel, but did not observe them being utilized. The team observed feral cat boxes in a couple of the feral cat cages. See section “Cleaning and



Disinfecting” for more on dog handling.

Lompoc

The animal handling observed was appropriate, gentle and humane. The team observed employees and volunteers handling dogs, cats and rats. The animals were handled properly and with utmost care and concern for their wellbeing. A safe handling guideline for volunteers was posted on the wall in the dog kennel.

Recommendations:

- Develop a written SOP for animal handling.
- Implement comprehensive training program for staff and volunteers on animal handling and restraint prior to deploying them to work with the animals and institute a yearly review. Training will reduce liability and work place injuries. The American Humane Association (AHA), the National Animal Control Association (NACA), the ASPCA, the HSUS and other national and local groups offer animal handling and restraint webinars, books, cds and videos online.
- Determine whether or not SBCAS will utilize prong collars and if so develop a procedure and training for their use. If not, remove all prong collars from the premises. Most progressive animal shelters prohibit the use of aversive training techniques or tools such as prong collars, pinch/choke chain collars, electronic collars, spray bottles and physical reprimands including alpha rolls. Consider applying the methods taught by Karen Pryor who provides online the “Shelter Training and Enrichment Course.”^{23,24}
- Provide trained staff with safety equipment and place the equipment in one or two designated areas in the shelter in case of an emergency. Ensure that all staff members know where to find the equipment.
- Place all animal handling equipment on a weekly maintenance program that includes the immediate repair or removal of any faulty equipment.
- Utilize the double-cage system that is in place to secure cats during cleaning or utilize feral cat dens. Humanely direct cats from one side to the other or clean the cage with the cat secured in the den.
- The AHA team commends SBCAS for utilizing the most essential animal handling equipment. Ensure staff safety and humane care of animals by providing access to the following additional animal handling equipment and ensure that staff receives instruction on the proper use of the equipment:
 - Crates, Cages and Cardboard Carriers: Many sizes and types of cages and crates should be available at all times for a variety of situations. Cardboard carriers can be used for a variety of purposes, including the transportation of diseased or deceased animals or providing a quiet environment for animals undergoing the euthanasia process.
 - Caging and Transfer Systems for Unsocialized Cats: Trap transfer cages, squeeze cages,

²³ <https://www.karenpryoracademy.com/shelter-training-and-enrichment>

²⁴ <http://www.animalsheltering.org/training-events/expo/expo-2014/expo-2014-handouts/Enrichment-pryor.pdf>



and feral cat handling systems are crucial equipment for animal care and control. These caging systems provide for the anesthesia, euthanasia, or transfer of feral and unsocialized cats without the need for human handling or intervention whatsoever.

- o Feral Cat Den: Designed to provide an alluring safe place for feral and unsocialized cats to hide, these versatile cages allow for daily care, cage cleaning, monitoring, treatment, transfer, anesthesia, or euthanasia of feral or unsocialized cats with no handling necessary.²⁵
- o Stretchers: Most animal stretchers have plastic or vinyl covers designed to help carry injured, anesthetized, or sedated animals safely and comfortably during transport. Many come with a cover that fits over the prone animal, attaching to the stretcher with a securing material, such as Velcro.

²⁵ <http://www.alleycat.org/page.aspx?pid=455>



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*4.0 Shelter
Medicine and
Veterinary
Services*

4.0 Shelter Medicine and Veterinary Services

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Santa Barbara Animal Services (SBCAS) had three separate locations within Santa Barbara County that housed animals. This presented unique challenges for veterinary and animal health issues and oversight. Only one location (Santa Maria) had a full service veterinary facility with the two facilities in Goleta and Lompoc utilizing a room that served as exam rooms and medical dispensaries. There was a wide discrepancy of care between the three locations although some basics such as vaccination protocols have been standardized.

In addition SBCAS held multiple contracts with various private veterinary clinics within the County that assisted with emergencies, after hours care and cases that were beyond the ability for the county facility to handle. The cost of this care was paid either by the County and/or by rescue (501-3c) partners.

Overall the staff at all three locations were observed to be compassionate and cognizant of the need for quick health assessments on their animals and are to be commended for the extraordinary health of the animals seen within their facilities at the time of the consult.

However, the inability to have daily veterinary oversight at all three locations had resulted in some animals failing to receive timely appropriate care. Staff did an admirable job with what resources they are given but lack of appropriate training, lack of designated supervision, lack of adequate staffing and lack of conducting Daily Rounds has resulted in unfortunate potentially preventable deaths and significant delays in outcome determinations. In 2014, 99 animals died in the kennel with over 50% being in Santa Maria, the facility with the most veterinary oversight.

4.1 GENERAL SHELTER MEDICINE

Observations:

Santa Barbara County Animal Services had a Policy and Procedures Manual written in 2011. Chapter 6 covered Veterinary Services. This document outlined a basic policy for various aspects of animal health care e.g. Physical Examination of Adoptable Animals (policy # 6.01), Vaccinations and Routine Treatment (Policy # 6.02), Sick and/or Injured Animals (Policy # 6.03), Isolation Room Protocol (Policy # 6.04), Inventory and Supplies (Policy # 6.05), Disposal of Medical Waste and Sharp Objects (Policy #6.06) and Infectious Disease Control in the Shelter (Policy # 6.07).

Santa Maria also had a few SOP's generated by the clinic staff for that shelter for example 1) SMAC Ringworm for Fosters and 2) Feline Upper Respiratory (URI) Treatment Protocols. It was reported that these would be given to foster volunteers dealing with ringworm or feline URI but that both conditions were rare.

In addition to the SOP, updated intake/vaccination protocols were posted at each location in the room utilized for intake. There were no formal SOP's found to cover other health issues for all locations.

ASAP had their own SOP's that covered many aspects of their animals' health. These were found in labeled binders in the appropriate rooms e.g. Isolation Room Veterinary Protocol and in a general binder in the volunteer/break area. These SOP's were detailed and comprehensive and staff and volunteers reported that they were followed.



Santa Barbara

Treatment of sick animals was on a case-by-case basis. Animals with identified problems on intake (noted by either the ACO or kennel staff) were brought to the attention of the supervisor depending on severity. Problems noticed during the day were also brought to the attention of the supervisor who determined whether it was necessary to transport the animal to a clinic or wait for the day the contract veterinarian could examine. If an animal needed immediate care the supervisor would either authorize transport to a clinic as soon as transport could be arranged or the supervisor would reach out to rescue partners to determine whether the outside veterinary care would be funded. Kennel staff sometimes handled simple problems if/when they were noticed while conducting their morning kennel duties. Staff reported that most problems were noticed and handled fairly expediently but that there were definite lapses due to insufficient staffing. For example, blood spots were noted by the evaluation team in a cage in one of the offices. (Figure 1) After alerting a kennel staff member the dog that had been in that cage was identified and examined. (Figure 2) A kennel staff member with some veterinary knowledge noted a paw laceration, cleaned and wrapped the paw, placed an E-collar and notified the supervisor. (Figure 3)



Figure 1

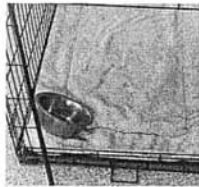


Figure 2



Figure 3

Other delays and lack of adequate daily health assessments were reported to the evaluation team. Last year a small white poodle was brought in as a stray in a weak and emaciated condition. The following day it was sent to the SB emergency clinic for observation. It returned to the shelter the next day with no apparent instructions or diagnoses. Five days later the shelter contract vet noted that the dog was emaciated, weak and that it was not known whether the dog was eating appropriately. The supervisor was informed of the dire condition of the animal. Contact was then attempted with a local rescue-funding group and once funding was assured the supervisor took the dog to one of the local SB contract private veterinary clinics. By this time the dog's condition had deteriorated to the degree that humane euthanasia was deemed appropriate by both shelter supervisors and clinic veterinarians.

In general, it is the contract veterinarian that generated a treatment form that was placed on the animal's cage initiating treatments. The appropriate labeled medication vial was placed in a container/shelf on the animal's cage. Animals in isolation/quarantine (Pillsbury) have their medications kept in the adjoining "euthanasia" room.

- ASAP – Assessment and treatment plans are initiated either by ASAP's veterinarian or the veterinary assistant under supervision. Problems were noted on intake or given to the technician by volunteers and staff. All medical problems were handled with expedition, appropriately and with adequate follow-up.

- **BUNS** – Volunteers made note of any health issues during morning feedings. Problems were conveyed to the appropriate staff/volunteer member who determined whether the rabbit needed to be seen by their private veterinarian. Problems and treatments were listed on boards in the main centralized volunteer room. Health assessments and treatments were noted to be appropriate and conducted.

Santa Maria

The RVT received notes from kennel staff/ACOs if a problem was noticed on an animal at intake or during the day. The RVT prioritized these exam requests and the veterinarian on duty saw the animal either immediately if it was an emergency or later in the day after surgeries were done. The veterinarian assessed the animal and determined what diagnostic tests and/or treatment were required. The RVT generated a treatment form that was placed on the animal's cage or in the isolation room along with a daily treatment record form. Medications were either available in the room the animal was located or attached to the cage.

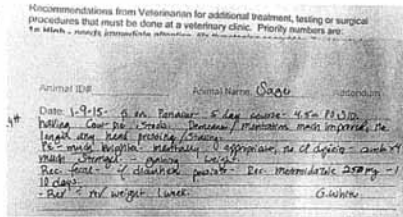


A white board was located in each isolation room where staff and volunteers could make daily observations. The RVT checked these boards for updates and wrote instructions for caregivers. Veterinarian conducted exams once treatment was completed by request of the RVT.

The veterinarian and/or RVT could generate a Veterinary Care Priority List each day. This listed the animals that required additional treatment and care either at a contract private clinic or in the shelter's clinic when it could be scheduled. For example: A priority list generated on 1-2-2015 listed 5 animals that needed hip radiographs, deciduous tooth removal at spay, recheck exam to adjust a medication prescribed by a local clinic, and tooth removal (which was completed on 1-5-2015).

Lompoc

A list of problems noted on intake or during the week was found in the main veterinary treatment room. The veterinarians used this list during their biweekly consults. It was reported that the veterinarians examined all new animals or animals with a noted problem and then generated a treatment form for each animal. This form was located in the veterinary office for the Kennel/shelter staff who would take daily note of this and treat animals according to the list.



It was observed that one of the veterinarians that conducted weekly exams called the supervisor with a follow-up report on a shelter cat with URI. The supervisor made note in the animal's record and was told it could be put up for adoption.



All three shelter locations kept paper records of all animals in the shelter. These records were kept in plastic wall containers. The veterinarian wrote assessments and treatment directions in the health record. In Santa Maria, the RVT also transcribed the written record into the animal's electronic Chameleon file. This was done at the end of the day when time permitted. It was reported that various staff could enter health information into Chameleon but that this was often not done due to lack of time.

Health care records generated by referral or emergency clinics were often not made available to the shelter or were not placed in the written record.

ANIMALS IN NEED OF EMERGENT CARE

Santa Barbara

It was reported that animals assessed as sick or suffering were taken to an emergency clinic as soon as a problem was noted. These animals remained at clinics as long as funds were found from rescue partners for continual treatment. Decisions on whether to continue treatment and at what cost was done on a case-by-case basis. There were many long term dogs at this facility with chronic skin and joint conditions that required constant assessment and treatment by the contract veterinarian. Volunteers were used to give medicated baths up to twice a week on many of the dogs and there was a high volume of joint/arthritis medication and nutraceuticals dispensed each week.

Santa Maria

It was reported that the RVT and veterinarians gave prompt medical attention to animals at this shelter. It was observed that a new dog with a worsening bite abscess (noted on intake) received immediate and appropriate surgery in the clinic as soon as the RVT was notified and the veterinarian had finished with the spay/neuter schedule. It was noted that the sick cats were given extra volunteer time and attention as directed by the RVT. Animals with special medical needs were often fostered with oversight by the RVT.

Lompoc

It was reported that the supervisor would call the RVT regarding very sick and/or injured animals. These animals would either be transported to Santa Maria for veterinary assessment or taken to a local contract clinic. It was observed that animals in the shelter were given appropriate medications by the kennel staff according to the veterinarians' instructions.

Animals picked up after hours, weekends or on holidays were brought to the shelters if deemed healthy by the ACO. The ACO was given authority to decide if an animal needed to be taken to an emergency clinic. The closest 24 hour emergency clinic available was in Santa Barbara city. ACO's from Lompoc and Santa Maria would transport the animal to Santa Barbara city if the animal was considered to be in critical condition. The ACO's reported that considerable time was needed for these transports which often took them away from carrying out their other duties.

SBCAS strove to rehabilitate treatable conditions to the best of their ability. There were clear guidelines with regard to infectious diseases such as 1) parvo, 2) panleukopenia, 3) ringworm and 4) upper respiratory complexes. None of the shelters treated conditions 1-3 at the shelter once definitively diagnosed (ELISA snap tests/skin culture) unless a willing foster was available. (ASAP treated all conditions in an appropriate and



effective manner). Respiratory conditions were treated according to the prescribing veterinarian's protocol.

It was reported that parvo/panleukopenia/distemper were very rarely diagnosed in the shelter system. Ringworm was also reportedly not routinely diagnosed. Few animals with upper respiratory conditions were seen at any location during the consult visit. It was reported that more URI was seen during high animal volume seasons.

Other conditions including behavioral issues are treated on a case-by-case basis. For example a cat with hepatic lipidosis was being treated via esophagostomy tube feeding and nighttime volunteer home care at Santa Maria. In Santa Barbara several dogs were being given weekly hypoallergenic therapy injections and frequent medicated baths. Simple surgical procedures beyond spay/neuter were done at the Santa Maria clinic at the veterinarians' discretion and ability. More complicated surgical procedures were done if/when there was funding and the shelter's staff considered it appropriate. There were no formal written decision making processes or algorithms noted. There were no written protocols for treating various behavior problems. It was reported that behavior issues were treated by a variety of walk/volunteer methods. Each shelter had different criteria and pressures from outside interest groups whether to treat or not.

Adopters were given photo copied health records at all shelter locations. However, additional information from emergency or referral private clinics was often missing. The exception is that ASAP adopters were given extensive medical records.

No formal daily rounds were conducted at any shelter locations with the exception of ASAP where either staff or volunteers reportedly did informal walk-throughs. At SB a daily discussion with the director, head kennel attendant, volunteer coordinator and adoption coordinator was observed. This discussion took place in the staff room and focused on specific animals and some action steps that needed to happen.

Recommendations:

- Use shelter software system to generate medical records, treatment sheets, medical rechecks, vaccine reminders and de-worming schedules. This program will generate daily actions lists. The use of paper records is inefficient and inconsistent.
- Create, or update and implement clear standard treatment protocols for all common shelter illness and injury. Include Disease Outbreak protocols.
- Institute *formal* Daily Rounds at all locations. There are conducted by a team of veterinary and management staff who continually assess each animal and ensure that all needed steps have been taken for that animal to move through the shelter. Conducting Daily Rounds in this manner will have significant impact on animal movement through the shelter. The small white dog in SB would not have been overlooked with Daily Rounds in place.

Personnel involved should include the Director or their designated proxy, veterinarian/RVT, adoption/foster coordinator and head kennel attendant. All may not be available each day but effort should be made to have those with authority to make decisions present. The purpose of Daily Rounds is to focus on why an animal is in the shelter and what steps must be done to move that animal out of the shelter. Daily Rounds is an action-step generating activity. The Daily Rounds team walks through the shelter, looking at each animal, making notes on what steps need to be



done to move the animal out of the shelter. A daily list of action steps is generated and a staff member is designated with follow through. Results of the follow through should be then reported to the Director at the end of the day.

The *brief* discussion by the team can include:

- Could this animal be immediately transferred to another agency?
 - Have behavioral and/or medical assessments been done to determine adoptability?
 - Has spay/neuter surgery or other medical procedures required before adoption been done?
 - Has a rescue group been contacted and pick-up arranged? If not, why not?
 - *What is the chance of having this animal adopted even with an added effort?*
 - What is our current capacity and are there more adoptable animals (dogs) in intake that need to be made available?
 - Is there any other reason this animal should be given extra time e.g. staff favorite?
 - Is euthanasia the most humane option for this animal ?
- Assign a realistic and humane maximum Length of Stay for each type of animal at intake.
 - Vaccination, *parasite control on intake and follow up*
 - Behavioral and/or medical care to alleviate suffering and improve adoptability
 - Behavioral and/or medical assessment to determine adoptability
 - Spay/neuter surgery or other medical procedures required before adoption
 - Rescue group contact and pick-up
 - Is there evidence of kennel stress or other chronic or emerging behavioral concerns? If so, have these been reported through the appropriate channels and a treatment/remedy implemented?
 - What steps are needed to move feral cats out of the shelter
 - Euthanasia – decision and performance
 - Assign a staff member to be in charge of carrying out needed dispositions for that day/week. This staff member should be given explicit time to carry out these action steps.
 - Decisions can include: increased behavioral enrichment, move to a more visible cage, community outreach as “special needs”, holding e.g. a “big happy dog adoptathon”, move to foster, move to rescue groups, euthanasia etc.
 - Formulate a method for receiving all records including clear discharge/treatment directions from referring/emergency veterinary clinics. No animals should be picked up from a clinic without these instructions. These instructions and records must be seen/evaluated by the veterinary staff and then placed into the animal’s permanent record. The Director of Shelter Medicine can be tasked with referral clinic/veterinarian communication.
 - Formulate a shelter-wide protocol/process for streamlining outcome decision-making steps. This will prevent delays and miscommunication in determining whether an animal is a good candidate for extra surgical or medical care. A good discussion and outline for implementing these kinds of algorithms in decision-making can be found at Making a comprehensive County shelter protocol

can help to decrease personal criticisms and location specific communication issues from outside interest groups.

- Consider an economic assessment of instituting after-hours/on-call duties for the RVT's and/or shelter veterinarians. Although many staff and contract employees live too far away to be physically available it may be possible to make some assessments by phone and/or Skype. The ACO could call the veterinary health member on duty and discuss whether transport to e.g. Santa Barbara city is necessary. However, the County must remunerate on-call duty appropriately.
- Hire a full-time RVT for SB and consider one for Lompoc. (see further discussion in the Veterinary Services section of this report).
- Generate/write formal veterinary protocols for all common medical conditions as well as steps to take in the event of an outbreak. The Shelter Medicine Health Care Team (SMHCT) should write these with input from contract veterinarians and kennel staff.
- Institute formal training seminars given by the SMHCT for staff that explain the methods and reasons of the protocol recommendations.
- Refocus efforts to decrease length of stay (LOS) especially for SB dogs. Many of the chronic skin conditions are due to the long term stay of most of the affected dogs. Daily Rounds will decrease LOS and new kennels will lessen the environmental conditions that appear to contribute to these issues in SB. The new SMHCT can institute shelter wide protocols for prevention and treatment of these shelter issues using accepted shelter guidelines for treatment. Reevaluate these protocols every 3-6 months as changes may be necessary during e.g. kitten season vs. quiet winter months.

Discussion:

Daily shelter rounds are performed to ensure that each animal, each day, receives the care and attention it needs to move as safely and efficiently as possible through the shelter. Shelter rounds include not only medical and behavioral care, but also logistical needs to move the animal through its shelter stay. As such, shelter rounds are distinct from, and more inclusive than, daily monitoring of animal health and behavior. Daily shelter rounds are also distinct from veterinary rounds, which focus on examining animals identified as having a medical concern. Veterinary rounds should follow daily shelter rounds and daily monitoring to respond to any concerns identified in those processes. Performing daily rounds can have a dramatic impact on length of stay, which in turn can decrease shelter crowding, lower disease levels and costs, and improve animal care and wellness as problems are identified and quickly addressed.

Daily Rounds generates a daily action list. Unless it is an emergency, action on animals should not be taken during rounds. Instead, note every single animal that needs action taken to make sure it is in the right location, with current paperwork/computer record, description and photograph, is scheduled for any needed procedures at a definite time, all needed contacts have been made (owner reclaim, rescue etc.), the animal is housed safely and appropriately and is receiving all required medical and behavioral care. Most actions should be completed on the same day they are noted. Occasionally, it will be necessary to schedule the animal for an action on a defined date in the near future (e.g. spay/neuter surgery prior to release, pick up by



rescue). When scheduled, note this on the animal's paperwork and in its computer record so the action does not need to be re-recorded unless it fails to take place on the day scheduled.

Many of the treatment protocols are not standardized for SBCAS. This leads to confusion and misappropriation of time and limited funds. Utilizing per diem veterinarians can actually increase the length of stay of an animal due to differences in medical approach to treatment plans. Consistent protocols help avoid this. The Shelter Medicine Health Care Team should formulate standard prevention and treatment protocols for use at all locations. The shelter directors should not be spending an inordinate amount of time ordering expensive medications when standard shelter treatment protocols would suffice. Time spent by managers dealing with veterinary issues would be better spent on outreach for moving dogs out of the shelter and standardized protocols will lessen the public's misunderstanding of the shelter's mission.

For additional information:

Appendix 4.A Purpose of Daily Rounds, UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program

Appendix 4.B Daily Rounds Action Sheet

Appendix 4.C Daily Rounds - How to Manual, UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program

Appendix 4.D UC Davis SOP Infectious Disease Protocol Template

Link to Decision Making Algorithms: <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/developing-intake-and-adoption-decision-making-criteria>.

4.2 VETERINARY SERVICES/STAFF/CONTRACT RELATIONS

Observations:

SBCAS had part-time contracts through the County with six licensed California veterinarians. It also had one full-time Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) on staff. The RVT set the weekly schedules for the veterinarians in Santa Maria depending on surgery and animal exam needs. The three locations had the following veterinary staff coverage:

Santa Barbara (SB) – one contract local veterinarian was on site one day a week (currently Fridays) for 6-7 hours. This veterinarian reviewed and examined all new intakes that arrived the preceding week. She also examined all animals listed on a medical problem chart, conducted rechecks and had oversight on veterinary supply and medications needed. Veterinary care was limited to non-surgical medically stable problems.

- **ASAP** – this organization ran its own veterinary facility for cats. One county contract veterinarian was on site 1-2 days (12-16 hours)/week. There was also a trained full-time veterinary assistant who monitored the clinic and animals on a daily basis. ASAP staff handled all medical protocols, decisions and emergencies appropriately and independently from SBCAS.
- **BUNS** – this sanctuary organization had its own policies for handling rabbits. The staff/volunteers interviewed were very knowledgeable in rabbit husbandry and had policies in place for assessing and treating rabbit illness. They routinely took rabbits to a private clinic for care and treatment.



Santa Maria (SM) – four contract veterinarians alternated days and hours to work in the spay/neuter clinic at the shelter. One veterinarian averaged 1 day (6-8 hours)/week, one veterinarian averaged 2 days (16-18 hours)/week, one averaged 1-2 days (6-12 hours)/week and one worked one day (8 hours)/month. The full-time staff RVT worked almost 100% at this clinic and was responsible for scheduling surgery coverage. Surgeries were conducted generally 5 days a week with public animals included on 2 days each week. All veterinarians performed routine spay/neuter surgeries on dogs and cats. Additionally, one veterinarian was skilled in rabbit spay/neuters.

The two-day/week veterinarian conducted mostly intake exams and wellness checks on animals at the SM shelter (with some spay/neuter surgeries as needed). Problems noticed by kennel staff etc. were either noted on a white board in a hallway, on a clipboard in the intake area or in the clinic or given to the RVT. Problems requiring more intensive workup and/or care, e.g. radiographs, were coordinated by the RVT and shelter supervisor for implementation at local private clinics.

All of the other SM veterinarians would also examine shelter animals if time and need presented themselves throughout the week.

Lompoc (L) – two contract veterinarians from SM traveled to the Lompoc shelter two afternoons a week (currently Monday and Friday) to conduct and review intake exams, examine medical problems listed on a clip board by ACO's or kennel attendants and diagnose and treat for minor health issues.

The SBCAS also contracted out to multiple private veterinary clinics throughout the county. These clinics were used for after-hour emergencies e.g. nights, weekends and holidays. The main 24 hour emergency clinic was located in Santa Barbara city. This and other clinics were used for diagnostics and surgeries that are beyond the scope of the Santa Maria shelter clinic e.g. radiographs and orthopedic surgeries. In addition, these clinics may be used to provide 24 hours observation/care to critical patients when necessary.

Animal Control Officers (ACO) had authority to transport critically ill stray animals directly to a contract veterinary clinic after hours. In general this meant transporting the animal to the 24 hour facility in Santa Barbara city. There were no overnight personnel who specifically observed the shelter animals at any other location. Problems observed in the morning by staff would be brought to the attention of the RVT at SM or the supervisor at the other locations. It was reported that if the animal was deemed to be critical transport to a veterinary clinic was immediately arranged.

After hour veterinary emergencies with fostered animals were handled differently depending on the organization. ASAP had well established SOP's in place for all cats in their foster programs. All ASAP foster personnel are trained in SOP's and there is an established protocol for emergencies.

Animals in foster programs at other locations had less established protocols for emergencies. In SM, animals in foster that needed medical attention would be brought to the attention of the RVT who would schedule an exam with the veterinarian on duty. Fosters at other locations would need to contact the shelter's supervisor who would determine the next course of action. There were no clear SOP's for handling foster emergencies other than taking the animal to a private emergency clinic.

Identified Challenges:



Santa Barbara

- The current veterinary staffing level was inadequate for the tasks required on a daily basis. The veterinarian was only available one day a week and there was no licensed veterinary technician on staff at this location.
- There was no formal training by the veterinarian for designated staff to become proficient or knowledgeable in veterinary medicine.
- Staff who have acquired some veterinary skills were not given specific time to monitor or assist the veterinarian. There was insufficient staff to cover kennel duties when the veterinarian was at the shelter and needed help. The veterinarian required a specific staff member with veterinary technician experience when conducting the clinic. Although not specifically assigned to veterinary technician duties this staff member did so on top of their regular kennel work.
- The SB contract veterinarian could not utilize time efficiently. Due to insufficient veterinary coverage her time was limited to routine exams and treatments. In addition there was no direct supervision from a medical director who would standardize diagnostics and treatment protocols.
- Lack of appropriately trained veterinary staff had resulted in delays in appropriate animal care (see General Shelter Medicine section).
- There were no formal Daily Rounds conducted with appropriate designated staff.
- The veterinarian routinely instituted some expensive treatments and time-consuming protocols for dogs housed long term. While appropriate for private practice these protocols put excessive burden on limited resources and staff.

Santa Maria

- Although there was a veterinarian on duty 5 days a week there was no formal veterinary supervisor who oversaw all aspects of shelter medicine at all three locations. The shelter premise holder did appear to be the informal head veterinarian in SM as she was present 2 days a week and had designated time to conduct shelter medicine.
- There was no formal communication between the four shelter veterinarians who generally do not have contact with each other. Although there was some communication between the 4 shelter veterinarians and it was reported that there is good rapport between all medical staff there was no formal, time-designated communication allotted. The SM shelter is fortunate to have this many veterinarians but there was a lack of formal emphasis on shelter medicine.
- There were no formal Daily Rounds conducted with appropriate designated staff.
- The RVT was frequently working late hours to cover all that needed to be done.
- The RVT did not have time to conduct training on protocols or other shelter medicine issues.
- There was no time for the lead veterinarian or RVT to monitor issues at the other two shelter locations.



Lompoc

- There was no daily medical staff on site. However it was reported that since a veterinarian now did rounds two days a week (currently Monday and Friday afternoon) that this had been a significant improvement to the shelter's veterinary oversight.
- There was no veterinarian or RVT designated to have authority and accountability with the drugs and medications being used at this facility.
- There was no veterinary premise permit holder at this location.
- There were no formal Daily Rounds conducted with appropriate designated staff.

Recommendations:

- Increase staffing levels such that sufficient veterinary and technical support staff are available to perform the veterinary services required in a shelter. There are several options that would increase both efficiency of staff hours and the humane care of animals, for example:
 - Hire another full-time RVT whose main responsibility is to monitor the health of the animals at the Santa Barbara location. This is also suggested for Lompoc. The veterinarian designated as Director of Shelter Medicine and, to a lesser degree, the SB contract vet, should directly supervise this RVT. Basic shelter disease issues must be treated according to the Director of Shelter Medicine in order to coordinate protocols throughout the County. The Director of Shelter Medicine and the two RVT's can be designated as the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team (SMHCT)
 - Hire a Veterinary Medical Director. This veterinarian's primary responsibility should be to develop protocols, monitor animal health, train staff, oversee the RVTs and liaise/coordinate with private clinics who manage problems outside of the shelter's ability (this Director of Shelter Medicine would only perform surgery on occasion).
 - Consider hiring a full or part-time staff veterinarian. The staff veterinarian and RVTs (it is still recommended that SBCAS have two-three full-time RVT's on staff) would form a unit separate from contract shelter veterinary spay/neuter positions (see above, SMHCT). The contract positions can be an adjunct to, but not a replacement for, a staff veterinarian with primary, consistent responsibility, time, authority and accountability to maintain shelter animal health, provide staff training, and help develop policies and procedures with regards to shelter animal health.
- Institute daily morning veterinary rounds ("Daily Rounds") for all animals at each location. Monitoring the welfare of individual animals as well as the health of the population of animals should be looked at as an integral part of the shelter medical program (see General Shelter Medicine for more detail).
- In general, tasks that can be done by a registered veterinary technician (RVT) or trained staff member should not be done by the veterinarian. Rather, use the Director of Shelter Medicine veterinarian to oversee the shelter health tasks done by the full-time staff who are dedicated for the veterinary team. This can include:



- Reviewing physical exam problems found on intake – prioritizing intake exams for the veterinarian.
- Reviewing logs of test results that were conducted during the week.
- Instituting treatment and control plans (developed by the Director of Veterinary Medicine) to manage positive infectious disease cases.
- Developing protocols (with veterinary input) to improve shelter animal health and ensure a means of managing these protocols effectively among staff.
- Providing personnel training in prevention and recognition of zoonotic diseases.
- Reviewing all training bulletins that pertain to veterinary medicine
- Ensuring that computer data entry is done correctly
- Reviewing vaccine and parasite reminders and ensuring that these are being done on time.
- Consider instituting e.g. bi-weekly or monthly group Skype sessions for all veterinarians and RVT's to "meet". These sessions need not be lengthy but will offer a forum for direct communication between all health care providers. On-line forums such as Skype offer after-hour possibilities and team members can Skype from home. The unique situation of significant distances between the SB shelters requires increased communication options that will allow SBCAS veterinary services to function as a cohesive group minimizing local cultural differences.
- Consider increasing volunteer help for the RVT in the SM clinic. Many options can be considered e.g. part-time data entry/technician help from students at the RVT program at Hancock community college. This position(s) would be in addition to the current daily surgery technician help and would be directly responsive to the RVT.
- Obtain a veterinary premise permit for Lompoc. Designate a veterinary supervisor (Director of Shelter Medicine, either SM or new SB RVT) to monitor supplies and have authority for drugs and medicines at this shelter.

Discussion:

A shelter veterinarian should be spending time developing protocols and training staff to handle routine medical issues. It is especially important that a limited contract veterinarian's time be utilized efficiently in a shelter. The job of a shelter veterinarian often differs in focus from that of a private practitioner. Many routine jobs could be handled by an RVT under the direct supervision of a veterinarian (California Business and Professional Code 4836.1 (a-e); California Code of Regulations 2034 and 2036).

In 2013 the Santa Barbara Public Health Department administration began working with SBCAS management to explore ways to reorganize animal services. The Reorganization Project 2013 (document provided to the AHA team) outlined the need for changes needed in the veterinary clinic. All recommendations made were commendable but had not been implemented. It is understood that hiring a full-time staff veterinarian may not be possible at this time due to County budget constraints and because using contractor veterinarians offers more flexibility. However, contract veterinarians can often end up increasing expenses not only in fees but in consumption of medical and pharmaceutical supplies. Be advised that veterinary shelter medicine is not the same as veterinary private practice. The skill set and knowledge needed is based more on "herd



medicine” concepts than individual animal treatment. For this reason it is important to hire a supervisory veterinarian with this training and/or provide options for continuing education in shelter medicine to the veterinarian promoted to a supervisory position.

(There are many options available for training beyond a formal residency in Shelter Medicine. For example the University of Florida conducts many different on-line courses <http://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/certificate-programs/online/>. Webinars and on-line seminars are frequently conducted by <http://www.aspcapro.org/> and Petsmart Charities * <https://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/learn>. In addition many veterinary conferences both state and national offer shelter medicine tracks that are highly educational. Lastly it is recommended that all SBCAS veterinarians be required to join The Association of Shelter Veterinarians <https://asv.memberclicks.net/>. This organization runs a well-attended and helpful listserv and promotes the specific education of shelter veterinarians. The current \$80/year membership fee is well worth the cost.)

The hiring of a Medical Director can prove cost savings through stream-lining of protocols and standardizing procedures, overseeing animal census and addressing medical issues promptly that lead to increased lengths of stays, and properly training of staff and volunteers for early disease detection and disease mitigation policies.

4.3 VETERINARY FACILITIES

Observations:

SBCAS housed animals in three separate locations within Santa Barbara County (with ASAP having their own building). Each facility had very different veterinary facilities.

Santa Barbara

A small room located at the western end of the main dog kennel building was partly used as the veterinary clinic and intake facility. The veterinarian maintained a supply of medications and non-scheduled drugs in locked cabinets. A sink and a small refrigerator contained items that require temperature control e.g. vaccines. The refrigerator was in good condition, seals were clean and functional, freezer was de-iced and vaccines etc. were appropriately stored although there was no thermometer to verify the actual temperature. Other basic animal handling tools and veterinary supplies were kept in drawers e.g. a variety of muzzles and leashes. Some medications were kept neatly stored in plastic bins on the counter top.

Throughout the day the room was also used as an intake exam room, food preparation room and storage for two large carts of either towels/blankets or open food containers. These were reported to be stored in this room most of the time even when intake exams were taking place. Although it was observed that they were removed while the veterinarian was present there was not much room for the veterinarian and the assistant to examine a large dog.



The room also contained supplies for intake protocols such as the vaccines, deworming and flea treatments. Kennel staff and ACO's who conducted intake exams during the day used these supplies.

Santa Maria

This location had a full service veterinary clinic. The clinic occupied a major part of the northern wing of the shelter. It had a separate entrance for public spay/neuter intake. A large treatment area was found central to the clinic. Two separate recovery kennels, 1) stainless steel cages suitable for small dogs, cats and rabbits and 2) large dog runs were located adjacent to the main treatment area. A separate surgical suite was also located next to this room. There were two separate and independent exam rooms located near the spay/neuter waiting area. The clinic reported that only one of these rooms was routinely used.



The public exam room had a small refrigerator with vaccines. Basic deworming and flea medications were found in cabinets/drawers. The refrigerator was in good quality, had clean and functioning seals and the vaccines were stored appropriately although there was no thermometer to verify current temperature settings. Some animal handling equipment was also found in drawers. Additional sizes of muzzles etc. were found in the main treatment room. An unlabeled bottle of cleaning solution and a bottle labeled "bleach" were found in the room next to the sink.

The main treatment room had a surgery induction area with two tables and inhalant anesthesia machines. All medications were kept either in locked cabinets or drawers. Aliquots of scheduled drugs needed for the day's surgery schedule were kept in a locked drawer at the RVT's station. At the time of the consult four birds were kept in separate birdcages in the treatment room. Three of the birds had arrived the previous day either as a stray or confiscation. The fourth bird (budgerigar) had been there longer.

The surgery suite was separated but visible from the main treatment area. It contained two surgical tables each with its own surgical lighting, inhalant anesthesia and monitoring equipment. Basic surgical supplies such as suture were neatly kept on a small shelf unit in this room. All surgical equipment appeared in good working condition and upkeep.

Examination and/or treatment of sick or injured shelter animals were brought to the treatment room per the RVT's instructions. All equipment for examination and subsequent treatment of a bite abscess on a dog were located conveniently to the induction area of the room. The RVT had access to a computer terminal and had a large white board for notes, scheduling and supply ordering lists.

The veterinary premise holder veterinarian with a DEA license ordered scheduled drugs. The drugs were kept in a locked drawer in the veterinarian/RVT office. It was reported that this office was kept locked when the RVT was not in the clinic. The key to the locked drawer was kept in a wall combination safe also located in the office. The RVT and veterinarians on duty kept comprehensive logs of drugs used throughout the surgery day.

Lompoc

A room located near the main entrance area, adjacent to the euthanasia room was designated as a veterinary



exam room. This room also contained some steel cages that housed one URI cat at this time. The room had a steel exam table, sink and small refrigerator. Medications were kept on shelves, cabinets and drawers. Basic animal handling supplies were located in a drawer next door in the euthanasia room. The room was clean and tidy.

The refrigerator was in good condition, the seal was clean and functional it was free of ice buildup. There was no thermometer to verify current temperature. The vaccines were stored appropriately but there was also an undated open can of dog food. Furthermore, several medications that were expired were found in the refrigerator including antibiotics.



- Basic veterinary supplies such as bandage material, forceps, ophthalmoscope, otoscope and swabs etc. were stored in drawers and a small scale was located on the exam table. Undated spray bottles of bleach and Triple Two solutions were also found in the room.
- There was no veterinary premise permit found for this shelter location. The contract veterinarians brought in drugs and medications from either the Santa Maria shelter or from their own private clinics.
- Basic problems included:
 - The Santa Barbara shelter did not have space for a designated veterinary clinic/exam room. The currently used room is inadequate in terms of space and was used as a basic storage room. Supplies must be removed before the veterinarian can examine animals and ACO personnel must maneuver themselves and their new intake animals around obstacles when performing intake examinations.
 - None of the refrigerators that stored temperature sensitive vaccines had thermometers.
 - There were expired medications stored and used at the Lompoc shelter.
 - The Lompoc shelter did not have a veterinary premise permit. A premise permit is required by California state law for "all premises where *veterinary medicine*, *veterinary dentistry*, *veterinary*

surgery and the various branches thereof is being practiced” (California Business and Professions Code §4853).

- None of the veterinary exam rooms had an appropriately labeled solution available for cleaning and disinfection.

Recommendations:

- Consider building (or retrofitting a trailer) a full veterinary clinic with designated exam rooms at the Santa Barbara shelter.
 - In the current Santa Barbara shelter configuration designate the medical exam room for that purpose only. All storage of other materials such as food or blankets should be kept at another location. If more storage areas are needed consider building at least temporary sheds that are easily assessable.
- Place a thermometer in each refrigerator at each facility where vaccines are stored in order to monitor correct temperature storage. According to the manufacturer’s label, vaccines should be stored at 2-7° Celsius.
- Designate a veterinarian to obtain a veterinary premise permit for the Lompoc shelter.
 - Remove and properly dispose of all expired drugs at all shelter locations especially in Lompoc.
 - Create Exam and treatment room check lists to ensure that the area is kept clean, properly disinfected and adequately stocked on a daily basis.
 - Provide labeled and correctly diluted disinfection solutions to each exam room and treatment areas. Designate several staff members to be in charge of mixing and ensuring that each bottle is full and that solutions are replaced when expired. Newly filled bottles must be dated each time. Correct types of disinfectants are needed according to the risk of infectious diseases present.

Discussion:

Dedicated work space for the examination and treatment of animals will improve efficiency and productivity which will save time and money.

Although it is tempting to use donated, expired drugs in shelters it is not lawful to do so at both national and state levels. Discussions by pharmaceutical experts on the Veterinary Information Network (VIN) have emphasized that “an expired drug is adulterated under federal law and therefore defined as unsafe for use. FDA attorneys have stated that if they decide to pursue a case and find expired drugs on the shelf of any veterinary clinic prosecution would be a slam dunk”.

According to Grant Miller, DVM, director of Regulatory Affairs, California Veterinary Medical Association in Sacramento “Expiration dates are required under federal law, even for drugs that have long term stability. Companies have to assign dates and the methods vary. They have to test stability and suitability for use for as long as the expiration date on the bottle. The longer the testing, the greater the expense. A short expiration date means more frequent replacement, so income can be improved by a shorter dating. No doubt some drugs are clinically effective past their expiration dates. But that does not make it legal.”



The use of expired medications falls below an acceptable standard of practice in California and therefore violates the California Code of Regulations, Title 16, sections 2030(f)(6) and 2032. Also, reference the [Hospital Self-Evaluation checklist](http://www.vmb.ca.gov/forms_pubs/hosp_insp_chklist.pdf) page 29 published by the California Veterinary Board http://www.vmb.ca.gov/forms_pubs/hosp_insp_chklist.pdf

4.4 VACCINATION PROTOCOLS

Observations:

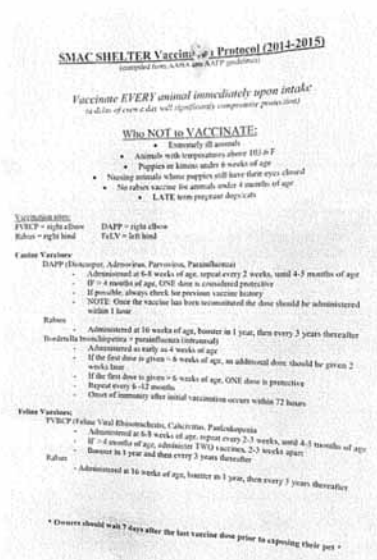
SBCAS had a vaccination SOP in the Veterinary Policies and Procedures Manual, policy #6.02. The policies that were posted in each intake exam room had updated modifications. Staff reported that this updated version was being followed.

Figure 1. SBCAS vaccination protocols for dogs and cats

In summary: dogs received a modified live DHPP (distemper, hepatitis, parvo, parainfluenza virus) SQ (subcutaneous) injection and an intranasal *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, parainfluenza virus (“kennel cough”) vaccine on intake starting a 6-8 weeks of age. The DHPP was repeated every 2 weeks until 4-5 months of age. Dogs over 4 months of age at intake were given only one DHPP. The “kennel cough” vaccine was only given once unless the dog was less than 6 weeks of age in which case it was repeated after 2 weeks. Rabies vaccine was given once SQ, repeated in one year if that was the animal’s first vaccine otherwise it was repeated every 3 years.

Cats received a modified live FVRCP (feline viral rhinotracheitis, calici, panleukopenia) vaccine SQ on a schedule similar to the dogs described above. The exception was that cats over 4 months of age received another FVRCP 2 weeks later. Rabies also followed the same schedule as that for dogs. All shelter locations recorded vaccinations given on the form generated at intake. Staff removed the vaccine labels and adhered them to the form then initialed and wrote the date given. There were no adverse-reaction written protocols available in all intake rooms. Staff were not consistently aware of what steps to take if a vaccine reaction occurred. Staff did not report receiving training in what signs to look for when vaccinating.

ASAP followed a slightly different vaccination protocol. All protocols were clearly written and posted in the intake room. ASAP used the intranasal Rhinotracheitis, calici and panleukopenia virus vaccine made by



Merial. Kittens received this vaccine starting at 4 weeks of age that was repeated in 4 weeks with an SQ vaccine. ASAP also had written protocols for deworming and flea treatment that were given at intake. All cats were also tested for FeLV/FIV and all cats received a microchip either on intake or at spay/neuter surgery. Intake staff was aware and followed standard vaccine adverse reaction protocols.

SBCAS did not vaccinate other species themselves. Horses and other livestock mammals were generally not housed at SBCAS and the Director/supervisors contacted local large animal veterinarians to examine the animals at a designated location. Vaccinations were given as needed by these veterinarians at their discretion. The SBCAS horse intake form that the veterinarian completed had three vaccines listed (encephalomyelitis, West Nile and Tetanus). The veterinarian, depending on their needs assessment, could write in other vaccines.

It was the policy at each of the shelter locations that vaccinations for dogs and cats were done at intake. The ACO officers and many kennel staff reported that they followed the intake vaccination guidelines as soon as time permitted. It was reported that most animals received their intake treatments within a few hours of arrival at the shelter. One intake vaccination procedure was observed during the consult. The stray dog, which was brought in close to closing hours, was immediately carried back to the intake room for vaccination before it was kennelled. Vaccines were given correctly and appropriately.

Intake room protocols at the three shelter locations also included a routine deworming and flea treatment. It was reported that only puppies receive *both* pyrantel and activyl® on a consistent basis. Adult dogs did not always receive a pyrantel deworming. There was no protocol for repeating any doses of anthelmintics. Staff reported that different veterinarians would prescribe different flea/tick medications on a case-by-case basis. There was no consistent protocol for ongoing monthly flea treatment although the veterinarian in Santa Barbara did prescribe them for dogs undergoing frequent baths.

FeLV/FIV tests are done on all cats and kittens at intake. (ASAP Protocol differs as they test all cats for FeLV and only FIV/Felv if over 6 months) The tests were also run on requested owned animals who present for spay / neuter surgery. The tests were also run on requested owned animals who present for spay / neuter surgery. The clinic staff reported that positive results were very rare. Heartworm tests were not done as this disease was not endemic in this area.

Basic problems noted included:

- There was inconsistency in giving animals routine deworming on intake
- There was no consistent protocol for repeating the deworming after the initial dose.
- Staff vaccinating animals was unprepared for vaccine reactions. Emergency drugs not available in intake area
- Cats in the custody of SBCAS but in the care of ASAP received different protocols
- Chameleon is not used to generate electronic records, create vaccine and flea and worming schedules.



- American Animal Hospital Association 2011 Vaccine guidelines recommend that puppies under 18-20 weeks of age receive boosters. SBCAS does not booster after 16 weeks.
- Testing kittens for FIV before 6 months can yield false positive results and therefore present adoption dilemmas.

Recommendations:

- Develop one protocol for consistent anthelmintic administration for all shelter locations. Make sure the protocol is clearly written and posted at all shelters.
- Standardize all protocols so that they are consistent with the internal partners (ASAP).
- Train all staff responsible for vaccinating animals to recognize signs of a vaccine reaction.
 - Provide appropriate drugs and train staff on their administration. See Vaccine Information Sheet in Additional Resources below.
- Adjust puppy vaccine protocol to add one booster for dogs that are 16 weeks.
- Utilize Chameleon to record vaccines and treatments and generate booster schedules.

Discussion:

SBCAS does a commendable job vaccinating its animals following shelter standard protocols. However, studies have demonstrated that parasitic infestation in shelter animals is common, and infection in puppies and kittens is extremely likely as transmission to neonates is possible during pregnancy and/or nursing (Hill SL, Cheney JM, Taton-Allen GF, et al. Prevalence of enteric zoonotic organisms in cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 2000;216:687-692.; Sokolow SH, Rand C, Marks SL, et al. Epidemiologic evaluation of diarrhea in dogs in an animal shelter. *American Journal of Veterinary Research* 2005;66:1018-1024). For these reasons it is imperative that shelters institute a comprehensive and effective protocols to ensure the public is not exposed to parasites. The vast majority of internal parasite infestations does not produce visible clinical signs or externally visible worms; yet can be a significant source of environmental contamination (and are nearly impossible to disinfect), are contagious to other animals and humans, and in some cases can cause severe illness and even death. It is important that SBCAS institute comprehensive and consistent internal and external parasite control. It appears that the shelter software is not being used to it's fullest potential. Training medical staff to input data would improve efficiencies and allow for a more accurate record to be given to adopters.

Additional Resources

- Parasite Control Guidelines for Animal Shelters www.sheltermedicine.com/portal/is_parasite_control.shtml
- http://www.sheltermedicine.com/flea_treatment
- <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/shelter-health-portal/information-sheets/internal-parasite-control-guidelines>



- Vaccination Information Sheet and monitoring for adverse reactions
http://www.sheltermedicine.com/portal/is_vaccination.shtml#reactions

Appendix 4.F AAHA Canine Vaccine Guidelines

Appendix 4.G AAFP Feline Vaccine Guidelines

4.5 STERILIZATION SERVICES

Observations:

SBCAS complied with California Food and Agricultural Code #30503 (a)(1) that no animal will be adopted out that has not been sterilized or neutered. All animals were sterilized either at the Santa Maria shelter veterinary clinic, the Santa Barbara Humane Society (SBHS) or by ASAP. In addition, the Santa Maria veterinary clinic also offered public sterilization services. Surgeries other than spay/neuter were done at each veterinarian's discretion and ability (this included such procedures as dentistry, mass removal, wound debridement etc.). Special surgeries that required specialized veterinary ability were done on a case-by-case basis (see veterinary staff section of this report).

There was no standard SOP for sterilization services in the Animal Services Policies and Procedures Manual. The clinics at Santa Maria and at ASAP had their own internal surgery protocols (the SBHS was not evaluated in this consult). Surgery procedures and protocols were within the guidelines established for spay/neuter programs (Looney AL, Bohling MW, Bushby PA, *et al.* The Association of Shelter Veterinarians veterinary medical care guidelines for spay/neuter programs. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2008; 233:74–86).

Five of the six contracted veterinarians conducted surgery for SBCAS on alternate days. One surgery veterinarian worked exclusively for ASAP. Public sterilizations were generally done on Monday and Tuesdays including one rabbit spay/neuter day per month. Shelter surgeries were done the other days with some scheduled during public days if time permitted. ASAP generally performed feline surgeries 2-3 days/week on their shelter cats only. The schedule also indicated that the veterinarians also performed sterilization surgeries for feral/community cat rescue groups as needed. All veterinarians were comfortable in performing juvenile spay/neuter surgeries i.e. starting at 2 lbs.

Spay and neuter ordinances were instituted for the unincorporated County in 2011 which has resulted in increased sterilization compliance. The recent addition of the City of Guadalupe was an excellent achievement. SBCAS staff reported that they hope to include the City of Santa Maria as this jurisdiction was still a major source of the County's shelter animals. Shelter stats indicated an excellent reduction in feline intake over the past few years ostensibly due to the County's efforts with spay and neuter campaigns. The shelter reported that coordinated efforts were still needed to decrease Chihuahua, pit-bull type and rabbit intakes (see Shelter Statistics section of this report for more detail).

Both SM and ASAP had a well-appointed surgery suite. Both locations achieved above minimum Standards of



Care for surgical procedures. Surgical areas were located in dedicated rooms separated from the induction/treatment areas by a door and contained all necessary equipment for anesthesia and monitoring. In all instances, spays and neuters were conducted by licensed veterinarians who examined every animal before its procedure. An RVT and/or veterinary technician consistently provided surgery assistance. Aseptic surgical technique was used and separate sterile instruments were provided for each patient seen operated on during the consult. The shelters used balanced anesthetic protocols that included pre-op sedation/analgesia, calm and compassionate handling to reduce stress, and controlled intra-op anesthesia and post-op pain control. Pre-Op analgesia for dogs included the use of butorphanol which does not provide adequate pain control. All drugs were in accordance with accepted policies for spay/neuter programs (American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP). Pain management guidelines for dogs and cats. *J Am Anim Hosp Assoc* 2007; 43:235–48. ; Ko, J and Berman A, Topics in Comp Anim Med, "Anesthesia in Shelter Medicine", Vol 25, Issue 2, Pages 92-97, 2010). The RVT withdrew the prescribed surgical drugs, labeled all syringes, entered all scheduled drugs used in a drug log book as required by law and was under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian at all times (CA Business and Professions Code 4836.1 (a) (b)). The in-house surgical facilities and procedures were found to be exemplary by the consult team.

Post-op monitoring was observed and done by the RVT, veterinarian on duty and a volunteer assistant. Most animals were provided with an Elizabethan (E-collar) post-op to help prevent problems with incisions. A course of NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory) drugs was provided for the dogs on return to their respective shelters. Kennel staff gave these medications as directed.

Public animals were admitted via a dedicated health clinic reception area. The sign-in procedure included signed waiver forms and possible requests for ancillary services e.g. vaccination, blood tests, microchipping etc. Shelter animals that were scheduled for surgery were examined when brought to the clinic area. The shelter offered low cost spay/neuter surgeries to the general public. The cost for procedures ranged from \$75 for a small dog neuter to \$200 for a large dog spay. Cats cost \$45-60 at this time. In addition, a PetSmart grant allowed for \$10 dog spay/neuter if the owner lived in a specific zip code. The shelter would also work with owners who could not afford the above prices finding grants and other funds as needed.

Animals in need of surgery were placed on weekly surgery lists. These were animals that had completed their stray/hold time and had a favorable behavior and medical evaluation. Animals from Lompoc were transported by ACOs to Santa Maria on a scheduled arranged by the shelter supervisor. The animals were generally transported back on the same day. Animals in SB were also transported to SM by ACO's on a weekly basis. The journey to SM from SB took over one hour one way, the drive time from Lompoc averaged 25 minutes. The SB animals were also generally transported back on the same day. The surgery list was generated taking into consideration what procedures needed to be done. For example, in order to prevent multiple anesthesia needs supervisors would put off some sterilization procedures if the animal required dentistry. Dentistry was done at SM and HSSB only when time permitted. Animals were sent to HSSB when that organization indicated that they had time and/or when an animal was already slated for adoption. The HSSB was located next door to SBCAS which negated long transport time for the animals.

Staff in SB reported that dogs sometimes returned with their incisions severely inflamed. The cause was reported to be due to the use of occasional wrong E-collar sizes. Some complaints regarding occasional incision dehiscence was also reported by volunteers. Staff reported that surgeries were generally done



without undue delay. However, some stake holders indicated that there were delays in getting animals spayed or neutered when they had an adopter ready. In addition, there were reported complaints that unaltered “special needs” animals could not be adopted or fostered out if a willing adopter were found. There was also reported concerns regarding giving vaccinations at the time of surgery e.g. rabies vaccines. SBCAS generated comprehensive spay/neuter statistics for the County. The data provided showed that total surgeries have basically stabilized over the past three years: 2012-13 total 3,225; 2013-14 total 3,218 and YTD 2014-2015 (6 months) total 1,260. This included surgeries done by ASAP and those done for Catalyst Cats. SBCAS conducted several spay/neuter promotions such as free Chihuahua/and mix surgery in May etc. Management reported that the relatively new Responsible Pet Ordinance (<http://www.projectpetsafe.org/rpo.php#RPOAnchor>) had resulted in observable decrease in intake over the years since implementation. At this time the City of Santa Maria had not signed on.

Some specific problems noted included:

- There was no surgical facility in Santa Barbara necessitating significant stress on animals undergoing sterilization. Animals must be transported over one hour for surgery (unless done at SBHS).
- The use of butorphanol for pre-op analgesia in dogs does not provide sufficient pain control.
- There was no specific protocol for handling animals returning from surgery at Santa Barbara that contributed to incision problems.
- The lack of a surgical facility in SB contributed to delays in spay/neuter surgeries on adopted animals.
- Delays in sterilization (such as waiting until a dental can be done) have a drastic impact on length of stay.
- Although not specific to sterilization services the lack of well written, clear and precise SOP for rules regarding unaltered “special needs” cases/hospice type animals impacted the perceived quality of care by the community

Recommendations:

- The Santa Barbara shelter location needs a dedicated veterinary clinic complete with surgical capabilities. Ideally funds will allow for a separate, well thought-out and designed building that will include the veterinary facilities and appropriate isolation/quarantine areas. Other options can include funding a trailer retrofitted to include a surgery suite similar to what has been done at ASAP or gutting and redesigning the old Pillsbury building as a veterinary clinic/surgery. The County and SBCAS must include veterinarians with shelter expertise in the discussions and implementation of any new clinic construction.
- Standardize procedures and protocols for animals returning from surgery in SM. These animals must be checked before transport to ensure that:
 - all incisions are intact and clean,
 - the E-collar is fitted and correctly sized
 - all animals have a soft towel or blanket to lie on during transport,
 - a staff member be available to check animals immediately on arrival in SB to check that



- o the E-collar is still correctly placed and that the animal cannot lick at the incision.
- o Receiving staff should document each animal's condition and remedial actions taken in the animal's record. Problems noted should be included on the Daily Rounds list (see General Shelter Medicine section of this report). It is also important that the clinic in SM be notified of any problems seen.
- Replace butorphanol with hydromorphone or morphine for pre-op analgesia in dogs. There will be cost savings noted here as hydromorphone and morphine are less expensive.
- Although it is commendable that SBCAS offers dental prophylaxes to their animals it does occasionally lead to delays in spay/neuter. An important goal of any shelter should be to decrease the length-of-stay so any bottleneck that prevents a timely adoption needs to be addressed. A dedicated surgery clinic in SB would help to remediate this problem.
 - o Alternatively, SBCAS should consider developing specific criteria that would require a dental. Dentals for mainly cosmetic reasons may need to be discontinued in order to increase flow-through of adoptable animals. These criteria should be constructed with input from supervisors, adoption counselors (who know what adopters in this community require) and the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team.
- Ideally, the unaltered "special needs" document/SOP should spell out not only what type of cases should be managed in this way but also clearly specify which rescue groups and foster families are authorized to handle them. This policy should be effective County-wide in order to mitigate pressure from special interests to make exceptions. The SOP must have input from all staff impacted including the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team.

Discussion:

The Veterinary Clinic in Santa Maria effectively serves the surgical needs of the North County of Santa Barbara County in general. However, the lack of Animal Services ability to perform its own surgeries in Santa Barbara greatly lessens the effectiveness and humane care of its animals.

Transporting animals long distances directly before and after surgery greatly exacerbates the stress of the sterilization procedure. All animal transport has the potential to spread infectious diseases. The stress of transport may increase susceptibility to infection or increase viral shedding. Risk of exposure to infectious disease is increased when animals that originate from multiple sources are transported in the same vehicle. In addition to affecting the individual animals transported, transportation programs may impact other animals. The attendant stress of long drives before and after surgery is a great risk factor for severe respiratory (and other) disease outbreaks in shelter populations. In addition, these transports monopolize the time of the ACO's and prevent productive utilization of their time, increase fuel expense and vehicle wear and tear.

One of the primary ways shelters can decrease euthanasia is by decreasing intake. The Project Petsafe Responsible Pet Ownership Ordinance, which promotes spay/neuter, is a key tool. The County administration should help SBCAS encourage the remaining cities, especially Santa Maria to implement this ordinance. Management staff's time spent encouraging increased spay/neuter and providing the means to do so will help continue to decrease Santa Barbara County euthanasia rates.



4.6 INCOMING ANIMAL EXAMINATIONS

Observations:

SBCAS had a basic written SOP in the Animal Services Policies and Procedure Manual (Policy #6.01). This stated that a veterinarian, RVT, will examine all animals that are adoptable or trained personnel. In practice all animals were reported (and twice observed) to receive a preliminary exam by the staff member or ACO officer bringing the animal into the shelter. These preliminary findings, including the intake vaccination procedures (see vaccination procedures section of this report), were written onto the intake exam form. The staff did not consistently sign or initial the forms. There were no written SOP's seen that included a detailed description of all intake procedures or what/how to write their observations. Although scales were noted in all examination rooms staff did not report that they consistently weighed animals on intake.

Although efforts appeared to have been made to develop a consistent and effective intake process at SBCAS there were inconsistencies between written and posted protocols; a lack of staff awareness of written protocols; absence of important information in written or generally understood protocols; issues with manner of implementation (e.g. weighing); failure to include some important components of a model intake protocol (e.g. animals not treated consistently for internal parasites at intake as is widely recommended); lack of training or compliance resulting in protocols not always being fully followed.

Not all staff members reported that they had received some basic training in problem identification with animals on intake. All staff interviewed reported a keen desire for more training. The RVT reported that she had done some staff training but did not receive designated time to hold training sessions. Two dog intake exams were observed and both instances showed staff as being conscientious about completing the intake procedure but they were not consistent in their approach. If a problem was noted it was reported that the staff member would:

Santa Barbara

Either enter the issue on the veterinarian's Friday check list or notify the supervisor if it appeared to be of immediate concern.

Santa Maria

Either enter the issue on the veterinarian's check list (this would then be addressed either during the normal Wednesday/Thursday examination days – or on other days if the veterinarian on duty had time) or notify the RVT for immediate examination.

Lompoc

Either enter the issue on the veterinarian's Monday or Friday check list or notify the supervisor if it appeared

CAT VETERINARY FORM
 Animal ID: _____ Sex: M NM F SF
 Name of Cat: Jessie Breed: DSH Color: Yellow Markings: _____
 Weight: _____ Estimated Age: 3-4 (as determined by Dr. _____)
 Vaccines (PLEASE INITIAL WHEN YOU GIVE)
 FVRCP: Date: 4/15/15 Repeat Date: _____ Repeat Date: _____
 Next Due: _____
 Rabies (SEE ATTACHED CERTIFICATE) Adopted/Trained/Personnel
 Date: _____ Date: 4/15/15
 Next Due: _____
 Worming:
 (Roundup/round worms, etc.)
 Date: 4/15/15 Amount: LD Repeat Date: _____
 Deworm: _____ Amount: _____ Repeat Date: _____
 Behavior
 Description of behavior: Adopted
 Overall Evaluation
 Performed By: _____ Date: _____
 To: _____
 From: _____
 Date: _____
 Initial: _____
 Note: Adopted - from Santa Maria County animal shelter
Multiple dogs in cages at SBCAS
 Santa Barbara County Animal Services
 Santa Maria 2002504 R110



serious.

The intake procedures were reported (and observed in the two cases) to include:

- full body scan with a microchip reader
- brief exam to note for obvious injuries
- brief assessment of temperament during the exam
- vaccinations
- deworming was observed once, flea treatment was observed both times

Each of the three shelter facilities had a designated room for intake examinations:

Santa Barbara

Staff used the veterinary office at the west end of the main kennel building (see Veterinary Services for more detail). This room was not located close to the ACO staff access area. Animals (dogs) brought in by the ACO's would generally be placed in two holding kennels near the ACO parking area until they had completed paperwork and had time to conduct the intake exam procedures. Animals would then be carried or walked the full length of the shelter facility to the veterinary room. Owner surrendered animals were reportedly taken to the vet room immediately for examination although staff reported that temporary cages would often be used in various areas or cats would be left in carriers for unspecified amounts of time when the front office was very busy. No specific intake cleaning supplies or protocols were posted or found.

ASAP had its own well-appointed intake/examination room. All cats received a preliminary exam by a technician in addition to their basic intake protocols. The veterinarian conducted thorough exams on new intakes three times a week on average. All intake protocols and procedures were well documented in detailed SOP's and were reported and observed followed.

Santa Maria

Staff used a designated intake exam room located near the ACO entrance on the north side of one wing. This intake room was of good size and had sufficient storage space. The room was seen to be tidy and basic intake tools and medications were conveniently located. An adjustable exam table was located in the middle of the room. A variety of animal handling supplies such as muzzles and leashes, a microchip scanner, a small refrigerator for vaccines were found. Intake protocols and other useful identification information (e.g. how to age puppies and kittens) were posted on cabinet doors. The refrigerator did not have a thermometer. Staff had access to a small and large scale for weighing various sizes of animals. There were no specific cleaning supplies were found. All animals were reportedly taken to this room immediately on intake for initial evaluation and intake procedures. This was observed with one stray dog intake.

Lompoc

The new addition to the shelter had a designated intake exam room. One exterior door allowed for ACO intake. This room had a small thermometer-less refrigerator for vaccines and was stocked with all appropriate intake medications/treatment supplies including two microchip scanners. A walk-on scale was located in this room in addition to a supply of animal handling tools. There was no sink or effectively accessible disinfection supplies. All animals were reportedly taken immediately on intake to this room for initial evaluation, vaccination and deworming/flea treatment as outlined in the Vaccination Protocol section



of this report.

As per the Animal Services Policy and Procedures Manual (Policy # 2.15) other species were generally not brought to SBCAS for impoundment. Horses were impounded at the stable or holding facility as designated by the shelter supervisor. The Animal Services Director made decisions on further actions and notified qualified local large animal veterinarians to examine. All intake exams and procedures were done by outside contracted large animal veterinarians.

General problems observed included:

- There was no detailed written SOP that specifically outlined the exact steps to take on intake examination. Although there were sheets listing doses for e.g. deworming and flea treatment on the walls/cabinets staff did not follow a consistent methodology. The initial exam sheets were not consistently signed by the intake staff, which can make follow-up difficult if needed.
- There was no ongoing, consistent and official staff training on intake procedures.
- There was inconsistent weighing of animals on intake
- There were no specific supplies and tools for “biosecurity” in any of the intake rooms. There were no specific cleaning instructions for these areas. No protective clothing or effective disinfection is provided for intake processing. Newly arrived animals are the most vulnerable to infection. Many common shelter infectious diseases can be transmitted during this time before an animal is even placed into a cage. This is especially true if intake personnel also clean cages. Garments are often heavily soiled or contaminated with pathogens by cleaning/animal care activities.
- The Santa Barbara designated intake room is inconveniently located and small.
- After intake, there is no written protocol for where the animal should be housed. Segregation is suggested by species and age, in addition depending on results of exam or need for stray hold, there should be designated isolation, quarantine, healthy hold and adoption options where animals are housed after exam.

Recommendations:

- Write clear and thorough SOP’s for intake procedures. These documents should be written with the input of the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team (see veterinary services section of this report). These documents must be clear, simple and consistent at each of the shelter locations. A good resource on intake procedures etc. can be found at <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/48>
- Institute regular training seminars for new hires and at regular intervals for long-term staff to instruct them about the SOP’s, how to implement the SOP’s in an efficient and effective manner and also instill an understanding behind the principals of good intake protocols. Members of the Shelter Medicine Health team, who should not only periodically observe but also update procedures at each shelter location as needed, should conduct these training seminars.
- Make sure all animals are consistently weighed on intake and that the weight and date are recorded.
- Assign Body Condition Score at Intake
- A thorough cleaning and disinfection of the entire room (including doors, handles, microchip



scanners, etc.) should be performed weekly.

- Ensure that protective clothing, hand sanitizers and gloves, are available in the intake room. Be sure that these are used as needed so that newly admitted animals are protected from exposure to harmful germs.
- Make sure the intake room has effective disinfectants and hand sanitizers if no sink is available.
- Build a new intake room as part of a full service veterinary clinic in the Santa Barbara facility. The intake room location and design must be an important part of the new facility. A temporary area (such as a refurbished trailer) can also be used near the ACO truck parking and main office area. Considerations for design and implementation recommendations can be also found in other sections of this report.

Discussion:

Animal intake is possibly the most important contact point for animals in the shelter system. At intake, the animal is 1) identified through physical description, photograph, and microchip scanning; 2) triaged through examination and treatment, referral for medical conditions, or possible reunification with owner; and, 3) provided preventive treatments (vaccines, parasite treatment). Each step is essential to ensuring that animals have the best chance at a positive outcome. It is important to have a unified, systematic intake system in place at each shelter location that is followed as prescribed. The Santa Maria and Lompoc shelters have well located intake rooms that provide for immediate intake procedures. The extremely low reported incidence of infectious disease problems at SBCAS (e.g. parvo, panleukopenia, distemper and ringworm) signifies a commendable adherence to standard shelter vaccination and intake protocols. However, improvement in consistency and adherence to a standard known protocol can improve the health of animals.

The intake exam process serves as a critical control point in an animal shelter. Careful examination on intake ensures that animals are correctly identified, facilitating a quick re-union with owners. It also ensures that animals are housed appropriately according to age and physical condition. Recognition of infectious conditions at intake and prophylactic treatment for internal and external parasites ensure that animals already in the shelter are not exposed to disease from newly admitted animals and is essential to protect human health as well. It is also important to recognize that these new arrivals are among the most vulnerable members of the shelter population: many have likely never been vaccinated, and are likely to be severely stressed by the novel experience of being admitted to a shelter. Every effort should be made to prevent disease exposure and minimize stress at this critical juncture. All staff responsible for intake should be provided with sufficient training, supervision, and acknowledgement of the importance of their role in protecting the health of new and resident animals at the shelter.

Weight on intake is an important part of the intake protocol. Research has documented that weight loss is frequently the first sign of disease/distress in shelter animals. Initial weighing at intake with subsequent reweighing can be invaluable in maintaining animals' health (Tanaka A, Wagner DC, Kass PH, Hurley KF, Associations among weight loss, stress and upper respiratory tract infection in shelter cats. J Am Vet Med Assoc. 2012 Mar 1;240(5):570-6).



Treatments administered at intake require significant animal contact, including handling of not only the coat, but also of the mouth of the animal as well as vaccines, doors, scanners, and leashes. Optimum sanitation and disinfection is required in this area and during this time.

Another essential role of intake is to mitigate animal stress as much as possible during the process in order to facilitate adaptation to the shelter environment. This will, in turn, protect animal welfare. All efforts should be made to minimize stress at intake. If animals are emotionally traumatized at entry, they can become sensitized to the shelter environment, potentially decreasing their ability to cope in the shelter setting, which impacts welfare and adoptability. SBCAS does a commendable job in trying to minimize stress on intake. Standardizations in protocols and good staff training by the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team will help to emphasize the importance of stress reduction at this juncture.

Appendix 4.H ASPCA Intake Check List

Appendix 4.I Canine Body Condition Chart

Appendix 4.J Feline Body Condition Chart

4.7 FEEDING AND NUTRITION

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.08 "Feeding and Watering," included the following sections: dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits and other animals. Chapter 3, 3.59 "Hills/Science Diet Shelter Feeding Program," included information on the contract SBCAS had with Hills on the feeding program including ordering, adopter bags of food, coupons and how adopter information is shared quarterly with Hills.

Procedure 4.08 noted that animals were fed according to their nutritional needs and access to water all day. The procedure was divided into sections: dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits and other animals. The feeding guidelines were basic and straightforward. The other information included appropriate food for goats, rations for infant animals, and for birds and all other animals the procedure noted "contact the Supervising Animal Control Officer if you have a question about the proper diet for an impounded animal."

Morning feeding took place during the cleaning process at each facility. The team was told that dogs were fed two times per day, but the team was not able to observe second feedings during the site visit. The team was asked during the site visit if it was acceptable to feed dogs once per day. Soft stool and diarrhea were reported to occur at each of the facilities.

Santa Barbara

The team monitored dog feeding during the morning kennel cleaning. Feeding started at approximately 9:45 a.m. A cart with the various food types and a supplement "Platinum Performance" which was given in each dog's food was rolled down the center of the main kennel from the back to the front. The food bowls had been placed on the tops of the runs, and the employees filled them and placed them in the runs as they went. The team observed the employees measuring food according to the dog's size, adding Omega oils or other veterinarian prescribed medications, and they asked the dogs to sit prior to feeding them. It was clear that this was a common practice, the dogs knew what to expect and most of them sat nicely and remained



quiet until they were given the queue to eat. Small dogs who were communally housed were separated by the guillotine door and/or were removed and placed in one of the Shor-line cages. The team observed the feeding of 3 small dogs in the main kennel who were housed together. One dog was removed and the other two were separated by the guillotine door. Medications were signed off on the medication sheets on the clipboards as they were given. The team did not observe feeding of the other species in care during the site visit. Shelter staff reported that there have been times that some volunteers have given treats that caused diarrhea issues.

Santa Maria

The team monitored dog feeding during the morning kennel cleaning. After both sides of the kennel were cleaned the dogs were fed. The team determined that since cleaning took place over several hours, the dogs ate at different times throughout the day. As previously mentioned, the dog food was placed in flat, wide metal trays that were built for the T-Kennels. The team observed the employees place the food trays with food in the runs. They did not appear to have been measured according to the size of the dog. Some of the food dishes that the team observed appeared to have both adult and puppy food mixed together. The team also observed a run with two small dogs housed together who were not separated by the guillotine door and one of them sat on the opposite side of the run with his head down while the other dog ate; no aggression was observed, but the team noticed that one of the dogs was not comfortable approaching the food. Medications were given, but the team did not observe where the information was recorded, presumably on medication sheets on the clipboards on the runs. Cat dry food was topped off during cleaning. The team did not observe feeding of the other species in care during the site visit.

The team found some cases of canned prescription dog food (i/d and z/d) and a couple of containers of bird food that were expired.

The team also observed a bottle of pesticide sitting in the hallway between open bags of dog food.

Lompoc

The team monitored dog feeding during the morning kennel cleaning. The food bowls were kept in "the hub" and while the cleaning/disinfectant sat during the inside cleaning, the food bowls were prepped and then placed on the tops of the runs. During the site visit a volunteer was doing laundry and helping to prepare the food bowls. The staff very much appreciated the assistance and the volunteer had been volunteering for many years and remarked that it was very rewarding. The team observed the team measuring food according to the dog's size. Medications were given and signed off on the medication sheets prior to starting cleaning. Cat dry food was emptied and refilled from bowls during cleaning. The team did not observe feeding of the other species in care during the site visit.

The team observed an open can of dog food in one of the refrigerators that was not dated. The team also found some canned prescription dog food (d/d) in a cabinet that was expired.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that the written feeding protocols for all species of animals are followed consistently at



each of the facilities. Supplement procedure 4.08 with a feeding chart that is easy for staff and volunteers to follow.

- Train staff to observe and document the appetite and food intake of animals and adjust diets accordingly. The body condition and weight of animals should also be documented and monitored, in order to detect nutritional problems. Lack of appetite should be documented, monitored, and referred for veterinary consultation, when necessary.
- **Make feeding fun!** This is a perfect opportunity to provide enrichment to dogs. Shelter animals should never be fed in regular bowls. Let them work for their food. Stuff their daily requirements into kongs, or make frozen dog food popsicles.
- Feed a consistent, readily digestible diet in appropriate quantities and do not mix and give dogs adult and puppy food. This can reduce the incidence of diarrhea and gastrointestinal upset. Diet-induced diarrhea can be confused with diarrhea caused by infectious disease leading to unnecessary treatment, isolation or even euthanasia.^{1,2,3,4}
- Discard expired food and ensure that expired food is not stored or kept on hand. Severe GI issues may occur if old canned food is inadvertently used.
- Date the open cans of canned food kept in the refrigerator. Cover the cans with a can lid or other item in order to keep the food fresh and from drying out.
- Do not store toxic chemicals, cleaning supplies or solution or any other such item next to or in the same areas as animal food.
- Adhere to strict treat guidelines as determined by SBCAS and ensure that all persons offering treats follow the guidelines.
- Separate dogs who are communally housed during feeding to ensure that they are able to eat free of fear and distress. If communally housing dogs, determine if they are possessive of their food. Some dogs who show no signs of aggression will display dominance when food is presented. Serious fights over food can occur at a time when shelter staff are not in the area and cannot intervene. If not monitored closely, some dogs and puppies will overeat while others are denied access.
- Dogs should be fed twice per day at minimum. The team acknowledges that this may be difficult for SBCAS due to the hours of operation; however, it is important to maintain a two feedings per day schedule for dogs. Feed as early as possible in the morning and as late in the evening as possible in order to increase the time between feedings.
 - Develop a written schedule of feeding times for those animals who require multiple feedings according to their age and nutritional needs. Kennel management should ensure that the staff strictly follows the schedule. Establishing a system to oversee

¹ <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/50#feeding>

² <http://www.sheltervet.org/about/shelter-standards>

³ http://research.unc.edu/files/2012/11/CCM3_032387.pdf

⁴ <https://oregonvma.org/files/Purina-Cat-Condition-Chart.pdf>



dietary habits is important and staff should be trained to monitor and adjust animal diets accordingly. The system should include monitoring: food intake, special needs, feeding behaviors, and feces. An animal's appetite can provide important feedback that relates to their general health and continued adjustment to the shelter environment.

Discussion:

Adequate nutrition plays a pivotal role in the health of sheltered animals. Appetite can be affected by stress and disease and needs to be monitored and recorded daily as a part of the daily rounds process. Notation of animals with little or no appetite should prompt the medical staff to investigate and if appropriate institute a diet change to something more palatable for that animals.

Using food as enrichment is a progressive way to entertain the animals.

Appendix 4.K Feeding Kitties in the Shelter

Appendix 4.L Food Dispensing Toys and Recipes

Appendix 4.M ASPCA Daily food calculator

Appendix 4.N ASPCA Appetite Monitoring Sheet

4.8 ZONOSIS

Observations:

The SBCAS had SOP's for zoonotic diseases for only rabies and west Nile virus. These documents were found in the Animals Services Policies and Procedures Manual. Rabies SOP's included: Policy # 1.37 (Rabies immunization and Titer monitoring); Policy # 2.26 (Rabies Suspect); Policy # 2.27 (Activities-Animal Bites, Stray or Wild-Quarantine; Policy # 3.38 (rabies specimen logging) and Policy # 3.39 (Rabies reporting to the state of California). Policy # 3.50 covered West Nile Virus Surveillance.

It was reported that the RVT in SM did all rabies testing. All rabies testing supplies and equipment were located in the euthanasia room at that facility. The RVT was notified when a rabies suspect specimen was en route. In preparation a specimen number and a laboratory slip would be filled out. Once the specimen had been processed the RVT would ensure correct shipment, notifications to all shelter locations and clean up according to Policy #4.18.

There were no SOP's regarding other zoonotic diseases. There was no mention in the Policy Manual about other potential zoonotic agents such as: *Salmonella*, roundworm, hookworm, scabies, campylobacteriosis, psittacosis, giardiasis, ringworm, toxoplasmosis and bartonellosis. Staff reported that they had not received consistent training or information about these various zoonotic conditions or what signs to look for. Staff reported a keen willingness to learn more about how to screen and how to prevent exposure of these diseases to themselves. As noted in the Vaccination and Intake Procedures sections of this report, there was a lack of consistent deworming protocols.

Specific problems noted:



There were no SOP's for zoonotic diseases other than rabies

There was no formal training provided for all staff on zoonosis prevention.

Recommendations:

- Develop detailed written SOPs on zoonoses to include relevant zoonotic diseases and precautions staff should take to minimize exposure. The SOPs should include information on what to do if an employee thinks he or she has been exposed.
 - A good precaution can include: a laminated card listing possible zoonotic diseases to which the staff could be exposed. In the event that an employee becomes ill, this card can be given to the physician. Zoonotic diseases are often misdiagnosed.
- Provide mandatory periodic training session especially for new hires and volunteers on zoonotic disease recognition, prevention and control. The Shelter Medicine Health Care Team should be tasked to provide not only classes but also simple and clear handouts. Questions and concerns from staff must be encouraged and addressed.
- Provide internal and external parasite control for animals to prevent direct and vector borne transmission of a variety of zoonotic pathogens. See the Center for Disease Control "Healthy Pets, Healthy People" website for more information (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/>).
- Standardize a consistently applied external and internal parasite control protocol (see Intake Procedures section for more detail).

Discussion:

A zoonotic disease is an infection that is naturally transmitted from vertebrate animals to human beings. Potential zoonotic agents include bacteria, viruses, fungi, internal parasites and arthropods. There are many factors common in animal shelters that make zoonotic disease a particular concern in this environment. For the protection of shelter staff and volunteers as well as that of the public, it is critical that animal shelter professionals be familiar with the most common zoonotic threats in a shelter environment, and the general principles of preventing transmission of zoonotic disease. A good resource for shelter staff training can include www.sheltermedicine.com - shelterhealth portal – information sheets - Zoonotic Diseases in Shelters. The diseases selected in this article include those that are either common or potentially very severe. Many of the diseases included are of increasing importance in recent years. It is important to remember that virtually all species can be carriers of zoonotic disease, not just rabies virus, and unusual diseases may also be seen in the more common species seen in shelters.

Failure to train staff on zoonotic potential could lead to OSHA Violations on worker safety and right to know.

Appendix 4.O AHA Guidelines for Zoonotic Disease

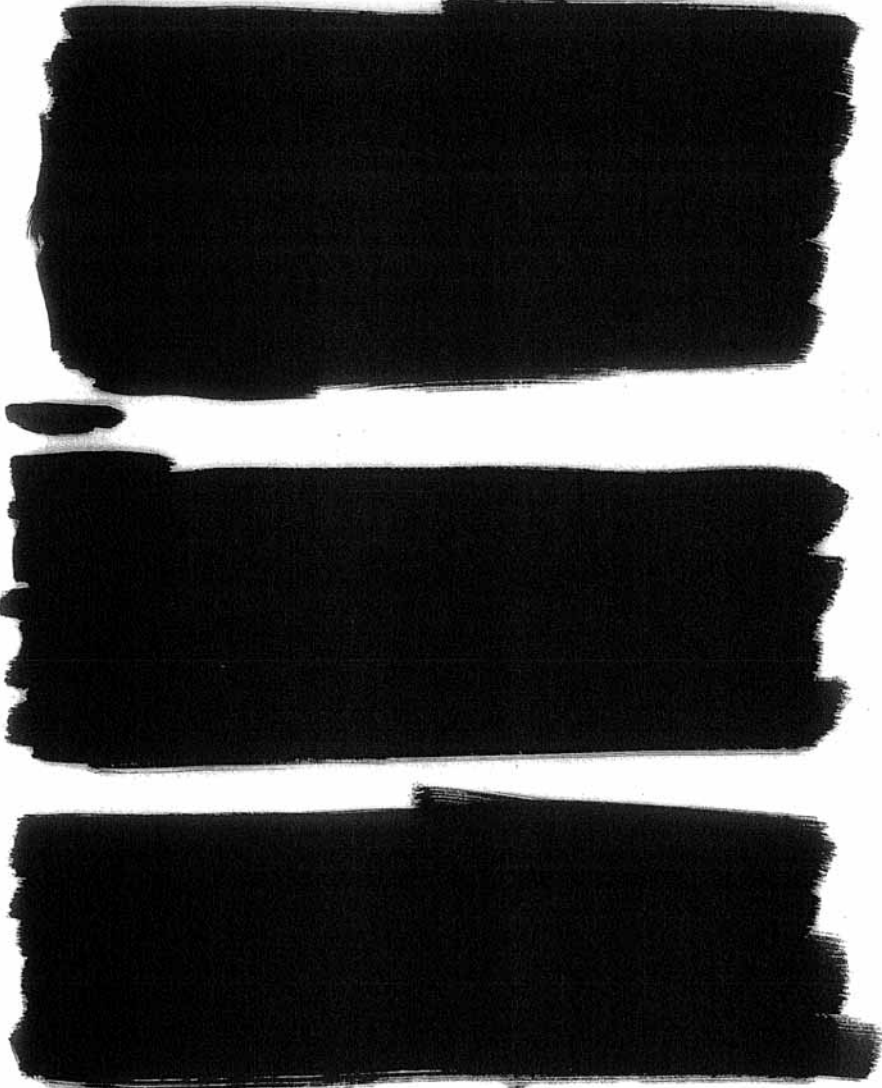
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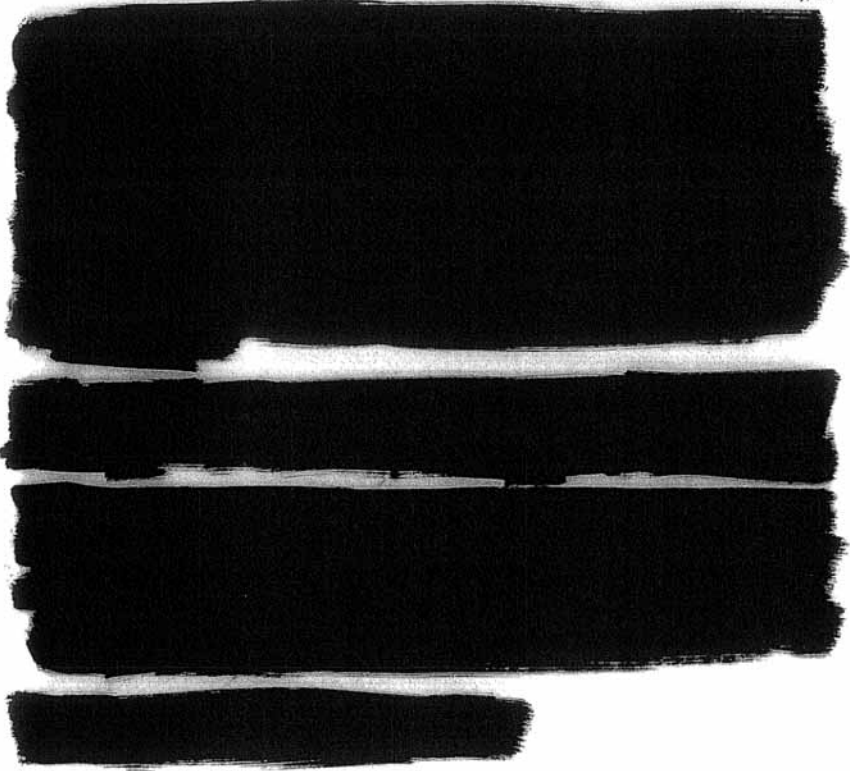


[REDACTED]

Recommendations







SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*5. Euthanasia
Policy and
Procedure*

5. Euthanasia Policy and Procedure

5.1 EUTHANASIA SELECTION

Observations:

There were detailed SOPs available that outlined the procedures for euthanasia selection: Animal Services Policies and Procedures Manual, Policy nos: 4.12 and 4.13. The document detailed the Care and Evaluation Committee that met weekly to discuss possible euthanasia decisions. It was reported that this committee included supervisors, kennel attendants and volunteers. Effective in 1999 the California “Hayden Bill” legislated the definition of adoptable animal (CA Senate bill number: SB 1785). The SBCAS had made a commendable effort to adhere towards the goal of decreasing euthanasia rates in the County. The SOP clearly stated that SB County had adopted the following criteria:

Tier 1: Adoptable animals are by definition friendly, healthy dogs and cats that are 8 weeks of age and older and do not require medical treatment, foster care or behavioral modification.

Tier 2: Treatable animals are defined as animals that require medical treatment for illness or injuries, underage animals needing maternal and/or foster care, or animals with modifiable behavioral problems requiring socialization and training.

Tier 3: unadoptable animals are animals that are irremediably suffering or vicious and posing a public safety risk and should be humanely euthanized.

SBCAS staff attempted to provide for open communication of its euthanasia decisions. However, there was frequent disagreement with volunteers and other outside stake-holder groups. This made euthanasia decisions especially difficult for the Santa Barbara shelter staff where it was deemed necessary to obtain “permission to euthanize” documentation from the assistant CEO of the County of SB. It was reported that euthanasia decisions were more straightforward at Lompoc and Santa Maria where the Care and Evaluation committees had the power to make euthanasia decisions. In Lompoc it was reported that the supervisor with other staff input generally made euthanasia decisions. Santa Barbara staff reported spending an inordinate amount of time juggling the needs and demands of the various interest groups and volunteers.

It was also documented in the SOP that one of the goals of the Care and Evaluation meetings was to “ensure that the health and well-being of adoptable animals is not compromised by holding animals with identifiable health or behavior issues for prolonged holding periods” (Policy # 4.13, Care and Evaluation Committee Procedures Section H (4)). However, contrary to the stream-lined SOP, it was observed that the lack of clear and defined communication between supervisory staff, veterinary staff and rescue groups resulted in significant delays in making final euthanasia decisions.

For example: A pitbull-type stray dog was impounded on 1/5/15 weakly walking with numerous abrasions assessed as a possible hit-by-car. The intake assessment by the ACO noted probable fractures. The next day a SM clinic veterinarian examined the dog finding possible pelvic fractures and numerous skin issues. The clinic



scheduled diagnostic radiographs at a local clinic for the following day. The “referral” clinic’s veterinarian suggested “cage rest” as treatment for assessed pelvic fractures. The clinic reported that its veterinarians examined the radiographs a few days later and determined that there appeared to be additional fractures that would require specialized surgery to repair. During this time, over a period of three days, several dog/cage aggressive episodes were noted and the dog was diagnosed with demodectic mange. The dog was placed on appropriate antibiotics for its skin issues and an NSAID for pain. Between 1/6/15 to 1/23/15 there were many emails discussing the need for specialized surgery funds and a willing and qualified foster. By the 23rd all avenues had been exhausted and the decision to euthanize the dog was made by the shelter director, shelter supervisor and veterinary clinic. The final decision for this animal was appropriate; the delay in getting to that decision is unacceptable.

Specific problems noted:

- It was reported that the staff at SBCAS was unable to make prompt and appropriate euthanasia decisions without considerable controversy from volunteer and outside influence, despite the fact that these animals are in the custody and care of SBCAS.
- The difficulty in making euthanasia decisions in Santa Barbara may have led to the preponderance of long-term animals at this facility.
- There were no clear and precise guidelines/ SOPs for communication between SBCAS and the various rescue organizations that could streamline decision-making processes.
- There was considerable outside influence and interference that hampered the SB Shelter’s ability to maintain effective flow-through, to have time to focus on finding alternatives for more difficult to place dogs and to euthanize dogs deemed dangerous or unadoptable according to the SOP standards.

Recommendations:

- SBCAS staff needs the authority and support from Santa Barbara County to formulate protocols for euthanasia selection. The decision to euthanize an animal is often difficult and painful for the staff involved. SBCAS has a compassionate and capable staff who are extremely qualified to make appropriate euthanasia decisions in keeping with its goals to decrease overall euthanasia in the County.
 - This can be partly accomplished by reassessing and rewriting the SOP that establish clear guidelines on when and how outside interest groups can and should influence euthanasia decisions.
 - This policy should be posted on the County website, introduced to all volunteers and staff and adoption partners.
- Prioritize making Daily Rounds (as described in the General Shelter Medicine section of this report) at each shelter. In turn make sure that all Shelter’s supervisors discuss euthanasia decisions as a group once a week either in person or via e.g. Skype in order to consolidate decision-making power and authority within the shelter system as a whole.



- o Daily Rounds can prevent delays in decision-making processes by preventing inadvertent waiting periods for e.g. phone call returns, veterinarian re-evaluations, behavior consults etc. Daily Rounds will designate one person for action-point follow-up.
- Convene an Animal Welfare Panel whose express purpose is to assess the welfare (physical, emotional and behavioral) of individual animals whose needs are not well served by shelter living. The objective of the panel is to identify all potential options for that animal, including humane euthanasia but certainly not limited to that. Live outcomes are always preferred and can be explored in creative ways by investigating sanctuary options, skilled trainers willing to foster, private rescuers that take on challenging animals, or special medical needs.
<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/euthanasia/lifesaving-alternatives.html>
The panel should operate with complete transparency.
- Establish clear and written guidelines between SBCAS and some specific rescue organizations that define how and when collaboration to treat and/or place an animal is needed. This SOP must include a timeline to avoid needless and unnecessary suffering. All concerned groups including supervisory staff, kennel staff, behavior staff, the Veterinary Health Team, specific rescues should have input into the creation of this document. It may be necessary to have an outside mediation organization help in creating a consensus.
- For example: a HBC, severely injured, large breed dog that shows aggressive tendencies should be flagged in daily rounds for decision-making deadlines even before the stray-hold period is over. A designated rounds member can be tasked with follow up each day to make sure action steps are taken. Outside interest groups will know exactly what the dog needs and will know exactly how many days they have to find a solution at which point they must take possession of the dog and/or place into foster if appropriate.

Discussion:

The stated goals in SBCAS SOP for euthanasia decision guidelines are clear. Problems occur when follow-up actions are delayed due to lack of prioritizing animals that are less adoptable. This criterion is different for every community and it is the community that dictates what it desires in animals it adopts. The most important and difficult decision that shelters need to make concerns when to euthanize. We owe it to the animals and ourselves to ensure that these critical choices are made based on a well-thought-out set of criteria; developed in a rational manner with input from appropriate stakeholders; and designed to maximize the number of animals released alive while minimizing the holding time and suffering of animals that will ultimately be euthanized.

The issue at SBCAS is the involvement of outside volunteer groups, whose mission, vision and values differ from SBCAS, have input/persuasion/coercion (either implied or bestowed via an MOU) in euthanasia decisions. In some instances, public outcry from key stakeholders have stopped euthanasia where it would have been in the best interest of the animal. There is evidence that animals, who euthanasia may be the humane alternative, are being kept indefinitely with no plan for rehabilitation, to delayed or non-existent



decision making. The efforts of SBCAS are clearly to have commendable and community accepted live release rates, and they do.

While it is commendable that shelters inform rescue groups of animals that are going to be euthanized it must be done in a consistent and restricted and prompt manner. The shelter can make information available about all animals at the shelter, to all interested rescue groups, as soon as possible after intake. Such a list can be generated twice a week and sent to all area rescue groups. This information can then be updated for the unadoptable animals within 24 hours of euthanasia. This would allow all rescue groups the entire hold period plus one day to decide whether they want to place a 'hold' on a particular animal. The rescue group must then agree to pick up that animal within a specified time period. Open intake county shelters are rarely equipped to handle long-term behavior problematic dogs. This is the case for SBCAS due to the old kennel infrastructure in Lompoc and SB and due to insufficient staff to handle these cases appropriately. Open intake shelters are not animal sanctuaries. Rather they need to be used as temporary depots for animals to move quickly into new homes, into foster, into rescue or euthanasia. Increasing flow through and decreasing length-of-stay is not synonymous with increased euthanasia and should not be viewed as such. Formulating clear, concise and openly provided guidelines for animal placement will stream-line the process and, most importantly, redirect shelter staff supervision time from micromanaging each animal's outcome individually to pursuing and instituting new and innovative ways to decrease intake and increase live release rates.

An excellent summary of decision-making trees can be found at www.sheltermedicine.com - shelterhealth portal – Developing Intake and Adoption Making Criteria.

<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/euthanasia/lifesaving-alternatives.html>

Appendix 5.A HSUS Policy on Selecting Animals for Euthanasia

Appendix 5.B Kitsap Humane Society Public Policy on Euthanasia

5.2 EUTHANASIA PROCEDURE AND METHODS

Observations:

A detailed SOP was available on euthanasia protocols in the Animal Services Policies and Procedures Manual (Policy # 4.12). This document covered all aspects of the euthanasia procedure from training, record keeping, log book keeping, controlled drug security, procedures and death verification. The document adhered to all CA legal requirements and best practices in euthanasia.

One "Owner Requests Put To Sleep (ORPTS)" was presented to the SM shelter for euthanasia. This was the only euthanasia conducted during the four day consult time frame. A staff member obtained the sodium pentobarbital (Fatal Plus®) from the gun closet and entered the date, owner's name, pet's name/ number of cc's taken/ number of cc's left in bottle/ staff initials in the euthanasia logbook. Staff reported that all ACC and staff that were certified to do euthanasias had keys to the closet. The Fatal Plus® solution was previously reconstituted/mixed by the RVT.

Staff had the signed ORPTS and the large old dog was brought directly to the euthanasia room and all doors



were closed. Staff used the owner's estimate of the pet's weight and reported that the standard dose was 1cc/10lb of body weight for IV and IC procedures. Some staff added an additional 1.5 mls to 2.0 mls of Fatal-Plus, depending on the individual Euthanasia Technician's observations and best judgment on a particular animal.

A fresh 18g needle was used for the actual injection. Both staff exhibited calm and compassionate demeanors throughout the euthanasia process. The dog was allowed to remain standing as it appeared to be comfortable. One staff gently restrained the dog and applied appropriate tourniquet method to the right carpal vein. The other staff member placed the needle, verified blood flash-back and injected the solution. The dog was gently placed on the bare floor as it became unconscious. After a few minutes one staff correctly verified death via the intracardiac method using a 3 cc syringe and 18g needle.

Once death was verified the body was taken out the back door of the euthanasia room and placed in a plastic bag then stored in the cooler that was adjacent to the room. Staff then replaced all equipment into the euthanasia room cabinets, placed all needles in the appropriate sharps container, and took the bottle of Fatal Plus back to the gun closet and locked it. No further cleaning was observed. Animal handling techniques were observed to be compassionate, humane and respectful to the animal.

All staff interviewed on euthanasia practices reported similar procedures for adult dog euthanasia at all shelter locations. It was reported that cats were also given IV (intravenous) euthanasia unless fractious/feral in which case the IP (intraperitoneal) method was used. There was some variation regarding pre-euthanasia sedation practices. All locations had the option to pre-sedate with a pre-mixed solution of 10:2 ketamine/xylazine. The usual sedation dose used was reported to be 0.6ml per 10 lbs of body weight. Some staff reported to use sedation most of the time others rarely used it unless the animal was fractious/dangerous.

All staff reported that animals were rarely kept in cages pending euthanasia. All reported that they performed the procedure as quickly as possible once all paperwork had been completed. Staff reported that they always scanned for microchips before euthanasia but this was not verified as no shelter animals were observed euthanized during the consult. As required by California state law (Food & Agriculture Code §31752[c] and §31108[c]), all animals should be rescanned for the presence of a microchip prior to euthanasia.

There was some reported concern from non-euthanasia certified staff concerning lack of a pre-sedation policy for all animals.

During the site visit, ACOs responded to an owner requested euthanasia for a dog. The owner completed the required paperwork at the Lompoc shelter and ACOs responded to the home. The ACOs correctly evaluated the dog, utilized the appropriate method for injectable euthanasia, properly gauged the dosage required and handled the animal with care & compassion. The procedure was conducted out of sight of other animals and in a room away from the owner. Despite the dog being extremely old and in very poor health (dog was "down"), they completed the procedure without difficulty demonstrating a high degree of competence and skill. They were professional & compassionate when dealing with the owner who was extremely complimentary of the ACOs.

The owner noted he had been the subject of previous enforcement action when his dogs were impounded. He praised the specific ACOs who responded and the staff at the shelter when he had been there previously.



The ACOs then collected and transported the deceased animal for disposal. The only issue noted was that the euthanasia drugs were transported in an unlocked glove box.

Recommendations:

- ACOs in the field need to have “safe-boxes” installed in vehicles to provide secure storage for field euthanasia drugs.
- In order to emphasize a perceived impression of humane death make sure soft bedding such as a towel or blanket is available for the animal to lie on during the euthanasia procedure.
- Adopt a standard procedure at all locations, which include the use of sedation.
- Formulate a line-by-line check-list that all euthanasia technicians must initialize directly before the procedure. This simple check list should include the most important steps outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual # 4.12 e.g:
 - Verified animal ID and euthanasia authorization
 - Verify no owner information (other than ORPTS)
 - Verify full body scan for microchip
 - Verify correct controlled drug log entry
 - Verify if sedation used
- Consider using IM sedation followed by IP euthanasia for fractious/ feral cats.

Discussion:

While not all animals need to be sedated before euthanasia, the use of sedation will alleviate anxiety for shelter staff and volunteers as well as the animals. For many well-socialized animals, direct injection of sodium pentobarbital is perfectly humane because it can be achieved virtually painlessly. However, it is important to have a consistent policy that is followed every time as this topic is one that incites much controversy with staff, volunteers and the general public.

Periodic euthanasia method review by the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team can help ensure that humane procedures continue to be used by all certified technicians. Regular review will help to dispel the perception that some euthanasias are stressful or less than ideal.

Direct intraperitoneal euthanasia is not considered best practice for feral or fractious cats. IP injections on cats that are balled up in the back of their cage or trap are technically challenging. There is little opportunity to aspirate into the syringe, so it is difficult to tell if you are in an internal organ or not. This means there is a much higher chance of injecting into an organ than if the animal is relaxed. It is preferable to give an intramuscular (IM) injection with the correct pre- euthanasia drugs (ketamine/ xylazine or its equivalent) followed by an intra cardiac (not acceptable in conscious animals) or IV dose of sodium pentobarbital.

5.3 EUTHANASIA ROOM/ ENVIRONMENT

Observations:



Each of the shelter locations had a dedicated room used mainly for euthanasia.

Santa Barbara

The euthanasia room was located in the “Pillsbury” building. It was separated from the quarantine/isolation runs and the room holding a bank of “puppy/kiñen” cages by doors. The room was long and narrow with one long wall containing cabinets and built-in counter space with a sink. There was a small fold-down metal examination table on the opposite wall. There were a variety of muzzles and leashes hanging on a wall, clean dishes stacked along the sink and some medication vials on the counters. The cabinets and drawers contained a variety of syringes and needles and alcohol. The overhead electric lights were not functioning at the time of the room evaluation.



It was reported that the room was used for multiple purposes for example: food preparation, medication storage and cleaning supply storage for the quarantine and isolation dogs was kept here. There was no natural light or windows available nor was there an outside access door. Any euthanized carcass would have to be carried through the quarantine/isolation areas. There were no signs on the doors to indicate “euthanasia in progress/ do not enter” however the Pillsbury building was kept locked at all times.

Controlled drugs for euthanasia were kept in a locked cabinet/drawer in the main building’s ACO office area. Five staff members were reported to have euthanasia certification including four ACO officers and one kennel attendant. All had keys to the controlled drug cabinet. The bottle of sodium pentobarbital (Fatal Plus®) was supplied by the RVT in SM. A detailed log book was also kept in the cabinet. A “pre-mix” or sedative/ tranquilizer (10:2 ketamine/ xylazine) was also kept in a drug box. It was reported that mainly field officers used this for fractious dogs.

Santa Maria

The euthanasia room was located in the north wing of the shelter. It had two access doors. One led to a small room with a bank of cages and one run, the other led outside next to the carcass cooler and had ACO truck access. The room was large, contained a steel exam table in the middle with overhead surgical-type light. Several windows permitted natural light. There was a wall of cabinets including a sink. The cabinets and drawers contained a supply of syringes and needles of various sizes. There were cleaning/ disinfection supplies, alcohol and a sharps container on the counter. The walls of the room were painted with whimsical pastoral scenes. A corner area had moveable cabinets that contained rabies specimen collection equipment. A variety of muzzles, leashes, catchpoles and other restraint equipment were hung on pegs next to the cabinets.

There was a marked and noticeable odor of decaying matter in this room. The source was the carcass cooler that was located just outside the exterior access door. There were no “do not enter” signs on any of the



doors but staff reported that it was understood not to enter if the doors were closed. Staff reported that the small steel cages located adjacent to the euthanasia room were rarely used. If used, staff reported that animals would not be kept there for long.

Euthanasia drugs were kept in a locked gun cabinet which was found in the ACO office area. The ACO officers also had access to the same pre-mix sedative as found in SB which was kept a drug box inside the cabinet. The RVT was responsible for checking the logbooks and resupplying both Fatal Plus® and the pre-mix. It was reported that all euthanasia certified technicians and ACO officers had keys. The logbook was also kept in this closet.

One owner-request-put-to-sleep (ORPTS) was witnessed in this room (see Euthanasia Process section for more detail). There was no microchip scanner in the room at the time but staff reported that they would bring one in if euthanizing a shelter animal. The RVT reported that all rabies specimens were processed in this room and that she kept control of supply inventory.

Lompoc

The euthanasia room was located on the south side of the remodeled shelter building. The room was labeled as “S o and E u a n a i a”. It was reportedly used only for euthanasia and also ACO equipment storage. The room had several windows with excellent light and was of good size with an exam table/unit along one wall. Another wall had a bank of cabinets/shelves, drawers and a countertop with a sink. The shelves and drawers contained a variety of syringes and needles. Muzzles of various sizes and leashes were found in drawers. Cleaning supplies and alcohol were available on the countertop. At the time of the consult a small cage with rats was being kept on the floor at the far side of the room. A few cans of food and other bedding material was stored in the room. Staff reported that a closed door signified “do not enter” to them.

Controlled/euthanasia drugs were kept in a locked cabinet next to the sink. Fatal Plus® and small bottles of pre-mix found in this cabinet as was the logbook for drug usage. A near empty bottle of medetomidine (dexdormitor) and another bottle of pre-mix were kept in the locked gun cabinet. All those certified in euthanasia and all ACOs had keys to these cabinets. The pre-mix sedative was expired on 4/31/14 and the medetomidine had expired in 2002. It was reported that controlled drugs were supplied by the RVT in Santa Maria.

Specific problems noted:

- The euthanasia room in SB is too small, cramped, badly lighted and inconveniently located.
- The odor in the SM euthanasia room from the adjacent cooler is extremely unpleasant.
- Expired controlled drugs and sedative mixes were found in Lompoc.
- Proper security measures for the storage of controlled substances as per DEA regulations are not in place.

Recommendations:

- Demolish the “Pill bury” building in SB. Relocate a euthanasia room closer to both ACO truck access and the cooler. The new euthanasia room should be used for that purpose only. The room design should emphasize a quiet environment away from shelter noise, good and natural light, good ventilation, sufficient storage for equipment and blankets and easy access to the cooler.



- Deep clean and repair the cooler in SM. Also consider more frequent carcass pick-ups and/or discontinue picking up dead decaying wildlife.
- The RVT and Premise Permit holder must clear out all expired drugs in Lompoc, log and dispose of them as required by law (see http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/index.html; http://www.vmb.ca.gov/licenses/controlled_subs.shtml)
- The Veterinary Health Care Team members should reassess the dispensing and logging of controlled substances at all locations especially SB and Lompoc as the premise permit and DEA license holder and RVT currently works mainly in SM
- Consider having “do not enter” signs for all doors at all locations that can be easily hung during euthanasias.

Discussion:

The euthanasia facilities/ room facilities are adequate in SM and Lompoc with the exception of the carcass odor due to the faulty cooler and decaying wildlife carcasses in SM. Although drug recording was correctly done as per federal laws for both dispensed [21 CFR§1304.03(b)] or administered drugs [21 CFR§1304.03(d)] there was a lack of accountability in monitoring expired drugs. This needs to be addressed immediately.

The distant locations make having precise and accountable drug logs even more important. At this time the RVT should travel to each location and reassess all drugs and logbooks to ensure all input is in accordance with CA and Federal laws. Future accountability will depend on who composes the future Shelter Medicine Health Care Team. One person will need to have responsibility to maintain all logbooks and periodically check them in all locations on a regular schedule.

The problems with the Pillsbury building have been detailed in many sections of this report. The small, inadequate euthanasia room needs to be replaced.

5.4 EUTHANASIA TECHNICIANS' TRAINING

Observations:

At the time of The AHA team site visit, each shelter location had 2-5 employees certified to perform euthanasia (not including veterinarians). CA state law dictates that employees of shelters or humane societies who are not veterinarians or RVTs shall receive proper training to administer, without the presence of a veterinarian, sodium pentobarbital for euthanasia (CA Code of Regulations#2039). The training curriculum must include 8 hours as specified by the California Animal Control Directors Association (<http://caoda.org/home/>) and the State Humane Association of California, which offers a “Euthanasia Training Curriculum” (http://www.californiastatehumane.org/training.htm#Euthanasia_Training). Each employee reported that they had received the appropriate training. However, many indicated that the training and certification had occurred “year” ago. There were several new employees who indicated they would be willing to take euthanasia training if offered. Staff was aware that there was an SOP titled



“Euthanasia” in the Animal Services Policies and Procedures Manual (Policy # 4.12) but many had not read it in many years.

The current RVT was certified by the State Humane Association of CA as a euthanasia training instructor and had given training to at least two employees a few years ago. The shelter possessed the current California Euthanasia Training Curriculum Handbook. Prior to the current RVT some staff recall having received training from Douglas Fakkema who used to provide euthanasia by injection workshops in CA. Several staff members could not remember when they had received this training. The RVT indicated that not only were new employees requiring training but that many euthanasia technicians desired “refresher” training. The RVT indicated that lack of time prevented her from offering euthanasia training and/or refresher courses.

None of the euthanasia certified staff interviewed indicated any “compassion fatigue” or had issues with the shelter’s euthanasia policies. Staff did indicate that they each have their own preferences with pre-sedation (see euthanasia methods and procedures section). Staff at one location preferred to sedate almost all animals prior to euthanasia, staff at other locations rarely did so.

Specific problems noted:

- The RVT (Veterinary Health Team) has not been given time to conduct euthanasia training to new staff or “refresher” training for those who were certified many years ago.

Recommendations:

- The shelters should dedicate specific times and dates (several different ones will be needed to cover all locations and staff hours) for the RVT (or member of the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team) to conduct the CA Euthanasia Training Curriculum and to certify new employees.
- Order and distribute copies of the Euthanasia Reference Manual published by the Humane Society of the United States (<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/euthanasia/euthanasia-reference-manual.pdf>).
- Require the Shelter Medicine Health Care Team to observe euthanasia practices periodically at all locations.

Discussion:

One of the most critical responsibilities for those of us in the animal care and sheltering field, and the function that is most demonstrative of an organization’s level of compassion and concern, is our ability to provide the most humane death possible when euthanasia is necessary.

The word euthanasia is of Greek origin and means “good death.” In order to provide a humane death, the euthanasia process must result in painless unconsciousness followed by cardiac and/or respiratory arrest and ultimately death. For euthanasia to truly be euthanasia the animal should be as free from stress and anxiety as possible. The American Veterinary Association’s Panel on Euthanasia says the technique used should “minimize any stress and anxiety experienced by the animal prior to unconsciousness” and that this stress and anxiety “may be minimized by technical proficiency and humane handling of the animals to be euthanized.”



Such humane handling is accomplished by staff that is knowledgeable about animal behavior and physiology, demonstrates respect, compassion and sensitivity for the animals, and is committed to providing the animal with a dignified death. It also requires a process that takes into consideration the behavioral and physiological responses of the animals to the process as well as to the drugs used.

All staff at SBCAS exhibited and professed a compassionate approach to humane euthanasia. However, employee overwork, stress and forgetfulness can result in less than ideal euthanasia technique. Having periodic review/observation by the RVT and veterinarian(s) can help to mitigate problems with either technique or issues of "compassion fatigue" in a positive manner before problematic issues arise. Technical skill and knowledge regarding drugs and equipment is a necessity, however an understanding of the emotional investment each staff member has in the process is equally important. Team work, support, patience, attitude and an understanding of one's convictions and personal commitments to their job are all involved in giving an animal a dignified death.

Over the years there are many new animal behavior techniques that help to minimize anxiety and help in making the "good death" truly good e.g. covering cat carriers/ cages, providing soft blankets and understanding the pros and cons of using pre-sedation. For this reason it is recommended that SBCAS dedicate itself to providing ongoing euthanasia training certification and also offer the course to those certified years ago. The RVT (and ideally a veterinarian) must be given time to prepare and offer the courses/training.

5.5 CARCASS DISPOSAL

Observations:

The three locations had slightly different methods for carcass disposal. All three had a cooler/refrigerator on location for carcass storage. All three locations verified death before placing animals in the coolers (see euthanasia sections for more detail).

Santa Barbara

Had a walk-in cooler located in the back/east area of the property. The cooler was old and the floor was in disrepair but appeared to be otherwise in good working condition. There was no thermometer inside the unit. The cooler had several barrels that contained both loose carcasses and carcasses in plastic bags. In addition, there was a small shelf unit that stored several carcasses inside plastic bags. There was a dirty towel on the floor and a fairly significant odor inside the cooler caused by a recent addition of a dead skunk.

Santa Maria

A large cooler was located across from the euthanasia room along the ACO driveway of the north wing of the shelter. The unit housed a large number of barrels that contained carcasses some in plastic bags. There were also carcasses in plastic bags on the floor. Some smaller plastic bags were stored in "milk crate" type bins. The unit had an overwhelming stench that was noticeable outside as far as 50 feet away including inside the euthanasia room. There was no obvious source of the smell at the time of the consult and it was reported by



staff to be constant. In addition, staff reported significant distress with having to deal with it. The consult team was unable to spend any significant time anywhere close to this unit due to the smell. There was no thermometer inside the unit and it was impossible to determine if the unit's temperature gauge (set at 53 ° F) was accurate.

Lompoc

Carcasses were stored in an outdoor stand-alone chest freezer unit. The bodies were all appropriately bagged and the temperature appeared to be close to freezing. A fairly significant odor was detected when the unit was opened due to a skunk carcass.

None of the locations performed either cremation or had other means of disposal. Santa Barbara County contracts with a Southern California disposal company to pick up carcasses that were then rendered. The pick-ups were scheduled once a week at the Santa Maria and Santa Barbara shelter. The freezer unit in Lompoc would be periodically cleared with carcasses transported up to Santa Maria.

Specific problems noted:

The units in Santa Maria and Santa Barbara while fairly clean did not appear to have been scrubbed in a while. The floors appeared swept but old stains were evident. Both locations had significant odor problems.

There were no thermometers inside the coolers.

The extreme odor at Santa Maria requires immediate remediation.

Recommendations:

- Arrange for a deep cleaning of both the Santa Maria and Santa Barbara coolers. This should include the floors, walls and ceilings and also the ventilation units.
- Purchase and place several good commercial thermometers in each unit in at least two locations and heights. Institute a system of monitoring cooler temperature. For example, designate staff members to be in charge of checking daily temperatures at various times of the day and keeping logs of this data. A system of repair and trouble-shooting must be in place to fix any problems within 24 hours.
- Reconsider the policy of dead animal pickup in the County e.g. skunks and other wildlife (see other sections of this report for more detail). Consider having a separate freezer unit for skunks and other decaying wildlife. Consider scheduling more frequent disposal company pickups in Santa Maria.

Discussion:

The issue of carcass cooler smell at the Santa Maria facility is significant. Although there is no research regarding the effect of dead animal smell on live animals it is likely that it can cause significant stress. The odor of carcasses is pervasive in the euthanasia room and although staff takes efforts not to have other live animals present during an euthanasia the odor is very present. Staff indicated needing a clean and odor-free euthanasia room for the benefit of their own compassion needs and for the animals they are euthanizing.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*6. Disease Control
and Sanitation*

6. Disease Control and Sanitation

General Overview

The Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.19 “Shelter Quarantines” and Chapter 6, Veterinary Services, 6.04 “Isolation Room Protocol.” Procedure 4.19 included procedures for handling animals who were being housed at the facilities for bite quarantine. The Policy section of the document was not clear as to the quarantine purpose. The document also stated, “A. The animal will be impounded by the officer, taken to the shelter, and placed in a kennel or a cage with no other animal.” Procedure 6.04 stated in the Policy section, “The Isolation Rooms are utilized for treatable animals that are clinically ill and have been prescribed treatment. Care must be taken to avoid cross contamination.” See the Veterinary Services section for veterinary observations and recommendations; this section will focus on disease management, isolation and separation as it relates to handling during cleaning and disinfecting. The team observed that animals in isolation areas were attended to after animals in stray and adoption areas.

Procedure 6.04 was quite detailed and it included the following sections: A. Goal, B. Recognition of clinical disease requiring medical isolation, C. Recognition that an animal needs immediate veterinary care, D. Cleaning and attire procedures, E. Placement of patients into medical Isolation Rooms, F. Treatment of patients in isolation, G. Cleaning in isolation areas (general techniques), H. Cage cleaning in isolation (feline), I. Cage cleaning in isolation (canine), J. Cage item cleaning and sanitation, K. AM Treatment, L. PM Treatment, M. Medical isolation area sanitation and N. Transfer of patients from Isolation Rooms. (Yes, there are two G’s.) This procedure appeared to be most applicable to the Santa Maria location given that the other locations did not have isolation rooms.

6.1 ISOLATION AND SEPARATION

This section will focus on the medical and behavioral aspects of isolation protocols. Please see detailed descriptions of animal housing at all locations in the Dog and Cat Housing section of this report.

Santa Barbara



The County provided a detailed SOP for isolation room protocols (Santa Barbara County Animal Services Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 6, Policy # 6.04). The ability to follow those protocols required adequate housing options that were only available in Santa Maria.

There was very little infrastructure at the SB facility for any effective isolation and separation of animals for intake, quarantine or illness. Quarantined dogs were housed in the separate “Pillsbury” building. The runs in this building were small, old and in poor quality. Several bite quarantine and one cruelty confiscation dog were currently housed in this building. The building was locked throughout the day and only designated staff had access resulting in minimal behavioral



enrichment possibilities for these dogs.

It was reported that small dogs were often placed in a wheeled block of small stainless steel cages found in the middle of the main kennel building's walkway between the two dog runs. It was reported that these new intake dogs were frequently seen to be very stressed as the area was extremely noisy and they faced large dogs.

It was reported that two small dogs were able to escape their runs in the Pillsbury building and were killed when they entered into another dog run through similar kennel door openings. These openings (holes where food bowls could be placed) were sealed at the time of the consult. It was reported that puppies were often housed in a bank of small "cat" cages in a room in Pillsbury that was adjacent to the euthanasia room. A temporary enclosure housing a puppy with sarcoptic mange was seen erected next to the main dog kennel building during the consult. It was reported that canine respiratory disease was not a common condition but, if noticed, the animal was not isolated rather treated in its original run or moved to a cage/run further removed from the rest of the population.



The shelter reported that infectious diseases were rarely seen. The shelter did not treat parvo or distemper infected dogs. Staff had access to ELISA Parvo Snap Tests found in the intake room. Positive tests warranted euthanasia unless a foster home and funds to treat could be immediately found.

A few roosters were housed in outdoor runs. It was reported that other animals such as small mammals, pet birds and reptiles were housed in temporary cages/ aquariums in various locations depending on numbers and type. For example, reptiles were often kept in the staff break (OSHA Violation?) or volunteer coordinator room. It was reported that various staff had some knowledge on these species husbandry needs and that the shelter strove to meet them. No SOP or detailed written protocols were seen for these species. BUNS managed rabbits and their isolation protocols were reported to be comprehensive and adhered to by dedicated volunteers.

The shelter reported that most cats were taken to ASAP on arrival. The separation and isolation protocols and ability to care for sick cats at ASAP were excellent. This organization not only had separate wards for incoming and sick cats but also had good fosters available for home treatment. All SOPs for cats in isolation were complete and comprehensive. Furthermore the organization realized the need for behavioral enrichment and emphasized stress management for its new intakes or sick cats. No further recommendations were found for ASAP.



Santa Maria

This facility had the ability to isolate and separate animals. Each dog kennel room contained several double-sided runs. The shelter reported that a kennel could be designated as an isolation ward if upper respiratory disease was diagnosed. The kennel room would then be appropriately labeled and staff reported that the County SOP for isolation room protocols would be followed.



Cat isolation wards consisted of small windowed rooms with approximately 4 stainless steel cages. These cages were large and in some cases double sized or with portals joining two smaller sizes. At the time of the consult there were two cats in isolation for upper respiratory disease. Each room had supplies and enrichment toys for the volunteers to use when treating and handling these cats.

These wards were quiet and the cage size appropriate for sick/ stressed cats. Feral cats were being housed in a separate room in large double-sides stainless steel cages.

The shelter reported that the only dog infectious disease it treated was canine upper respiratory disease complex (CRDC or upper respiratory infection-URI). Parvo and distemper were rarely diagnosed. Positive cases were euthanized unless willing foster and sufficient funds were identified. It was reported that ideally an entire kennel would be designated as a canine URI isolation ward when respiratory disease became evident. However, the ability to cordon off an entire kennel was reported to be dependent on population size. It was frequently necessary to tape off runs as "individual isolation ward" when the shelter was full and every run was needed. However, the clinic staff reported that spread of canine URI was rare. Quarantine and confiscation dogs were also housed in a separate kennel room with double sided guillotined runs. Quarantined cats were kept in separate rooms at the west end of the facility when needed. It was reported that both dogs and cats in quarantine would receive enrichment with toys.

Rodents were housed in various rodent appropriate cages in several adoptable pet areas. The rats appeared healthy, had appropriate behavioral enrichment toys and did not exhibit stress behaviors.

The shelter had several psitticine birds at the time of the consult. They were housed in the clinic treatment room in separate birdcages. Two macaws had been recently confiscated. One of these birds was acting depressed and had evidence of chronic disease/ behavior problems (feather picking). A new stray cockatoo was also housed at the opposite end of the treatment room. The clinic staff reported that birds were not common. They were generally kept in the treatment area due to lack of any other adequate housing. The two macaws were supposed to be returned to owner as soon as he contacted the shelter and shelter staff fostered the friendly cockatoo.



Lompoc

This facility did not have much ability to separate or isolate dogs. There were two outdoor runs available if needed but the shelter reported that it did not generally house sick canines. Adoptable, mildly sick dogs were offered to the shelter's rescue partner for foster. It was reported that the shelter could designate the animal exam room cages for sick cats if necessary. At the time of the visit one cat was being housed in this room pending diagnostic tests to determine whether it was contagious (viral URI) or could be placed for adoption. This shelter did not treat other illnesses such as parvo or distemper. Quarantine or confiscated dogs were housed with the general population but with color coded tags attached to their runs for identification. Cats on quarantine were housed in the stray cat holding room. Fowl were housed in outdoor runs and rats were housed in cages located either in the entrance area or in the euthanasia room. The rodent cages were appropriate for the species and staff reported that the cages may be moved depending on the needs of the animals e.g. friendly young ones are brought up front, shy more fearful ones are kept in the quieter back room.

The team was told that if infectious disease was suspected in an animal with obvious illness at intake, such as parvovirus, they would use personal protective equipment and gear and usher the animal to the euthanasia room for testing and euthanize if positive. If a suspect animal was already in a cage or kennel, they would remain in place until tested and if positive they would be handled accordingly and euthanized. The entire facility would then be deep cleaned and animal enclosures would be cleaned and disinfected with bleach solution and footbaths would be utilized.

Specific problems noted:

- The Pillsbury building was not appropriate to house animals for any reason.
- There was no adequate, humane housing available in the Santa Barbara shelter to separate sick, quarantine or confiscated dog populations.
- There were no adequate cages or rooms to house puppies or new small dogs in SB.
- There was no dedicated appropriate room to house other small species away from noise and exposure to dogs in SB.
- The Santa Maria shelter reported frequent inability to adequately isolate canine URI cases.
- The shelter kept feral cats in long-term isolation.
- There was no quiet, warm area available for bird housing.
- The Lompoc shelter did not have adequate isolation/ quarantine dog housing.
- Proper protective equipment (gowns, gloves, boot covers) were not consistently worn by staff and volunteers

Recommendations:

- Ensure the adherence to Isolation Protocols, including requiring the use of personal Protective equipment to minimized disease transfer.



- Create clearly designated areas in all 3 locations for Isolation, Quarantine, Healthy Hold and Adoption. Clean from most susceptible to least susceptible populations.
- Remove/demolish the Pillsbury building in SB. A new redesign of the Santa Barbara shelter must include an overall well located and designed housing for dogs. This must include appropriate housing for separation and isolation.
- Institute better population management at the Santa Maria shelter during high volume months so that an entire kennel can be kept designated for canine URI. Treating URI dogs while in the general population puts the entire shelter canines at risk of illness. Population management should be used to predict when more housing is needed. This will allow the shelter to prepare and institute alternative options including increased media outreach, increased temporary foster homes, and increased shelter transfer programs.
- Do not house feral cats long term. Institute Community Cat programs as described in other sections of this report or consider humane euthanasia.
- Consider designating one of the currently unused small windowed rooms as a bird room. This room should be kept warmer than the rest of the shelter especially if birds appear to be sick or stressed. Protocols to maintain adequate enrichment must be written and followed.
- The Lompoc shelter needs to build/ replace its dog runs to include adequate isolation and separation (see recommendations in dog housing section of this report).
- During an outbreak, additional measures should be taken to minimize the spread of diseases. Employees should don disposable gloves and gowns when handling ill animals or any animal that may have been exposed to disease.
- Dedicated boots that can be disinfected or disposable shoe covers are more effective than footbaths and should be used in contaminated areas.
- Educate all shelter employees about common diseases, including parvovirus, panleukopenia, canine distemper, intestinal and external parasites, upper respiratory infections, and ringworm. All employees should know how these diseases are transmitted, basic disease prevention methods, basic sanitation and disinfection techniques, and proper identification of disease symptoms.
- Correct the alphabet order in Procedure 6.04, as there are two Ds and two Cs.
- Change the language in the first line of Procedure 4.19 to read, "Animal will be quarantined at the shelter by the investigating Animal Control Officer after a bite has occurred."

Discussion:

All facilities should have a means of providing isolation that will allow for humane care and not put other animals at risk (Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, Association of Shelter Veterinarians, 2010). At a minimum four basic categories of segregation are recommended:

- Healthy Adoptions (juveniles separated from adults, ideally)
- Healthy Stray/ Hold (juveniles separated from adults, ideally)
- Isolation (sick)
- Isolation/ Quarantine (bite cases and aggressive)



Populations that need separate housing include:

- Different species
- Don't house predators and prey in visual, auditory or olfactory contact with one another.
- Animals with infectious conditions
 - The amount of housing designated for this purpose depends on the facility but 10% is a good rule of thumb. With good husbandry most animals should not get sick in the shelter.
 - Make sure housing in isolation areas is at least equal in quality to other housing in the shelter. Sick animals especially need an environment that is comfortable, non-stressful, and easily cleaned between occupants.
 - Provide double-sided or compartmentalized housing to minimize handling and cross-contamination when caring for sick animals.
 - A separate building or area should be designed to house small dogs and puppies appropriately.
 - Designate a quiet area or room for birds and other species away from predator animals such as dogs or cats.
- Young animals (puppies and kittens under 5 months of age)
- Quarantine/confiscate animals
 - These animals are often housed for extended periods. The housing must reflect this by providing space and comfort. Behavioral enrichment in terms of toys, bedding and contact with trained staff when possible must be factored into the design.

Limitations of the Santa Barbara and Lompoc facility create challenges for isolation of sick animals even for short term holding or treatment. This is a concern because ill animals – such as the puppy needing to be isolated in a temporary run in SB can maintain and spread serious disease such as canine distemper, URI or in this case scabies. A well designed shelter has smaller areas with large individual runs that can be used for designated subpopulations. Segregating sub-populations is a critical tool for shelter animal health. At minimum, sick animals must be isolated from healthy animals and ideally more vulnerable animals such as puppies, kittens and newly admitted animals should be housed separately from animals held long term.

Beginning at the time of admission, separation of animals by health, quarantine designation and age is essential to provide for their behavioral needs as well as proper health and welfare (Griffin B. Wellness. In: Miller L, Hurley KF (eds). *Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters*, Ames, IA: Blackwell, 2009a; pp 17–38). The isolation runs in Santa Barbara are grossly inadequate and result in inhumane behavioral management of long-term confiscation and quarantine dogs.

The Santa Maria location is fortunate to have separate isolation areas in which to house ill animals. Animals who enter shelters often have unknown medical histories and sometimes no vaccination history. Animals who have been recently exposed to (and therefore able to spread) disease may show no initial symptoms upon examination during the incubation period. The need for good health care protocols is critical, and the



rationale is two-fold—to uphold the shelter's responsibility to care humanely for animals and to maintain the reputation of the organization as a well-operated community resource.

The concept of isolation and separation in an animal shelter allows one to manage the animal population more effectively, and in the process protects the public and ensures a healthier environment for the animals.

The isolation and separation concept is as follows:

- Evaluate and vaccinate the animal at intake.
 - If sick, house the animal in isolation for the stray period.
 - If a bite case or an aggressive animal, hold it in quarantine.
 - If the animal appears healthy and potentially adoptable, hold the animal in an area with other healthy animals and as soon as the animal is evaluated and cleared for adoption, move to an adoption area.

Managing the population by isolating sick and/or aggressive animals from healthy animals will decrease the possibility of spreading disease and protect staff and the public from potential bites. Isolation and separation will also assist with staff making better adoption and euthanasia decisions and assist SBCAS in presenting to the public only those animals who have been evaluated and chosen for adoption.

Isolation and separation protocols must be strictly followed in order for them to be effective. Some organizations make the mistake of bending the rules by not using space as it was designated. There may be times when the healthy holding area is full and some agencies make the mistake of placing a healthy animal in the isolation room. Exposing healthy animals to sick ones negates the logic and benefits that result from managing the population in this way.

It is also important to remember that prey species (e.g., birds, guinea-pigs, hamsters, gerbils, rabbits) should be housed away from predatory species (e.g., ferrets, cats, dogs) at all times (Quesenberry K, Quesenberry P, Carpenter JW. Ferrets, Rabbits and Rodents. 2nd edn. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier Science, 2003). It can be extremely stressful for them to be housed in an area where they are subjected to olfactory, auditory, and visual contact with predatory species. At the same time behavioral enrichment and considerations must be maintained especially for birds used to human interaction.

When building new shelters or redesigning existing facilities be aware of the minimum recommended floor area allowances for individually housed of various sizes of shelter dogs. Consider hiring architects and shelter medicine experts early in the design stages of rebuilding so that proper housing including isolation wards are optimum. Some basic guidelines for canine run sizes are provided below.

- Extra small dogs (<10lb): 12.0 sq. ft. (1.1 m²)
- Small dogs (11-20 lb): 18.0 sq. ft. (1.67 m²)
- Medium dogs (21-40 lb): 24.0 sq. ft. (2.2 m²)
- Large dogs (41-60 lb): 32.0 sq. ft. (3 m²)



Extra large dogs (61-80 lb): 40.0 sq. ft. (3.7 m²)

Giant breeds (>80 lb): 48.0 sq. ft. (4.5m²)

6.2 CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Observations:

The Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 4, Kennel Operations, 4.07 “Cleaning Procedure” included the following sections: safety, cats and kittens, rabbits, dogs and quarantine and bite animals or vicious animals. Policy 4.20 “Cleaning with the SMT System” included operating instructions for the pressure cleaning system at the Santa Maria facility. Chapter 6, Veterinary Services, 6.07 “Infectious Disease Control in the Shelter” included procedures on alerting the RVT or a veterinarian when there were signs of kennel cough, canine and feline parvovirus and then how positive parvovirus cases would be managed. Each of the facilities utilized TripleTwo for cleaning and disinfecting animal enclosures. Each of the facilities had a combination of spray bottles with and without appropriate labels indicating the content of the bottles. (OSHA) The team was told that in terms of equipment needed to appropriately complete responsibilities—including personal protective equipment—was readily available and their needs were met. Some employees were observed utilizing personal protective equipment.

Santa Barbara

Dog kennel cleaning commenced after the 8:00 a.m. daily staff meeting, at approximately 8:20 a.m. Volunteers arrived early and began moving small dogs to the small dog play yard adjacent to the shed and main dog kennel. The team was told that volunteers cleaned and maintained the 5 outdoor pens located on the concrete pad that that group erected.

When cleaning started the morning of the site visit, a puppy (Ernie A383724), who was reported to the team to have sarcoptic mange, was removed from his cage and taken to an outdoor pen that was on the concrete just outside the main kennel on the pathway to the various animal areas. His cage was in one of the stainless steel Shor-lines in the center of the main kennel. The Kennel Attendant utilized a towel to pick up the puppy and move him to the pen and did not don latex gloves or other personal protective equipment. The puppy was excited and squirming and turned and licked the Kennel Attendant on the face. Signs on the cage read “Ernie: Benadryl 25, From: 12/26 To: —, ¼tab BID, “Pup 12/23, Possible contagious mites, handle with gloves, keep dog and laundry separate” and the sign on the pen read, “12/23 may have mites, please do not handle me” and “No Yet Available for Adoption.”



Prior to the start of the cleaning process, dogs in the hexagonal building were medicated and fed and then the pad locks on the outsides of the runs were opened. Dogs were then moved to the inside portion of their runs and the guillotine doors were closed. Dogs who were more house trained than others were taken to the dog play yards on the side of the kennel where the rabbits were located. A regular garden hose was utilized to spray down the outside runs and walkway, water buckets were dumped along the way. Three different foamers were observed in the kennel, all made by HT Products, two were preset to be used with TripleTwo to dilute at 2 ounces per gallon and the other (the Multi Ratio Foam Master) has a dial that was set to "C" which dilutes at 4 ounces per gallon. The team was told that each staff member has his or her own preference to which setting is utilized on the foamer according to how many suds it produced. The runs were thoroughly sprayed including water bowls, doors, and walls to the top of the run walls. While one Kennel Attendant sprayed one side, the other sprayed the outside runs on the other side of the kennel. Each Kennel Attendant had the foamer set to "C." One Kennel Attendant was observed using a scrub brush on a handle to scrub some of the runs after the runs were foamed. The TripleTwo was allowed to rest for approximately 10-15 minutes; this was appropriate as the contact time for efficacy is 10 minutes. The foamers were then removed from the hoses and the TripleTwo was rinsed away. As the runs were rinsed the water buckets were filled back up. The team observed that the water buckets were not rinsed and water dumped to ensure that TripleTwo residue did not remain in the buckets. As the buckets were filled with water the water retained a slightly soapy veneer that faded away after a few minutes. The runs and walkways were then squeegeed and the guillotine doors were opened to allow the dogs access to the outside. At this point, the feeding and medicating process began (see section "Feeding and Nutrition").



Volunteers began cleaning and disinfecting the outdoor pens at approximately 9:45 a.m. All of the dogs were removed and placed in the dog play yards. All items within the pens were removed except for the igloo dog house, plastic platform bed and water bowl. The team did not observe the foaming process; however, observed that a hose and foamer were set aside for their use. The pens were rinsed and water sprayed toward the back of the cement slab and water and TripleTwo rolled off the back onto the ground.

TripleTwo was stored outside behind the main, administrative building in 50 gallon drums. The team noticed that there was not a dilution mixing station for filling the spray bottles with TripleTwo and did not determine how spray bottles were measured and filled.

Mops and mop buckets were observed in each of the facilities in various areas, many with murky standing water with an unknown mixture.

Santa Maria

Procedure 4.20 "Cleaning with the SMT System" included instructions on its use and safety guidelines. The team observed use of the system during morning dog kennel cleaning; however, did not observe the system being used in the single sided runs in the isolation or clinic rooms. The procedure noted that "Santa Barbara County Animal Services employees decided that scooping would not be the most efficient cleaning method in our environment. Contact your supervisor if you prefer to begin by scooping the kennel." The procedure for using the SMT system in the isolation room and clinic noted that dogs are to be placed into a clean run



while their run is being cleaned. Section C. “4. Move the animal out of the dirty run to a clean run. It is not acceptable to allow the animal to run loose while cleaning the run.” The team was told that if the SMT system is ever down, they use regular hoses, but that that rarely happens and it was usually fixed on the same day. However, the team was also told that the SMT system had mechanical problems nearly from the beginning and maintenance was required regularly. In the hallway outside of the main kennels there was a blue bucket that contained Trifectant for disinfecting the squeegees. The team was told that the buckets were refreshed once per week. One of the buckets did not appear to have a label on it, but the other did.

The observed cleaning process varied slightly from the written procedure. Rather than moving all of the dogs to one side of the runs and closing the guillotine doors in each of the 4 adoption rooms as the procedure was written (adoption “one”) the Kennel Attendant worked room by room. The team believed this was acceptable given that the dogs would be sequestered to one side of the run for longer periods of time otherwise. However, the side of the kennel that adopters were allowed in was cleaned first in each room (the short side of the runs). Dogs were moved to the shorter side of the run and the guillotine doors were closed. The flusher was turned on and the SMT system was set to disinfect and the runs were sprayed. Feces was not removed or sprayed into the trench during the initial spray down nor were the runs rinsed before applying the cleaner/disinfectant. The team requested that they be shown how the rinse and disinfect buttons worked and were told that the rinse function did not work well at the time (perhaps only in that particular room), and that when it was selected the cleaner/disinfectant still came through a little. A few minutes after the cleaner/disinfectant was applied the rinse function was turned on and the runs were rinsed. At that point the feces were sprayed out of the runs. The team observed that the water was not completely clear and that it still had some traces of foam. The runs were rinsed with a light rinse and then a high pressure rinse and then were squeegeed and guillotine doors were opened. The Kennel Attendant moved to the next room and began the process again.

The stray dog kennel was cleaned room by room rather than moving all of the dogs to one side of the runs and closing the guillotine doors in each of the stray rooms as the procedure was written. The team believed this was acceptable given that the dogs would be sequestered to one side of the run for longer periods of time otherwise. The flusher was turned on and then the team observed dogs being gently coaxed to one side of the run and the guillotine doors being closed. One dog was resistant to moving to the other side of the run, and the Kennel Attendant said that the water hose being turned on would persuade him to go to the other side. He turned the hose on and sprayed it on the walkway near the kennel and the dog moved to the other side. The dog was not sprayed and did not get wet from the hose. The water buckets were dumped into the runs, bedding was placed on the top of the runs, the bed was placed on its side, and the food trays were placed on the top of the kennel (dry food was still present in some of the trays). The water buckets were then filled back up with fresh water with a regular hose and the feces were sprayed into the trench drains. The high pressure rinse was turned on; however, the water was slightly soapy. The walkway and runs were sprayed down, and all feces marks were rinsed away. The switch was changed to “foap” and the foam increased. Unlike the adoption kennel, the result was a more foamy mixture and the team was more affected by its strength and began to cough. The AHA team member then left the area to observe cleaning of a cat room.

Procedure 4.20 section D. Protective Equipment stated, “1. All personal protective equipment is optional,



based on testing in this environment indicating that the exposure limit is within acceptable "standard." It also stated, "3. Use of personal protective equipment is recommended for your safety and well-being. Contact your supervisor if you request additional equipment or have recommendations for the use or additional needs in this area."

The team observed cats being cleaned in the cat room with the cages C101-110. The cats in this room were available for adoption. The door was opened, the screen door was latched and the cage doors were opened, allowing the cats to jump out of their cage and onto the floor to walk around. The team asked if all of the cats got along well and were told yes. Only two cats came out of their cages and when one of them walked in front of a cat who remained in his cage, he hissed as they walked past his cage. The Kennel Attendant put on latex gloves and fed and medicated the cats who were on medication, changing gloves between cats. The handling of the cats was gentle and appropriate. Litterboxes were then dumped and refilled. TripleTwo from a spray bottle was sprayed onto a paper towel and the sides of the cages were wiped down. The Kennel Attendant remarked that they prefer quick cleaning for cats in order to reduce stress, which impressed the team.

TripleTwo was stored in the mechanical room where the SMT system was located. The team noticed that there was not a dilution mixing station for filling the spray bottles with TripleTwo and did not determine how spray bottles were measured and filled.

Lompoc

The team observed morning dog cleaning which began at approximately 8:00 a.m. They aimed to complete the outside portion of the kennels first since those were visible to the public beginning at 9:00 a.m. Pad locks were removed from the outer dog run doors. Dogs were then moved to the inside portion of their runs and the guillotine doors were closed. Short, plastic platform beds were on the outsides of the dog runs (Kuranda beds on the inside). Feces were scooped out of the runs and placed in a pile in the outer trench drain, which resulted in a large pile of feces. Water was dumped out of the buckets into the runs and a regular garden hose with a HT Products foamer preset to dilute TripleTwo at 2 ounces per gallon was utilized to spray down the outside runs and walkway. The team was told that bleach is only used if parvovirus had been in the facility. The runs and walkway were then rinsed and the water buckets were refilled and then the area was squeegeed. The beds were put back in place and the pad locks were refastened to all of the chain link door latches. The dogs were then ushered to the outside of the runs and the guillotine doors were closed again. If a dog did not want to go to the other side the Animal Welfare Attendant skipped that run and went to the next one. Water from bowls was dumped into the trench drain that ran along the front of the runs, the Kuranda beds were placed on their sides against the run wall. Like at the Santa Maria facility, to persuade dogs to move from one side to the other, the hose was turned on and sprayed onto the walkway outside of the run. The team was told that if the dog did not go in, they set the hose aside and entered the run to move them to the other side. The inside portion of the runs were then sprayed down with TripleTwo via the foamer. The insides of the runs and walkways were thoroughly sprayed. While the TripleTwo sat for the required time, the food was prepared and new bedding was placed on the tops of the runs. The runs and walkways were then rinsed, water buckets refilled and runs and walkway squeegeed. The Kuranda beds were towel dried prior to opening the guillotine doors and allowing the dogs access to both sides of the run.



The team observed morning cat cleaning which began with the cat adoption room; a volunteer assisted the staff member. A cart on wheels that included a garbage bin and other required supplies was utilized. There were a combination of cages and loose cats in the room and the cages were cleaned first. The cat cage door was opened and the cat jumped out of the cage onto the floor. The litterbox was dumped into the trash and then were sprayed with TripleTwo from a spray bottle. Dust and litter was wiped out of the cage and then the walls and top were sprayed. Without wait time, the cleaner/disinfectant was wiped off with a cloth. The cage doors were not sprayed. Food and water bowls were wiped out with a dry cloth. The litterbox was then wiped out, approximately 5 minutes after it was sprayed. Bedding, food and water were added to the cage. The room, which had scratching posts, a cat Kuranda bed and a chair, was then swept and straightened up, and water and food bowls on the floor were refreshed. The stray/intake cat room was then cleaned, following the same procedures.

TripleTwo was stored outside behind the facility in 50 gallon drums. The team noticed that there was not a dilution mixing station for filling the spray bottles with TripleTwo. When the team asked how the cleaner/disinfectant was mixed they were told that it is to be measured at 2 ounces per gallon and it is done by eye, without measuring tools.

Recommendations:

- Update cleaning policy and procedures and train employees and volunteers. Hold all employees accountable for adhering to the policy. This policy should be consistently implemented across all three sites. Variations can be included to address unique situations at each campus. Post a check list in each kennel for employee and volunteer reference.
 - This policy must mandate the use of appropriate PPE as per OSHA guidelines. This will include the use of respiratory and ocular protection in areas where chemicals are being aerosolized.
 - This policy addresses what products to use at what dilutions and contact times, under what circumstances.
 - This policy will outline the exact steps and sequence to be followed.
 - Utilize degreaser at least once per week in the dog kennels. Degreaser can be purchased at HT Products where SB CAS purchases TripleTwo.
 - Maintain clean surfaces that are free of visible dirt and debris. Clutter is hard to sanitize.
- Create solution dilution reference guides and provide appropriate supplies at dilution stations. Utilize the ASPCA's Shelter Disinfectant Reference sheet.¹ Consider purchasing dilution mixing stations for each facility in order to ensure proper dilution of cleaner/disinfectant, which is important not only for efficacy, but also animal and humane safety and health.²
 - Disinfectant agents (Roccal, Triple Two, Trifectant, Accel) will have clear dilutions

¹ <http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-disease-management/shelter-disinfectant-quick-reference>

² <http://www.laffertyequipment.com/products/proportioning-mixing-stations>



instructions on the packaging.

- o Bleach is typically used at a 1:32 concentration for general cleaning (4 oz bleach to one gallon of water) For ringworm it is used at a 1:10 dilution which is 1.5 cups to 1 gallon of water. Assuming the bleach is a 5% concentration of sodium hypochlorite.
- Provide staff and volunteers with thorough and ongoing training in proper sanitation and disinfection methods.
- Do not allow cats to roam freely in the stray room while their cages are being cleaned at the Lompoc location. While this gives cats an opportunity to exercise, this practice is risky because it is an intake holding room and it is important to limit their exposure to the surroundings and other cats, especially for the first few days in care in order to determine if they are sick.
- Discontinue coaxing dogs to move from one side of the run to the other with a water hose. Even if they are not getting wet, frightening them is not an effective method of moving dogs. When water or cleaning and disinfecting products are sprayed in or near the area of a primary enclosure, animals must be removed from the cage or kennel, or separated from the area being cleaned by guillotine doors to prevent splatter, soaking of the animals, and stress.
- Create a separate procedure document for identifying, reporting and housing/treating kennel cough cases. Procedure 6.07 includes information regarding kennel cough; however, the bulk of the document regards parvovirus.
- Ensure that hand sanitizer dispensers are provided in all animal handling areas.
- Ensure that all equipment that comes in contact with animals (including cleaning supplies) are readily disinfected or discarded after use (such as pooper scoopers).
- Ensure that dogs are being placed in a clean environment and that it is cleaned between dogs when cleaning the runs at the Santa Maria location which are not equipped with guillotine doors.
- Consider bagging and throwing the feces in the garbage at the SB and Lompoc facility rather than washing it down the trenches and into the drainage.
- Thoroughly rinse water buckets prior to refilling them with clean water to ensure that they are free and clear of cleaner/ disinfectant.
- Ensure that the Trifectant in the buckets used for squeegees at the Santa Maria location are changed out at the same time each week. Trifectant solution is effective for 7 days. If utilizing the tablets, apply 2 tablets to each 32 oz. of water.
- The AHA recommends spot cleaning cat cages. Watch the webinar “Shelter Guidelines: Sanitation”³ which notes:
 - Less can be more: Deep cleaning takes a lot of staff and volunteer time and often increases stress for animals (which can then lead to disease). Spot cleaning, which is adequate in many instances, requires less animal handling and helps the animal feel more comfortable by keeping familiar smells in the cage. A few tips:
 - Change gloves between cages.

³ <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2011-05-26-000000/shelter-guidelines-sanitation>



- Leave bedding in the cage unless it's heavily soiled.
- Open and close cage doors quietly to maintain a calmer environment.

Spot cleaning is not appropriate during times of disease outbreak; if cages are heavily soiled (mucous, feces, blood, urine); if the cat poses a danger to human safety; or when a new cat is being placed into a cage that has just been vacated by another cat.

- Enough staff must be assigned to complete sanitation tasks promptly each day so that animals spend the majority of their time in sanitary conditions. Utilize the formulas developed by UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program for calculating humane capacity to also determine “basic care labor” which is also part of the calculation.
- Ensure outdoor areas around the shelter are kept clean, recognizing it is impossible to disinfect gravel, dirt, and grass surfaces.
- Assign cleaning equipment such as brooms, brushes, squeegees, pooper scoopers, and other items to specific rooms. An easy way to do this is to color-code the handles to coordinate with specific rooms.
- Avoid mopping if possible. Mops harbor odors and spread disease. If you choose to mop, consider the following:
 - Use a disinfectant with good activity in the presence of organic material
 - Do not use contaminated mop water from one housing area to another; never use plain water
 - Use designated cleaning supplies for each area of the facility

Discussion:

Proper sanitation saves lives. SBCAS has a comprehensive cleaning policy that does not seem to be completely adhered to consistently across all three sites. This may be a training issue that can be addressed.

The use of cleaning chemicals and foamers will mandate the use of proper PPE to uphold OSHA regulations.

Appendix 6.A AHA Disease Control Manual in Animal Shelters will assist you in updating your policy and provides good references for implementing a staff/volunteer training program.

Appendix 6.B Disease Control and Sanitation PPT

Appendix 6.C Disinfection and Cleaning PPT

For purchase: Maddie's Fund Infection Control Manual

<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Products/maddies-infection-control-manual-for-animal-shelters.php>

6.3 Outbreak Mitigation

Observations:



There is no standard policy and procedure for dealing with outbreaks for URI, Distemper, Parvo, or Ringworm. If an individual animal is diagnosed with Distemper, Parvo or Ringworm, euthanasia is performed unless a suitable foster or rescue groups steps up to provide care.

Recommendations:

- Establish infectious disease outbreak policies
- Increase foster availability
- Create designated isolation rooms on all three sites

Discussion:

Due to the lack of ability to truly isolate and separate in SB and Lompoc, euthanasia of positive dogs for distemper and parvo can be consider an effective outbreak mitigation plan. However, once diagnosed, it is highly likely that many animals will have been exposed to the positive dog. Effective disease mitigation plans are essential to prevent mass euthanasia of animals who have come in contact with the infected animals and infectious disease epidemiology knowledge is imperative to mitigate spread.

Appendix 6.D Controlling Parvo

Appendix 6.E Anatomy of an Outbreak - Distemper



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

Program Assessment

American Humane Association

7.0 OSHA
*Compliance and
Safety*

7.0 OSHA Compliance and Safety

General Overview

OSHA compliance needs improvement, though some standards are met. This evaluation is not intended to qualify for a complete OSHA assessment.

Observations:

Safety Manual & Training

The department has a safety manual and training records indicate that staff is provided with this information. Much of the training, however, appears to be “self-guided” as limited supervisory staff time is available to oversee and administer actual training.

Material Safety Data Sheets

Material Safety Data Sheets were available and present in office, staff break areas and were posted adjacent to various chemicals. (img 5337) . MSDSbooks were evident. (img5675) They were not evaluated to ensure they were updated.

Signage for State & Federal Regulations

State and Federal labor law posters were hung on bulletin boards (img0349). The boards appeared well organized and the information posted included OSHA notices and other relevant items.

Secondary labeling

Containers in each shelter were a mix of compliant and non-compliant. Spray bottles which were labeled were a mix of legible and illegible.



(img 5298, 5299, 5300, 5301).

Preprinted labels appeared to be compliant; however, stock labels with permanent marker did not retain proper labels. In some cases, bottles were not labeled at all. In one area, powdered Trifectant was measured into “food service portion control cups” and then stacked outside the Trifectant package. These cups were not labeled and access not secured.

(img 459, 460)



Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers were evident throughout each shelter. They were labeled and inspected in 2014. Extinguishers were wall mounted as well as cabinet mounted with appropriate tags visible.

(img0352) (img0373)



Personal protective equipment

There was a variety of PPE available at each shelter (img5118, 5120) Items such as exam gloves (several styles), ear plugs, goggles and boots were available; however, their use was inconsistent.

There were signs indicating that "Hearing Protection" (img5382, 5454) or "sanitary precautions" (img0507)

should be utilized when entering areas. Staff did not uniformly utilize provided protection. In addition, staff voiced concerns over the noise in Santa Barbara stating that ear plugs were not sufficient in dampening decibels.



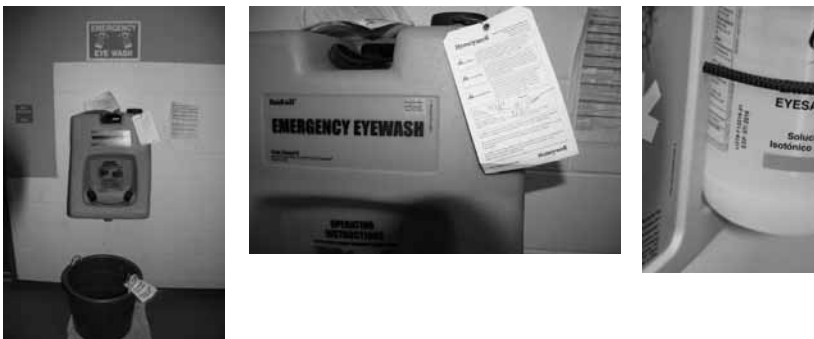
First aid kits

First aid kits manufactured by ZEE and BANDAID were located in each of the three shelters. (img 5343) Kits varied in size and ease of accessibility. OSHA regulations do not require first aid kits in the workplace if the workplace is located in close proximity to a doctor, hospital or clinic. Accordingly, each facility had access to medical services in the event of an emergency. First aid kits that were inspected appeared to be stocked; however, additional small kits located in areas such as vehicles, euthanasia / treatment rooms and break rooms would be helpful. (img 5338) Some kits had notes indicating that items needed to be restocked dating from 3/ 13 and 3/ 14. None of the shelters had an Automatic External Defibrillator in evidence. As each facility is open to the public, these devices should be standard equipment.



Eyewash stations

There were eyewash stations in each shelter. These consisted of saline rinse bottles in wall mounted stations used for irrigating eyes manually (img0657) as well as wall mounted fountain style eye wash stations designed to flush eyes continuously (img 5019). These had been inspected in 2014 and were compliant.



(img 5336, 5377)

Work related injuries

Work related injuries appear to be reported promptly and addressed appropriately. Management noted that work-related injuries and FMLA issues had affected staffing. Staff on "light duty" were utilized to supplement

operations and floated among facilities to cover staffing shortages. Reporting forms for injuries were evident in each office.

Break Areas

Animals were noted in break areas, cleaning products were stored with food.

Zoonosis

No staff or volunteer training on zoonotic diseases.

Training

It was not apparent that annual OSHA training was conducted.

Recommendations:

- Form a safety and compliance committee with representatives from management, supervisors and line staff to address safety issues at each facility. Identify a Safety Officer for each site.
- It is highly recommended that you engage OSHA for a free consultation. They offer training and inspection without the risk of citations. Or,
- Consider hiring in outside OSHA compliance agency for training and evaluation.
- Conduct hazard assessment for all areas of the shelter. Create safety standards. Train employees to those standards.
- All OSHA regulations are available for review on the OSHA website at www.osha.gov. Additionally, the American Humane Association publication "American Humane's Complete OSHA and Safety Guide for Animal Shelters" is an invaluable resource. Copies of user guides should be obtained.
- Replace & re-label secondary containers properly.
- Review MSDS sheets to ensure all chemicals used have current data.
- Do not store chemicals in areas where human food is consumed or stored
- Do not store drugs or animal products in refrigerators labeled for human use.
- Procure & install an Automatic External Defibrillator at each shelter. Train key staff in use.
- Mandate use of PPE. Create SOP and enforce.
- Provide ear muffs for employees instead of ear plugs.

Discussion:

OSHA compliance is non-negotiable. Animal shelters pose many risks to employees including but not limited to: Excessive Noise exposure, animal bites, slip/trip/fall hazards, exposure to hazardous chemicals, exposure to waste anesthetic gasses, repetitive stress injuries, lifting injuries, zoonotic disease, and workplace violence. Review of literature cites many animal shelters being inspected and cited for OSHA violations which can have serious financial implications to the organization.



The consumption of food and beverages must be limited to areas free from toxic and biologic substances.

Maintaining an OSHA compliant work place takes a considerable amount of training and effort. Investment in a comprehensive training program conducted by an outside company could be a worthwhile investment. Most outside OSHA consultants will provide defense mitigation in the event of a citation.



OSHA does not cover volunteers. SBCAS engages volunteers and volunteer organizations to assist in shelter operations. Setting OSHA compliant standards for all volunteers who perform duties on behalf of SBCAS would ensure parity between employees and volunteers and reduce liability. Volunteers could be encouraged to engage in training programs on workplace safety as the risks to them are the same as the staff.

Appendix 7.A: Veterinary Hospital Safety

Appendix 7.B: AHA OSHA and Safety Guidelines

Appendix 7.C: American Humane Association OSHA Compliance PPT

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*8.0 Field Services
and Animal Control*

8.0 Field Services and Animal Control

There are 8 rostered positions for Animal Control Officers for SBCAS. The Lompoc Animal Control Supervisor oversees the Lompoc Animal Control Officers and there is an Animal Control Supervisor who oversees Santa Barbara and Santa Maria ACO's.

In 2014 the officers responded to a total of 15,923 calls. It is not known how many calls were not addressed.

8.1 OVERALL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Observations:

The field services division has a series of operating procedures for all aspects of field operations. The majority of the policies were last revised in 2010 according to the documents provided and reviewed. The policies are written in several different styles and in some instances, a "conversational tone" as compared to a clear, concise and professional fashion.

Employees are updated on policies by memo, email and through daily meetings. The training records do not reflect any updates to show that staff have been made aware of specific changes. One training record provided showed that original instruction was completed; however, no follow up or refresher information was annotated.

Animal Control Officers derive their legal authority from Santa Barbara County Code Chapter 7 – Animals and Fowl. Their positions are defined in section 7-1 and their authority, powers and abilities are set out in section 7-5. Animal Control Officers are appointed & designated by the County Commissioners as employees with the commensurate rights, abilities and authorities to perform their duties under the direction of the Animal Control Supervisor.

Recommendations:

- There should be a written "sign-off" sheet attached to the SOP providing a verifiable, dynamic record that each staff member has been made aware of revisions or changes to the SOP manual.

Discussion:

The SOP manual contains a variety of policies. They are well organized and modeled after industry best practices as offered by the National Animal Care and Control Association, American Humane Association, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and others. Training is required and the manual has been updated within the past five years in conjunction with an updated county code revision. The statutes and ordinances enforced by the field services department are handled in a consistent and uniform fashion. ACOs understand the mission and enforcement philosophy, practicing "community policing" principals and engaging the public in a pro-active, responsive fashion. This is supported by the SOP, training and direction from supervisors.

8.2 OFFICER SAFETY AND TRAINING

Officers are trained through a combination of in-house training, sheriff's department training courses and



state conferences as available. Training included use of equipment, ASP and assorted animal care / cleaning / behavior / handling classes. These were noted in the training record. This training was based on the SOP manual; however, the training was not always supervised. Staffing limitations sometimes resulted in staff following a self-guided training or performance program that was later reviewed and signed off on by a supervisor who may not have actually been present for the training activity.

Training files indicated that staff training, especially attendance at outside training events was not consistent across all three facilities nor based on staff needs but rather on staff levels and staff availability to attend specific courses. According to ACOs, training requests were able to be submitted but there was no formal process for doing so other than a verbal request or email.

Recommendations:

- A formal training request process should be established to insure that requests are received, cataloged and responded to in a fair and consistent fashion.
- Training files should be maintained on each officer and updated on an annual basis as part of the annual employment review process.
- Training should be considered that complies with industry best practices standards from outside agencies that can provide P.O.S.T. qualifying continuing education credit.

Discussion:

Current staffing levels present a challenge when onboarding new ACOs as well as updating training for existing staff. The SOP outlines and supports training but in practice, training “delivery” is somewhat disjointed. Agencies with a standard program and sufficient staff are able to meet these needs but, as is the case with SBCCAS, those without tend to struggle. For training to be effective, it must be evolving and responsive to changes in the industry and, by extension, agencies must be able to update and revise training and in-service refreshers to reflect those trends.

Revision and updates should be considered for basic and advanced issues related to enforcement, officer safety and equipment. Organizations providing training include California specific agencies, training NGOs such as NACA, ASPCA, ACTS, LETI and Code 3 Associates. Certifications for ACOs and supervisors should be the standard with those certifications provide by consistent, standardized, outside organizations that have a demonstrated record of providing a variety of animal specific or animal involved training.

8.3 COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCH

Observations:

Calls for service were taken by clerical staff and by officers in the field. There were no dedicated dispatcher positions that did not perform other duties. Staff had some cross-training to handle these duties. Staff were observed taking calls, using proper telephone etiquette and entering information into Chameleon appropriately.

Calls for service were entered into Chameleon and ACO's handled calls without having a central dispatch center operating for that purpose. Supervisors had both desktop and laptops running Chameleon which were



used to display dispatch screens and pending calls. These were not routinely monitored and, in at least one case, not utilized due to connectivity issues in the field.

Priority calls included vicious or aggressive animals, injured animals, cruelty calls, bite investigations, stray dogs, and wildlife calls. Deceased animal calls were also included in general calls.

Primary communication was by cellular telephone. Officers also had 800MHz radios and mobile display terminals (MDTs) to use in the field. All communications devices suffered from intermittent operability due to the large area covered with sparse coverage. Officers expressed concern that due to the large areas covered, communication was problematic and in some areas, impossible. Some areas have limited radio / cellular coverage. Radios were 800mhz band portables which will soon become obsolete as a result of national 900mhz public safety re-banding. Officers advised that they did not mark in / mark out on calls with any centralized dispatcher other than other officers in the field. This was sporadic at best. ACOs utilized cellular telephones for the majority of communications which they did appropriately and safely.

During the visit, ACOs used equipment to the best of their ability; however, that was hampered by service quality and connectivity issues.

Recommendations:

- Establish dedicated dispatch center for shelters with a consolidated number for calls and staffing to handle call taking / dispatch only OR
- Contract dispatching to Sheriff's Department dispatch center.
- Upgrade cellular service, MDTs and radios to current standards.
- Vehicles should be equipped with GPS monitoring to insure that vehicles can be located in the event of an emergency.
- Vehicle MDTs should be upgraded to include 4G connectivity to facilitate Chameleon use in the field.
- Vehicles should be equipped with a field use printer for issuing forms, notices and other routine paperwork.

Discussion:

Current procedures for dispatching calls do not provide consistent, safe delivery for services and allow many opportunities for issues to arise. As an adjunct to these recommendations, SBAS should engage and study whether establishing an internal dispatch function would be cost effective versus contracting with an outside law enforcement agency such as the Sheriff's Department.

Issues are not limited to policies and staffing but relate to the inability of existing equipment (cellular phones, radio, laptops) to provide the service delivery necessary over the wide geographic area. Operating and handling calls for service in diverse communities is challenging enough without the additional burden of poor to non-existent communications.

Implementation of these recommendations would improve officer safety, increase productivity and service delivery and reduce wasted time concurrently. ACOs in the field would be able to better utilize their time and the agency's resources.



8.4 FIELD SERVICES VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

Observations:

Field services staff had an issued equipment list that included items for vehicles and officers. The "Equipment Resource Checklist" was completed at hiring as a part of the Officer Training Academy. Issued equipment included journal, policy manual, name plate, shirts, pants, heavy jacket, rain suit, rubber boots, keys, badge, clipboard, utility bag, mag flashlight, mini flashlight, utility belt, belt keepers, glove pouch, page pouch, leash / handcuff pouch, key holder, regular gloves, heavy gloves, snappy snare, snake tongs, snake bag, net, muzzles, cell phone, first aid kit, receipt book, licenses, license receipt book, alcohol cleansers, fire extinguisher, ASP baton, ASP pouch, business cards and California Law Book. Additional spaces for pepper spray and pepper spray pouch were crossed out on the example form. The form noted if items were issued or in a vehicle.

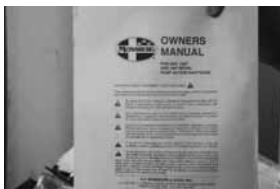


The agency had several models of chemical capture equipment. In some shelters, it was noted that it was seldom used or not at all while in others, it was frequently deployed. The overall condition of the equipment was acceptable; however, the storage for the equipment and drugs was inconsistent. At Lompoc, the equipment was stored in a wooden cabinet which, though locked, was not secured to the floor or wall and was flimsy enough to be broken open with virtually no effort. (IMG5706) At Santa Maria a gun safe was evident which is ideal for storage of chemical capture equipment. Records and reports for use were available and completed when equipment was used. Some items were out of date but when notified, supervisors immediately corrected these issues. (IMG5709).



Documentation showed that fire-arms were previously issued equipment (IMG5713); however, staff and ACOs noted these had been taken out of service.

Documentation provided by administration indicated that surplus firearms had been received



by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office. This leaves ACOs with no safe method to dispatch injured wildlife in the field.

During field observations, ACOs noted that some equipment was not available in all vehicles or in personal issued loads. ACOs on occasion had to scavenge from existing equipment to insure that in-service vehicles were appropriately equipped for on-call or daily field operations. During field observations, ACOs had the necessary equipment available. Some equipment was in need of repair or replacement which ACOs advised was completed by sending out for repair or ordering replacement items. Many of the minor repair needs related to catchpoles.

SBCAS operates a variety of vehicles including vans, compartment carrier equipped pickup trucks, disaster

trailer, livestock trailer and mobile command trailer. The vehicles were marked and carried a variety of equipment for handling animal related calls. One noted deficiency was the truck caging systems. These have become worn over time and the doors no longer remain secure, sometimes coming open during transport. Additionally, secure boxes that were installed in older models were not re-installed in new models resulting in the use of unsecure glove boxes or similar compartments for transporting scheduled drugs.

Recommendations:

- The equipment checklist form should be updated to identify equipment that is issued directly to the ACO and should have space for no less than annual inspection for inventory purposes.
- A separate vehicle equipment checklist form should be implemented to identify standard equipment items carried in every vehicle. This should have space for Supervisor review and inspection monthly.
- The uniform inventory should be updated to include issue dates, replacement dates and inspection dates.
- SBCAS should stock key spare items for daily ACO operations to facilitate immediate replacement of non-functioning, lost or damaged equipment. Inventory level should be at least two (2) spares on hand for critical items to include: Ketch-all pole, snappy snare, snake tongs, cat grasper, leash / lead, heavy (bite) handling gloves.
- SBCAS should stock replacement parts for ketch-all poles and acquire small tools to facilitate in-house replacement of wire loops, bite guards, hand grips and related hardware.
- Microchip scanners should be added to the list of field equipment on the standard issue checklist for ACOs.
- Vehicles should be remarked to include clear, easily readable contact information including telephone number and website information.
- Vehicles should have a locked “safe-box” style compartment installed to facilitate secure transport of controlled substances in the field.
- ACOs should be issued and receive specific training in the use of firearms *.22 or equivalent rifle for field euthanization of wildlife OR discontinue responses to injured wildlife in their entirety.

Discussion:

Overall, SBCAS enjoys many resources that other agencies lack. Proper animal handling equipment, uniforms and vehicles are several highlights that demonstrate the agency’s commitment to providing employees with the tools to perform their jobs. Recommendations note where improvements could be made that would enhance that service delivery.

ACOs have adapted well to accomplishing their jobs with the materials available and any changes to policies should reflect the need to allow them discretion to continue to approach the public in a “low-key” appearance as appropriate. The ability to wear a variety of uniforms helps with the public perception and creates a non-confrontational work environment that is key to officer safety when they are operating individually.



Emphasis should be placed on consistently inspecting, repairing or replacing worn, damaged or obsolete items on a routine basis. Additionally, personal protective gear should be provided along with adequate training to insure proper and humane utilization.

8.5 PUBLIC SAFETY BACKUP AND RELATIONS

Observations:

According to ACO's, local law enforcement provide backup in routine situations. Agencies are not overly supportive and routinely defer all animal related calls to the animal services department instead of handling them directly. ACO's do not have direct communication with law enforcement as radios are not assigned interoperable frequencies with law enforcement.

Recommendations:

- SBCAS should approach local police departments and offer in-service or academy course information on responding to animal related calls for service to educate local law enforcement about animal services and foster a positive working relationship.
- As radio equipment is replaced during re-banding, radios should be integrated into the county "eriff" dispatching system to allow ACOs to contact law enforcement directly.

Discussion:

Law enforcement has traditionally seen animal control as a relatively unimportant function and marginalized contact or training in that area. Current trends are demonstrating that public opinion has shifted and both law enforcement and ACOs are held to a higher standard. It is considered vital that animal control agencies reach out and establish good working relationships with their respective law enforcement agencies at both the administrative and operational levels. This provides for better unified responses to calls for service and offers another layer of public safety protection via cooperative efforts to address dangerous animals, animal cruelty and nuisance domestic animal calls.

8.6 AFTER-HOUR EMERGENCIES

Observations:

The department has an on-call policy 2.42 that outlines how after-hours calls are handled. The policy defines what types of calls are considered ones qualifying for after-hours service. These included: Loose animals threatening persons, bites where the animal was not confined, injured animals without a known owner, assistance to law enforcement and loose livestock. ACOs on call are directed to take a pager and cellular phone home. They log out with the local dispatch in their assigned area and are permitted to take home a vehicle. Officers rotate through this with one covering north and one covering south county.

Officers complete each call and impound animals at the closest facility. Night drop boxes have been eliminated.

In 2014 819 after hours calls were logged.

Recommendations:

- The vehicle policy should be amended to permit use of the vehicle for limited personal matters if



no other vehicle is available. Requiring an officer to remain at home, unable to engage in normal life activities can present a conflict with FLSA requirements.

Discussion:

After hours service is a challenge for animal control agencies nationwide. A comprehensive review of FLSA provisions should be conducted periodically to insure that court decisions impacting this area are considered. SBCAS is again challenged by the size of the service area and the distances that need to be travelled to respond to calls. Efforts to improve relations with local law enforcement may assist in this area by helping to eliminate needless non-emergency calls that would otherwise be able to be handled without animal control responding.

8.7 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Observations:

Job descriptions are available for each position. These were adequate and covered the actual job performance of the ACOs in the field.

Recommendations:

None.

8.8 FIELD SERVICES FORMS AND RECORD KEEPING

Observations:

SBCAS utilizes Chameleon for record keeping. Paper records are also generated as backup to computerized database information. The SOP directs how records are created, maintained and stored. From information available or observed, it appears that the SOP was followed and records maintained appropriately.

Forms maintained were generally complete and accurate. Some reporting was redundant as noted above with ACOs completing both a computerized and paper calls for service log. This is a practice followed by many agencies and while not the most efficient, is common practice. Records were easily accessible both in computerized format via Chameleon and in records files at each shelter.

Statistics, trends and related information were available in a variety of standard and customized Chameleon reports. The department maintained and compiled monthly and annual reports that covered a variety of tasks, operations and events. However, these reports were not utilized to assess staffing levels, zip code call volume, types of activities, response time or uninitiated activities.

The materials were gathered in a fashion that made sense and covered the areas noted in the SOP. Additionally, supervisors had the ability to review data in real-time via the dispatch module for officers as well as kennel / shelter information.

The shelter followed a standard records retention policy and, when asked, was able to provide archival information in a prompt and efficient manner.

Recommendations:

Create Field Services Benchmarks to include:



- Response time
- Zip Codes
- Activity by subtype
- Open Items

Discussion:

Creating department benchmarks allows for analysis of activities. This can be used to determine staffing needs, ordinance changes, fee for service assessments and response times. This is valuable information that should be included in strategic planning, goal setting and job performance.

8.9 OFFICER ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURES

Observations:

ACO daily activities were generated and reported in Chameleon for review by Supervisors. Officers entered their own call times (dispatch, arrival on scene, clearing) into Chameleon with a daily running sheet as a paper backup. As noted in Dispatch, communications are problematic making it difficult for Supervisors to determine actual locations for ACOs in the field absent the ACO showing on scene in Chameleon on a specific call. ACOs in the field are essentially self-regulating.

Written procedures for handling calls for service, record keeping and data entry were available and, as far as applicable, were adhered to for entry. In cases where field entry was not possible, ACOs would enter and update cases in Chameleon upon return to the respective shelter.

Recommendations:

- SBAS should install GPS tracking and obtain software to track vehicles in the field for officer safety.

Discussion:

ACOs spend a significant amount of time attempting to utilize Chameleon and completing paperwork. There are several instances where these efforts are duplicative resulting in inefficient use of time and resources. By consolidating and eliminating duplicative entry requirements, some time savings may be realized. Additionally, utilizing GPS to track officers to assist with dispatching provides the dual function of insuring officer safety and improving efficiency.

8.10 LAWS, INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Observations:

The SBC codes have been updated periodically and incorporate information on a variety of functions. The most recent edition is dated 2010. Chapter 7- Animals and Fowl references nine articles and covers general provisions, restraint & impoundment, dogs, diseased & dangerous animals, beekeeping, use of steel-jawed leg-hold traps, dangerous dogs, as well as transfer of dogs & cats. A review of these sections does not show any glaring deficiencies. A periodic review of the chapters would be appropriate on an annual basis to insure conformity with any changes in state codes or regulations. Enforcement in Buellton is undertaken under Title 6 of the Buellton Municipal Code which references and adopts the Santa Barbara County Code & Regulations



therein dated 2011.

SBASHandles and investigates animal cruelty complaints, animal fighting reports and related cases. During the visit, one cruelty call investigation was observed. During that case an ACO worked with the local Codes Enforcement Officers to resolve a case of possible animal abuse that had a LINK component of elder abuse. The ACO worked well with local agents to resolve this complaint using education and follow-up as an enforcement method. Officers have had training related to basic investigations as well as training in advanced cruelty investigation; however, not all ACOs have had each training class. The SOP references and directs how each type of investigation is to be conducted in Chapter 2 Field Operations. The policies are generally well written (although some are slightly “folkly” in composition) and cover all aspects of investigatory procedures.

Animal fighting investigations are not specifically referenced in the policies; however, their investigation falls under general cruelty investigations. ACOs indicated that they have few complaints of dog fighting with most of their alleged fighting calls related to cock-fighting.

In other cases, ACOs utilize a “Fix It Ticket” to enforce compliance with licensing laws. Owners were issued a deferred citation allowing them to correct the violation resulting in the citation being administratively withdrawn without criminal penalty. This is an excellent tool to achieve compliance. The period is two to four weeks in most cases but may be extended.

ACOs have the ability to issue citations as well as serve “third party” citations based on citizen’s complaints. These citations are completed by a complainant, filed with the court and then sent to the field services staff to serve on the animal owner in the field. Unlike officer initiated citations, these often present a challenge for the serving officer who may be utilized as a tool in a neighborhood dispute. It requires a measure of diplomacy to handle this type of citation when the officer is not aware of the totality of the case. This process was observed during the visit and was handled exceptionally well.

ACOs were observed handling animal at large, animal in unattended vehicles, wildlife in traps, sick wildlife and deceased animal calls for service. Additionally, ACOs were observed on routine patrol and directed patrol calls. During all interactions with the public, the ACOs conducted themselves in a calm, professional and respectful manner. Of particular note, EVERY citizen (even those receiving citations) complimented the ACOs conduct & demeanor without exception. The ACOs public contact practices at all three shelters would best be described as exemplary.

Recommendations:

- A specific “Blood Spore” investigations policy should be included in Chapter 2 under Field Operations.

Discussion:

The ACOs that were available for “ride-a-long” observations demonstrated a high degree of competency and public relations excellence in the field. While it may be possible to put on a good show for visitors, the unplanned citizen interactions reinforced and confirmed that the ACOs have an excellent reputation in the field.

8.11 ANIMAL LICENSING



Observations:

Animal licensing is a primary service provided by the department. Licensing operations are outlined in the SOP with specific sections detailing license operations, renewals, enforcement and canvassing that are shared among several functions within the department including office and field sections. ACCs were responsible for enforcement and license checks in the field related to complaints. Additionally, procedures for license canvassing are included in the SOP and carried out by ACCs when time permits. According to the ACCs, canvassing is often precluded by staffing shortages.

License sales for SBAS were:

- 2012 27094
- 2013 22776
- 2014 27142
- 2015 28499 (projected)

According to census data for 2013, the overall population for Santa Barbara County was 435,697. Utilizing the American Veterinary Medical Association formula for calculating animal population (<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Statistics/Pages/US-pet-ownership-calculator.aspx>), the estimate dog population is 97,864. This equals a 27% license compliance rate based on provided data. Licensing is promoted by renewal reminders, flyers and online. Major advertising such as television / radio ads, water bill inserts, promotional advertising circulars and other methods were not noted as being utilized. The compliance rate is good as most jurisdictions have 15% - 20% as an average compliance rate. The department projects increased licensure for 2015; however, no specific plan was expressed that would result in this increase. Considering current enforcement challenges, economic stressors in the community and minimal advertising, this will be difficult to achieve.

Licenses are sold in the office and online. Web Licenses sales accounted for 22.3% of total license sales in 2014. Whereas RPO Project Pet Safe only produced 3.8%. Citizens may download the form for a dog license which can be mailed in or presented in person to one of the shelters. Differential licensing as well as multi-year renewals are available. Licensing was primarily promoted as a means to reunite lost pets with their owners as well as part of a community health & safety program tied to rabies vaccinations. Fees support the general operation and are considered one of the revenue streams for animal services operations.

Recommendations:

- A consolidated and expanded advertising program that incorporates a variety of outreach, media and public relations efforts should be considered to increase and enhance the license compliance program.
- Investigate www.petdata.com to serve as a third party licensing sales agent. This may be more cost effective than the RPO employees.

Discussion:

Licensing is an area that has an excellent opportunity for growth and revenue enhancement. Given existing laws and current compliance rates, an enhanced license campaign could generate as much as a 100%



increase in revenue (double license sales) or more. Funds would need to be allocated for promotional advertising as part of a comprehensive program designed to incrementally increase compliance and sales. Programs may include such things as media advertising and direct mail appeals.

Any program should be planned for a minimum of a five year commitment with the necessary resources and funding to cover advertising, marketing and enforcement. Emphasis in the program should be on the benefits of licensing including reunification of lost pets quickly with owners as well as providing overall support for the animal services program.

SBCAS may want to examine best practices models such as Calgary's program in Canada.

<http://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/ABS/Pages/Animal-Services/I-heart-my-pet-program.aspx>

Turn-key vendors such as Pet Data, Inc. are available or SBCAS may wish to consider bringing in an outside consultant with specific experience in animal licensing program implementation.

Appendix 8.A City of Calgary Pet Licensing Program

8.12 FIELD SERVICES/ ANIMAL CONTROL CONTRACTS

Observations:

ACOs utilized the local humane society parking lot for secure parking for vehicles. There are city animal control officers in two jurisdictions. The City of Santa Barbara Police Department Animal Control Officers use the Santa Barbara shelter for their impounded animals. ACOs noted that they have a good working relationship with local jurisdiction ACOs. Services are provided to unincorporated areas as well as Buellton, Solvang, Lompoc, Santa Ynez Valley, Santa Maria, Guadalupe, and Goleta. The City of Santa Barbara provides their own officer service but contracts for sheltering. The City of Carpinteria maintains their own service as well. During the service visit, ACOs with the City of Santa Barbara brought in an animal to the shelter. Relations with this City appeared cordial with the officers commenting that they had no issues.

Utilization fee for service was not evaluated or assessed.

Recommendations:

- Record and benchmark zip codes for calls, number of animals impounded from each city served, number of after-hours calls per city, and activity per city.

Discussion:

Collecting benchmark data will allow assessment of utilization fees assessed to each city contracting for animal services.

8.13 WILDLIFE RELATED ISSUES

Observations:

The agency handles a variety of nuisance and injured wildlife calls including skunks, deer and a variety of large & small mammals. ACOs handle deceased wildlife calls as well. While some cases are adjunct to a potential rabies exposure, the majority of the calls do not rise to that level of urgency. The department deals



with a significant number of “domestic but feral” rabbit calls as well. Local police defer calls to animal services and, according to ACOs, seldom respond to assist and will not handle field euthanasia by firearm. ACOs no longer have access to firearms for field euthanasia and euthanasia by injection for wildlife is the recommended procedure. The department has traps available for citizens for nuisance wildlife such as skunks. ACOs work to educate the public on nuisance wildlife exclusion and mitigation; however, the public now uses the animal control agency as a nuisance wildlife trapping service in many instances. Few if any of these calls are for potential rabies exposures. ACOs may deliver, set and remove traps and any contained wildlife which may be relocated, released on site or transported for euthanasia.

Recommendations:

- Animal Services should cease providing non-critical nuisance wildlife services, retaining ONLY confirmed rabies exposure situations.
- Animal Services should refer all non-exposure wildlife cases to the appropriate licensed and permitted nuisance wildlife control service or license wildlife rehabilitation organization.
- Animal Services should discontinue handling injured or deceased wildlife calls, referring these to the State Game Department or local police.

Discussion:

Handling nuisance wildlife is not a primary function on animal care & control which should be focused on companion animals. In reviewing materials provided, it appears that other agencies abdicated their responsibility to handling wildlife and the operations ended up with SBAS by default. Every effort should be made to exit the routine business of handling wildlife absent a confirmed potential rabies exposure to a person or companion animal.

Staff training for handling wildlife relies strongly on experienced officers sharing their knowledge and skills but is not supported by significant or sufficient certifications nor are the officers supported at the state level. As noted, no provisions exist to field euthanize large, injured wildlife which presents a threat to safety and results in animals needlessly suffering that should be euthanized promptly as a result of their injuries.

Costs for operating this program are not balanced by revenue as wildlife is “owned” by the State of California. Resources including officers time, equipment, handling and disposal are significant in that approximately 30% of observed calls for service were wildlife or deceased animal related. Eliminating these services, which are not core to animal control, would result in a considerable cost savings that could be redirected to increasing staffing, renovating existing facilities or replacing outdated equipment.

8.14 BITE INVESTIGATIONS/ QUARANTINES/ PUBLIC HEALTH RELATIONS

Observations:

Animals which have exposed a person to the possibility of rabies are quarantined for 10-14 days from the date of exposure. SBCHS is a division of the Public Health Department and handles the rabies quarantine program. Internal and external reporting forms are available (including downloadable versions on the SBCHS website). ACOs handle notifications and releases from quarantine. Unvaccinated animals are required to be quarantined at one of the shelters or at a local veterinarian. Animals which become ill, die or



are located deceased are transported for decapitation and testing. ACOs and shelter staff follow written procedures.

Rabies specimens are routinely transported in ACO truck “dead boxes”. As noted under vehicles, these boxes are not very secure and on at least one occasion, a “red bag” specimen fell out during transport. An alert citizen contacted SBCAS and the specimen was received and subsequently tested.

SBCAS has regulations and laws in place that regulate dangerous animals; however, the court & appeals process subjects some animals to long-term holding while the legal process concludes.

Recommendations:

- Standard bite forms should be sent via email or entered into Chameleon for ACOs to access in the field thereby eliminating the necessity to return to a shelter to pick up a standard form.
- Transport boxes should be secure and rabies suspects labeled clearly to prevent inadvertent loss.
- Efforts should be undertaken to streamline court cases to insure that animals are not subjected to inordinately lengthy holding times prior to disposition.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
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*9.0 Population
Management*

9.0 Population Management

General Overview

The following excerpt is taken directly from the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) 2010 Guidelines For Standards of Care in Animal Shelters. The full manual is included at the end of this section Appendix 18.A for your review and reference.

“Population management describes an active process of planning, on-going daily evaluation, and response to changing conditions as an organization cares for multiple animals. Effective population management requires a plan for intentionally managing each animal’s shelter stay that takes into consideration the organization’s ability to provide care that meets the recommendations outlined in this document. The capacity to provide humane care depends on the number and condition of animals admitted and their duration of stay; the size and condition of the facility; staffing levels and training; and other factors as well as the number of available enclosures. There are many ways to maintain a population within an organization’s capacity for care whether in a shelter or home-based rescue organization. Active population management is one of the foundations of shelter animal health and well-being (Hurley 2004a), and must be based on an appreciation that capacity to provide humane care has limits for every organization, just as it does in private homes. When a population is not managed within an organization’s capacity for care, other standards of care become difficult or impossible to maintain.”

Proactive population management is a key component of ensuring that all animals receive optimal care needed to maintain their physical and emotional well-being while in residence. It effectively will reduce the length of stay which has impacts on animal health as well as staff requirements and operational expenses.

The appropriate management of animal census is not based on cage space, but humane capacity, which accounts for the number of people available to provide care, facility capabilities, required stray hold times, average length of stay, time required to provide basic and enhanced care to the animals, and organizational resources. Operating outside a shelter’s humane capacity is considered unacceptable by the ASV standards.

While challenging, open admission shelters such as SBCAS can practice population management successfully. The basic fundamental principles include:

- Daily Rounds (addressed on several occasions in this report)
 - This is a daily assessment of what each animal needs to move toward an outcome. It implies that an action plan be made for every animal in need and accountability assigned.
- Capacity assessment and planning
 - Understanding what the limit of animals are that the organization can provide the appropriate care for. This is not simply cleaning and feeding, but providing essential enrichment to maintain or improve the animals behavioral health



Observations:

An analysis of last 12 month shelter statistics that are key performance indicators of population management reveal the following:

Note: Rabbit data is from FY2014

	Santa Barbara	Santa Maria	Lompoc	Total
Cage Space Dogs	48	76	30	154
Cage Space Cats*	162	75	20	257
FTE Animal Shelter Attendants currently working and Extra Help	1.5	10	2	
Dog Intake	748	1639	837	3224
Cat Intake	922	834	208	1964
Rabbit Intake	194	99	36	329
Average Length of Stay - Dogs (days)	200	48	42	n/a
Average Length of Stay - Cats	79	109	110	n/a
Average Length of Stay - Rabbits	235	246	229	n/a
Average Daily Census Dogs	70	88	37	
Average Daily Census Cats	101	65	20	
Average Daily Census Rabbits, est.	79	45	11	
Adoptions - Dogs	201	411	143	755
Adoptions - Cats	741	408	101	1250
Adoptions - Rabbits	150	50	22	222
Died in Kennel - Dogs	1	12	4	17
Died in Kennel - Cats	12	9	1	22
Died in Kennel - Rabbits	6	9	3	18

* * assumes all double cages are not partitioned

It has been observed that SBCAS does not have an active population management system in place, other than a community spay/ neuter program for the public in Santa Maria.

Daily population management rounds are not in place to actively seek ways to move animals toward an outcome. This is especially evident in the population of dogs (13) and rabbits (14) in Santa Barbara with length of stays over 1 year some in residence for over 3 years!



Part of the concern with the dogs is that volunteers have been very vocal about the disposition of some of the long term residents that were originally recommended to be humanely euthanized due to emotional distress. These dogs are still residence with no plan of action and no opportunity for remediation or rehabilitation.

Recommendations:

Active population management includes:

- Implement daily population management rounds
 - Create action plan for each animal - move them toward an outcome
- Reduce feline intake by implementing community cat plan, such as Feral Freedom
- Consider implementing feline intakes by appointment. A story of success can be read at <http://www.maddiesfund.org/cats-by-appointment-only.htm>
- Adoption promotions - remove barriers to adoption
 - Fee waived
 - Breed sales
- Increase transfers to rescue groups
- Increase relationships with sanctuaries and long term care providers
- Creating a robust campaign for difficult adoptions
- Identify bottlenecks that increase length of stay:
 - Stray holds
 - Time to surgery
 - Timing of behavioral evaluations
 - Disease
 - Long term medical conditions need incentives for adoption
 - Too many animals on the adoption floor = too many choices
- Community outreach to increase spay/ neuter. The biggest intake is seen in Santa Maria, the only city that does not have a spay/ neuter ordinance.
- Proactive owner surrender counseling. Create benchmarks to measure reasons why owners relinquish and where they come from and then target programs to meet those needs.
- Increase foster care capacity to get susceptible animals out of the shelter
- Implement fast track and slow track program

Discussion:

The way forward for SBCAS is the implementation of active population rounds. An attempt to manage census will reduce staffing needs, expenses and improve the overall welfare of the animals of SBCAS. There are many articles and reference materials available for further review so the leadership can implement a program that is specific to the needs of the animals and the community of Santa Barbara County



Additional Resources:

<http://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-animal-care-intake/population-wellness-rounds>

<http://www.aspcapro.org/webinar/2011-04-28-000000/shelter-guidelines-math-and-population-planning>

- Appendix 9.A ASV Standards of Care in Animal Shelters
- Appendix 9.B ASPCA ASV Population Management Checklist
- Appendix 9.C Managed Admissions
- Appendix 9.D A Matter of Measurement
- Appendix 9.E Advocate spay/neuter Voucher program
- Appendix 9.F Length of Stay
- Appendix 9.G ASPCA LOS Calculator
- Appendix 9.H Life in the fast lane
- Appendix 2.G Feral Freedom Guide (referenced previously)



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*10. Behavior and
Enrichment*

10. Behavior and Enrichment

Observations:

SBCAS does not possess a comprehensive behavior and enrichment programs for dogs. The dogs are exercised, allowed some time in play yards outside, and have limited social interaction all predominately provided by the volunteers. However, a majority of their time is in runs with minimal enrichment. There is a prevalence of stereotypical behavior notably barking, cage jumping and spinning in some of the long term residents.

Behavior assessments are conducted by volunteers in all three shelters. It is not well-defined as to what qualifications the volunteers have to be considered an evaluator, or what training they have received to safely perform this task. This is not to imply that they are not qualified only that there are no standards set by SBCAS as to who can evaluate dogs and no required training or competency evaluation. An incidence was relayed whereby a volunteer insisted upon a dog to dog interaction between a shelter dog and a potential adopter's dog whereby the adopter's dog was fatally injured. General oversight, required training and standard operating procedures for behavior assessment are necessary to mitigate liability and ensure animal, employee, volunteer and adopter safety.

Each site has a version of a behavior evaluation form, but it is not consistent between sites. Behavior evaluations are not recorded in the organizations software system and thus not readily available for review.

Dog behavior evaluation is not performed on all dogs entering the shelter system. Assessments are only conducted if an animal is deemed to be "unpredictable" during the intake procedure. Assessments are not routinely repeated during the animal's shelter stay, even those animals that have been in the system for years. Behavior notes were randomly made in animals records. Behavior observation forms do exist.

The cats, due to the low census numbers were afforded ample cage space, some grouped housed for companionship and their cages contained scratching pads and toys. The less socialized cats were provided with cardboard dens to hide. Volunteers routinely interacted with the cats providing socialization and enrichment. Feline behavior assessment is provided by ASAP in SB. They use their own forms and process and chose evaluators based on their own set of criteria. All shelters have a feral cat assessment form, though it is unclear how or who determines which cats to evaluate

The census indicated there are approximately 80 rabbits housed in Santa Barbara. BUNS maintains exercise pens for the rabbits to rotate through but seemingly they spend much time in cages. No rabbit behavior form was identified.

Animals exhibiting difficult behaviors are not provided with behavior modification plans. There are a number of animals in the SB shelter that are exhibiting behavior indicative of emotional distress and suffering. At-



tempts to humanely euthanize those animals have been blocked by a small group of vocal volunteers, yet behavior plans or modification attempts to mitigate their stress have not been undertaken. They remain sheltered, with no hope of reprieve.

Recommendations:

- Hire a Behavior and Enrichment Coordinator. Qualifications should include being a Certified Professional Dog Trainer or equivalent with experience with shelter animals. Responsibilities include:
 - Creating standardized canine behavior assessment procedures or adopt known assessment tool such as ASPCA SAFER
 - Develop consistent staff and volunteer training program to ensure standard qualifications
 - Implement a full scale canine, feline and rabbit daily enrichment schedule
 - Draft and implement behavior modification plans for those animals needing rehabilitation
 - Teach basic obedience to enhance adaptability of large and unruly dogs.
 - Sit on the Care and Evaluation committee and provide subject matter expertise on animal dispositions including euthanasia recommendations
- Convene Care and Evaluation committee to start an active discussion regarding dogs exhibiting severe emotional distress. Create action plan which can include:
 - Assessing viability of foster care providing the animals are not considered dangerous.
 - Research sanctuary placement or transfer to external partner.
 - Implementation of proactive behavior plan under the guidance of a trainer or veterinarian.
 - Consider use of behavior drug therapy under the guidance and approval of a licensed veterinarian in combination with a behavior modification plan.
 - Recruit outside trainer to work with animal
 - Humane euthanasia
- Ensure appropriate behavior logs, evaluations and observations are recorded in Chameleon. Keep paper behavior logs in a convenient location for staff and volunteers to record observations.
- Standardize assessment and evaluation forms across all three sites and amongst all internal partners performing assessments. This can be a collaborative effort using best practices utilized by each group.
- Create Volunteer and Staff Behavior Evaluator criteria and provided standardized training. Work with internal partners to establish best practices for Evaluator Certification.
- Perform behavior assessments on each animal entering the shelter within 3 days of admission.
- Provide ongoing behavior assessments in animals sheltered longer than 90 days.
- Create volunteer enrichment team, think of a catchy name, provide t-shirts and establish enrichment schedule.
- Create standardized behavioral questionnaire for owner relinquishments. Gather as much information as possible during the surrender interview.



Discussion:

Animal shelters inherently are stressful environments. For these animals, they are in unfamiliar surroundings with strange people, noises and odors. Prolonged incarceration can create behavior issues in animals that previously were well-behaved. Stress is a precursor to disease outbreaks, especially in cats. Animals entering a shelter should not leave a shelter in worse mental health.

There are many things that can be done, easily and inexpensively, to provide sheltered animals with social interaction, mental stimulation and physical activity. Enrichment will enhance adaptability. Training shelter dogs can further increase adoptability and cage presentation by instilling behaviors that will make them more desirable.

It is important to standardized behavioral assessments to ensure that appropriate judgments are being made, but it is also necessary to understand the limitations of these structured tests and the variables that influence the outcome. Many decisions are based on the animal's performance and liability issues concerning safely placing animals in a home need to be acknowledged when structuring a standard assessment program. Well-rounded behavior assessments not only include the results of the evaluation but also the intake questionnaire (assuming the animals were relinquished), behavior during the intake exam, and daily observations made by staff and volunteers. All of these must be clearly documented in the animal's electronic record.

While it is acceptable to have volunteers conducting the assessments, it is imperative that they and any staff assigned be trained, and evaluated for competency by a qualified individual. Cornell School of Veterinary Medicine Marie Fund Shelter Program recommends only staff perform these evaluations. However, staffing limitations in SBCAS prevent the reality of this. The key is to require training and standardization to limit liability.

Volunteers provide an essential role in shelter animal enrichment. Structuring enrichment protocols include varying the activity from day to day. Play groups, long walks, game playing, food puzzle and snack time preparation all can be assigned as volunteer duties.

Meal time should be in the form of enrichment. No dog should simply be fed in a metal tray or paper bowl. Food should be entertaining. Frozen Kongs, buster cubes, hidden snacks, dispensing toys should be routinely used.

The importance of a detailed behavioral intake questionnaire can not be over emphasized. Owners relinquishing their pets should be encouraged to be open and honest about their pet's behavior in order to find a suitable adopter. Careful consultation by trained staff can ensure owners provide detailed information.

There is limitless information in the internet regarding creative enrichment programs that will enhance the welfare of the shelter population and improve adoptability. And don't forget, bunnies, pocket pets, birds, horses, reptiles and farm animals need enrichment too!



<http://www.rabbitawarenessweek.co.uk/behaviour/tips-for-enrichment/>

- Appendix 10.A - After the Adoption
- Appendix 10.B - Canine Activity Log
- Appendix 10.C - Food dispensing toys and recipes
- Appendix 10.D - ARL Playgroup Manual
- Appendix 10.E - Best Friends Enrichment for Shelter Dogs
- Appendix 10.F - Shelter Enrichment PPT
- Appendix 10.G - Sample Cat Surrender Questionnaire
- Appendix 10.H - Sample Dog Surrender Questionnaire



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
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*11.1 Volunteer
Management*

11.1 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Observations:

Santa Barbara has an interesting and unique volunteer program. Presumably due to budgetary issues, limited resources and staffing shortage, outside volunteer organizations (501c3) and "friends of Animal Services" rallied to fill the gaps in animal care and financial shortfalls. A system was created to engage internal partners. These internal partners collectively providing thousands of volunteer hours per year are:

- BUNS- Bunnies Urgently Needing Shelter - This 501c(3) group provides volunteers to care for rabbits and costs associated with spay/ neuter and other medical and husbandry expenses. Some capital improvements. Assistance with adoption and some community outreach and education. Located and serving Santa Barbara, Goleta shelter
- ASAP - Animal Shelter Assistance Program - This is a 501c(3) organization whose volunteers provides care to all cats and costs associated with medical/ surgical care and husbandry. Capital improvements and equipment purchases, adoption, community outreach and education. Located and serving Santa Barbara, Goleta shelter and occasionally assists with Santa Maria cats. Recruits and trains fosters.
- CAPA - Companion Animal Placement Assistance - This is a 501c(3) organization whose volunteers provides care to animals in Lompoc. Funds some costs associated with medical/ surgical care and husbandry. Capital improvements and equipment purchases, adoption, community outreach and education. Recruits and trains fosters.

Each internal partner volunteer organization operates independently from SBCAS with no oversight by a County employee. Their organizations seem to be well managed, extremely reliable and operate within (or above) acceptable standards. Animal care provided by these groups is impeccable and highly valued and a necessity for the humane care of the animals residing in Santa Barbara County.

Each of the internal partner volunteer organizations has their own standard operating procedures, recruitment standards, screening of applicants, training requirements, method of scheduling and opinions on the disposition, handling and needs of animals in the custody of SBCAS.

Santa Barbara Animal Services has its own volunteer program within the operation that has a basic infrastructure including a volunteer manual and a very small budget that essentially covers t-shirt purchases and small recognition items. SBCAS volunteers work in Goleta Shelter providing care to the resident dog population. In addition SBCAS volunteers work in the Santa Maria Shelter providing care to both dogs and cats. Managed by the Community Outreach position(s), the volunteer program allows interested individuals to complete an application followed by an orientation. There is no volunteer background screening. Volunteer opportunities range from doing laundry to greeting the public, to direct animal care; however, there seems to be limited volunteer job descriptions. Training consists of mentoring new volunteers by assigning them to a volunteer mentor. There is no ongoing volunteer training program for SBCAS volunteers.

There is no set schedule for the SBCAS volunteers who are able to sign up for their service hours so volunteer



engagement is on a week-to-week basis. There is no formal volunteer recognition program especially due to limited funding but staff attempts to show appreciation through an annual potluck party where efforts are recognized. Volunteer hours are currently tracked manually and statistics were hard to obtain. In the next few weeks however, the Community Outreach Coordinator will be implementing Volgistics, a volunteer resources management software program.

The relationship between the staff and all volunteers is challenging and confusing on several levels. In most animal shelters using volunteers, all volunteers are managed by an employee of the shelter. The standard operating procedures that the volunteers are trained on are the same ones that the shelter employees must abide by. The group ideally works cohesively and collaboratively under one organizations chart and by the same set of rules. This is not the case in SBCAS.

Because each campus has a different volunteer program structure and relationships with outside volunteer groups to complete the operational responsibilities including animal care, medical and behavior treatments, confusion often results from lack of a standard and consistent structure often guided by principals and expectations of the individual volunteer groups. Each internal partner has its own mission statement and vision, all provide much valued services, however their objectives can often conflict with those set by the Santa Barbara County PHD. This can be a basis for friction and dissension. Despite this, relationships between volunteers (both SBCAS and provided by internal partners) and staff is generally good on most days.

The issue of liability cannot go unmentioned. SBCAS retains custody of all animals, yet in some instances volunteer groups who are internal partners and volunteers of SBCAS are making final decisions with regards to an animal's disposition. In addition, SBCAS volunteers use undue influence (through relationships with key community stakeholders) to direct or coerce care and disposition of animals at times blocking the humane euthanasia of some long term, emotionally distressed animals. Volunteers (SBCAS and internal partners) are issued keys, allowing them access to the buildings to obtain paperwork or use the restroom facilities during the weekend, when no county employee is on the property.

Various staff did express concerns about the political ramifications associated with the relationship between the Santa Barbara County CEO and management with various volunteer individuals and groups. These political concerns have resulted in a climate of anxiety and irresolution. This very concern has led to the resignation of a newly-hired staff member who cited explicit concerns in his resignation letter regarding the political climate, operational influences, and other issues preventing a consistent, professional volunteer program.

Both volunteers and staff also expressed concerns centering around bullying from a specific group of SBCAS volunteers who have been given too much authority or license in operational matters. A member of the American Humane Association evaluation team did witness a hostile comment directed toward an employee during an onsite visit to the Santa Barbara Campus. There have been accounts of an adopter's dog being killed by a shelter dog during an interaction whereby a trained volunteer facilitated the interaction.

It is important to preserve the relationships despite a few negative experiences. In summary, external stakeholders (volunteers and other nonprofit groups) are frustrated by the limited resources allocated to the animal care programming which they believe leads to a lack of training, tools, and overall ability to deliver an



effective animal care program for the community. This frustration has led to the creation of several nonprofit groups who have invested in the daily operations of the program with dedication, commitment, passion and enthusiasm. Without them adequate care for the animals would not be possible. However these relationships were not structured in a way that defined clear expectations, responsibilities and professional boundaries. Over time, this has resulted in a dysfunctional, yet symbiotic, relationship between the volunteers and the staff that must be rectified in order to gain stakeholder confidences.

Recommendations:

- Restructure the volunteer department so that there is one single point of coordination between all groups. The single point should be an employee of the County.
- Engage all internal partners that provide volunteer to form an executive committee collaborating to develop best practices for all volunteer management, then implement best practices across all volunteer groups providing services to SBCAS. This standard operating procedure should include:
 - Standard mechanism for screening all volunteers
 - Aggressive recruitment strategies
 - Structured, consistent orientation
 - Code of Conduct
 - Required training
 - Job descriptions and requirements
 - Mechanism to evaluate performance and remediate issues
 - Organizational chart
 - Uniforms
 - Recognition and appreciation
 - Monthly hour commitment
 - Scheduling
- A method of tracking all volunteer numbers and hours will allow assessment in work load as well as community involvement. Establishing baselines will give a benchmark to measure growth. Information collected by internal partners should be shared with SBCAS on a monthly basis.
- There are consultants available for volunteer program evaluation that Santa Barbara County can engage to conduct a comprehensive volunteer program audit. One of these consultants is the JFixler Group and more information can be found here: <http://www.jffixler.com/volunteer-and-member-engagement> (Disclosure: A member of the AHA staff has a spouse involved in the organization, though the recommendation was made without prior knowledge of this)
- The practice of the County Government allowing volunteers to exert undue influence over euthanasia decisions must stop. With strict guidelines soon to be in place, the process whereby that decision is thoughtfully and painstakingly made should not be undermined. If volunteers wish



to express concerns over the disposition of an animal, they need to come armed with solutions and through the appropriate forum. Letting an animal languish in a cage with no action taken is unacceptable and outside of the Association of Shelter Veterinarian Guidelines. The County has the responsibility to ensure no animal suffers needlessly. Emotional distress constitutes suffering by many standards. AHA is not advocating for the euthanization of any animal currently residing within the County shelter system, the recommendation is simply that a system be put into place where the correct people are allowed to make decisions after all other options have been exhausted and that those decisions are supported.

Evaluate the risk management tips found in this article:

http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/library/articles/employee_or_volunteer.shtml

Articles regarding conflict between volunteers and staff:

<http://philanthropy.com/article/Volunteers-Can-Cause-Friction/57754/>

https://charityvillage.com/Content.aspx?topic=Human_Resources_Q_A_Reducing_conflict_between_staff_and_volunteers#.VQo7UpPF8bo

Discussion:

The team was impressed by the clear commitment of all of the volunteers and volunteer groups taking the initiative to forge a partnership all aimed at a common goal: to enhance the welfare of the animals in Santa Barbara County. The facilities maintained by ASAP and BUNS served the cats and rabbits of Goleta well. All operate with care and commitment and their policies and procedures are commendable. It is recognized that this collaboration was formed to solve a problem which entailed inefficient government funding for programs and services contracted to be provided by SBCAS. The 'collaboration' well-intentions are applauded and viewed as creative problem solving.

What was lacking when these relationships started to form was clear, consistent operating procedures and boundaries, which falls to the County to implement. As a result, there is a bit of anarchy going on that has fueled strained relationships.

American Humane recognizes the value of services (both volunteer and financial) that all of these groups contribute and encourages that they way forward is with standards developed and abided by all. The staff of SBCAS also provides a valuable service to these animals and the tone and environment that everyone works in needs to be positive and productive, not divisive and toxic.

Everyone is united by a common goal. But the County does have an additional obligation to ensure that best practices are employed that mitigate risk and liability to staff, volunteers, the community and to the animals.

Resources for good volunteer program manuals:

<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/volunteer-management/resource-library.html>

Understanding how a volunteer program fits into an agency:



<https://www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/2010/january>

<https://www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/1999/may>

Understanding how to create an appreciative volunteer culture:

<http://learn.volunteermatch.org/>

<http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/workplaces-staff-volunteer.cfm>

http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/may_jun_2004/developing_good_staff_volunteer_relationships.html?utm_source=Convio&utm_medium=Redirects&utm_campaign=301

Appendix 11.A Volunteer Management & Animal Care

Appendix 11.B Please Curb your Volunteer

Appendix 11.C Tracks of my Volunteers

Appendix 11.D Training & Development Summary Report



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*12. Governance,
Strategic Planning,
Leadership*

12. Governance, Strategic Planning, Leadership

12.1 Governance

Observations:

The oversight of SBCAS is assigned to the Public Health Department, located in the Community Services Division. There are four divisions in Public Health: Fiscal, Administrative Support, Primary Care and Community Health. The Public Health Department Director, Dr. Takashi Wada, has general oversight of 24 public service programs within the Primary Care and Community Health Divisions. The Community Health Division is managed by the Deputy Director, Susan Klein-Rothschild. Ms. Klein-Rothschild is the direct supervisor of the SBCAS Director, Ms. Jan Gick who has served in this position since 1999.

The Public Health Department falls under the leadership of the Assistant County Executive Officer, Terry Maus-Nisich, who reports to the County Executive Officer, Mona Miyasato, who in turn, answers to the Board of Supervisors who are elected officials of the five County districts.

SBCAS provides contractual services for animal control and/or animal sheltering to 7 of the 8 County cities and incorporated communities.

SBCAS has informal agreements with several County non-profits to provide invaluable animal care assistance and financial support as well as a signed tenant-lease agreement with a 501 c(3) DAWG, that provides sheltering and public adoptions on the Goleta Campus. Governance of the internal partners is not well-defined as there is no accountability or clearly assigned oversight of the activities conducted on behalf of SBCAS.

The lack of structured agreements with these non-profits has contributed to the creation of an environment that cultivates confusion and conflict between staff, volunteers, partners and key stakeholders as it is unclear who is in charge of managing the work performed on behalf of the animals that are in legal custody of the county.

In well managed shelter, the Executive Director has ultimate responsibility for all the animals, staff and volunteers. This is not obviously the case in SBCAS as there seems to be decision making on every level, some by individuals who are not entrusted or entitled to do so. When decisions are made by management, they are susceptible to being undermined at any level up to the District Supervisors.

It is difficult to objectively evaluate current SBCAS leadership under these conditions. In this semi-anarchic environment it is impossible for anyone to lead successfully. Until such time as clear boundaries are set, a chain of command is implemented and adhered to and accountability is upheld the system cannot function productively or efficiently.

The management on all levels is predominately reactive not proactive and thus this is a failed system.

Recommendations:

- Establish and follow clear chain of command.
- Develop specific MOUs with internal partners that include and define accountability and



supervision.

- Engage internal and external partners in problem solving and restructuring relationships.

Discussion:

The collaboration between the County, SBCAS and the internal and external partners was a very creative way to solve a problem. The County is unable to fund the true total cost (as described in Section 15 (Finance & Budget) of animal services in a manner that ensures quality of care and the upholding of the Hayden Bill. These partnerships have been life-saving to the community animals. However, this intention was not well-executed as these informal agreements have over time eroded boundaries of authority. The animals of Santa Barbara County are the legal custody of the County, and better County oversight and funding would be appropriate.

Investigation into alternative governance models should be undertaken to ascertain if County management for Animal Services serves the community in the most efficient manner. Options include:

- Privatization of some or all County Animal services to a non-profit, either in whole or just the sheltering aspect
- Joint Powers of Authority

12.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Observations:

The team reviewed the FY2014-15 Operational Plan provided by senior leadership. This document outlines the basic spend plan for all County services. In section D of the document, each Functional Group provides a brief summary of strategic values, purpose and goals. Animal Services resides in the Health & Human Services functional group. While a strategic purpose was listed: Provision of animal shelters and animal control services, there were no stated goals or objectives identified for Animal Services. A word search of this 504 page document found 21 matches for the word "animal" [eight of those instances referring to line items in the budget and four in reference to an anti-animal abuse task force proposed by the District Attorney. Animal Services was not well represented in the Operational Plan

While the SBCAS department policies call for an annual strategic plan in #1.4 of the Policy manual, there is no identified, current, strategic plan for Santa Barbara County Animal Services.

Recommendations:

- Engage SBCAS in a strategic planning process. This process should include those affected by the plan and those that have the ability to change it. Utilize the VMOSA process: Redefine the Vision, Mission, Objectives, Strategies and Action Plan. This should include short and long range planning.
- Establish measurable performance metrics to track success and provide you with the necessary data to drive decisions, make adjustments and to guide and track performance.
- Hold individuals accountable for the plan and the part they are delegated to accomplish.



Discussion:

The strategic plan is a living, operational document that is necessary to provide leadership, managers and employees with a road map to achieving desired outcomes. Without this document organizations can get lost, lose focus and initiative, decrease productivity, cultivate employee apathy, and create a public perception of disorganization and mismanagement. This document is a key component to aligning the time, energy and resources of all parties invested in the enhancement of the welfare of the community's animals.

Building the plan is only one piece of the puzzle, communicating that plan to all parties and holding everyone accountable for their part is the other.

A valuable resource: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en>

Appendix 12.A - Strategic Planning for Dummies

12.3 ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION AND VISION

Observations:

Chapter 1.3 of the SBCASPHD Policy & Procedure Manual contains the mission statement, goals and objectives for the department, outside of the context of a strategic plan. The document, drafted in 2010, indicates that the mission statement is "to be revised" and the date issued is "pending". However, this document is posted on the SBCAS landing page on the PHD website.

POLICY:

Animal Services mission is to establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment between humans and animals in Santa Barbara County. Further, to protect the human and domestic animal population from rabies. To protect the animal population from the dangers of the streets and the wild, and from other potential harm.

PROCEDURE:

The objectives of the department are stated below:

- A. To assure that a minimum of 90% of Santa Barbara County's dog population has been vaccinated against rabies.
- B. To protect the public's safety by enforcing animal codes and ordinances and animal quarantines.
- C. To prevent and investigate the inhumane treatment of animals.
- D. To educate and inform the public in the areas of animal codes, animal ordinances, and responsible pet ownership.
- E. To implement and maintain an automated licensing program for dogs, and animal related businesses.



- F. To respond to emergency service requests from the public or law enforcement as quickly as possible but no later than one hour after receiving the call.
- G. To respond to routine service requests from the public within forty-eight hours.
- H. To impound (domestic and wild) stray animals.
- I. To provide services to the public to aid them in locating their lost animals.
- J. To implement, maintain, and encourage an adoption program for impounded animals.
- K. To provide, with veterinary supervision and/or assistance, medical attention for all impounded animals.
- L. To manage unclaimed animals through adoption, or humane euthanasia.

The mission statement seemed to be socialized amongst the staff, but it was not obvious that volunteers had been oriented to the document.

SBCAS objectives lack specificity in they are not quantitatively measurable or timed. In essence, they do not follow the SMART +C model.

S- Specific - How much is to be achieved by whom and when?

M - Measurable - Data and statistics recorded and collected

A - Achievable - Impacted by available resources

R - Relevant - Tied back to mission and goals

T - Timed - Defined timeline for completion

C - Challenging - Encourages forward improvement on issues important to community

These objectives seemingly just state the responsibilities of Animal Services rather than provide direction and guidance for the leaders as well as a mechanism for performance evaluation. Furthermore, there are no key performance indicators established or collected to benchmark progress and uphold accountability.

As previously noted, SBCAS has cultivated relationships with several community internal and external non-profit partners who provide valuable services that augment animal care and supplement financial shortfalls. These community partners are guided by their own mission statements, vision, beliefs and objectives that may or may not be in line with those of SBCAS.

Recommendations:

- As stated above, the SBCAS must undergo a strategic planning process.
- Re-define objectives using SMART+C methodology.
- Establish benchmarks and key performance indicators to evaluate all key areas of the organization.
- Ensure alignment, or at minimum visibility, of all internal and external partners objectives so the organization moves in unison toward mutual goals.

Discussion:



When all oars are not rowing in the same direction it is hard to move forward. Defining a mission and objectives is part of the strategic planning process. Ensuring that all stakeholders are on the same page and maintaining accountability allows the organization and its leaders to work progressively.

Prior to setting measurable objectives, baseline data, needs to be collected to assess where you are. How many adoptions did you do last year, how many euthanasias, field calls, volunteer hours? Once you know where you are, you can plan your goals and objectives on where you want to be. All of this is communicated down to the employees and volunteers so the message and direction is consistent. Miscommunicating or failure to clearly articulate objectives sets employees and volunteer up for failure.

12.4 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Observation:

SBCAS organizational chart is depicted in Appendix 12.B. & 12.C

The Director has a minimum of 8 (all contract veterinarians individually report to the Director) direct reports distributed over 3 campuses.

The organization chart is has both a functional and geographic delineation prohibiting the organization management by business lines. This puts a strain on the span of control and prohibits the Director from effectively and efficiently managing the team in addition to providing vision, leadership and acting as a liaison to the PHD and the community.

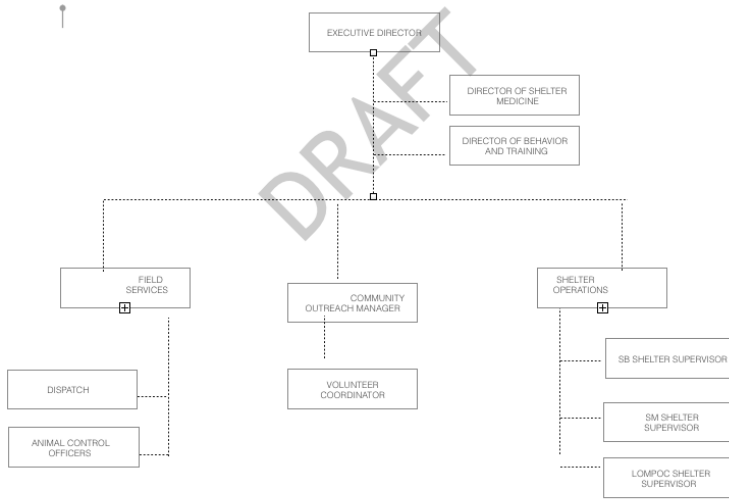
Due to insufficient depth in the staffing roster, or lack of employee efficiency, the Director has been seen working the front desk, supervisors are cleaning kennels, Animal Control Officers are transporting animals to other locations for surgery, and leadership has spent a lot of time engaging in debates over animal care with volunteers and members of the community. This is not efficient or productive use of time or adequate leveraging of resources. It also prevents forward motion when all day is spent putting out fires.

It is not clear that the Director has been truly empowered and positioned for success. There have been instances when decisions have been undermined through grievances communicated by community residents up to the Board of Supervisors. There are also observations made that the Director is inflexible in considering outside concerns and suggestions. The actual truth is not apparent, yet only supports the observation of the team of organizational dysfunction, misalignment of responsibilities, lack of clear boundaries and mistrust on all levels.



Recommendation:

- Consider re-organizing by business lines and developing appropriate tiers of management with the appropriate delegation of authority and accountability.



Discussion:

The appropriate span of control varies from organization to organization and is dependent on a number of factors:

- The experience and personality of the manager
- The nature of the business and work
- The skills and attitudes of the employees
- The organizational culture

Narrow or wide spans of control have advantages and disadvantages. Wide spans are typically adopted if budgetary factors control the number of managers allowed. Narrow spans may improve communication flow.



In this case, due to the geographic dispersal of employees and nature of work and work load capacity, delegation of responsibilities over a narrow range may improve the productivity of the Director and empower staff. The Director should be responsible for:

- Overseeing staff
- Cultivating and maintaining partnerships with community constituents
- Liaison to Public Health Department and County government
- Ensuring the policies and procedures are implemented and upheld
- Promote the efficient and productive utilization to staff

The Director should not be manning the front desk when employees take lunch breaks, cleaning kennels, and engaging in continuous debates over animal decisions.

12.5 EMPLOYEE MORALE AND ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST

Observations:

Employees demonstrated a positive demeanor during the time of the onsite assessment; however, in an attempt to garner feedback from the employees directly, an employee satisfaction survey was provided to the employees. The survey results revealed that staff feel fulfilled and challenged working in the organization and they are held to somewhat realistic expectations, but are very often stressed. The stressors appear to stem from the lack of staff and the work load capacity, the handful of toxic volunteers, in addition to the nature of the work which lends itself to compassion fatigue. They feel that they mostly have the supplies needed to accomplish their jobs. However, a little more than half of the people feel that training is lacking.

Most employees are satisfied with their jobs, feel that they have good supervision, and that their opinions matter. Yet, interestingly 50% said they would be likely to look for another job. Some due to pay, others due to the lack of career growth and some due to the work environment.

Most everyone agrees that safety and appearance of the organization are extremely important, that the staff works well together as a team, but their opinions are a little more wide spread about supervisors following through on stated goals and actions. This has most people saying that they do not get to take on time or uninterrupted breaks. They seem fairly split about the staff being treated equally and fairly, but mostly are comfortable sharing concerns, and receive helpful feedback and guidance from supervisors. While most understand the philosophy and mission of the organization, they seem somewhat lacking in their ability to understand and follow policies which are different between the various organizations represented.

The majority of the staff feel that the presence of the internal partners is valuable and they could not do their job otherwise. Concern was expressed over a few individual volunteers that bully employees and generate



negativity. Overall, employee morale was judged as being good supporting evidence given the long tenures of many employees.

Recommendations:

- Hold quarterly “town hall” meetings to check the pulse of the employee morale, give them a forum to discuss concerns and challenges and communicate the status of the organizational goals and objectives.
- Mitigate employee stress
 - Host Compassion Fatigue seminars for both employee and volunteers
 - Ensure adequate breaks and down time
 - Assess staffing levels
 - Remove disruptive volunteers from service
- Increase communication between campuses. Shelter supervisors/managers should meet regularly
- Establish employee recognition program
- Consider implementing competency levels to give employees a chance to enhance their skills and responsibilities
- Establish employee training program, revitalize the Animal Services Training Academy

Discussion:

Employee morale effects productivity. Disengaged employees have a higher absentee rate, higher turnover and poor work performance. In this business, low morale can lead to bites, accidents, spread of disease, and mishandling of animals. This is an industry already fraught with emotions running high as the passion of the workers and volunteers can be consuming.

Maintaining employee morale starts with having the right people in the right jobs. Cultivating or fostering negativity should not be tolerated. A good leader motivates by example and sets the mood of the organization. Set clear expectations but give employees an opportunity to provide feedback if a new policy is being implemented that affects them. Make them feel valued and empowered.

An organization’s employees are the ambassadors to the public. Make morale and employee satisfaction a measurable objective in the strategic plan.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*14. Data,
Statistics & Record
Keeping*

14. Data, Statistics & Record Keeping

General Overview:

The animal management software system used by SBCAS is Chameleon. This is a widely utilized, web-based software system that is designed for shelter and rescue use. It features a myriad of options to increase efficiency and productivity while at the same time providing tools needed to increase adoptions and lower euthanasia rates. Some of the functions of Chameleon are:

- Critical Report compilations
- Licensing
- Field Service Activities
- Inventory Management
- Donation Management
- Mass Mailing tools
- On-line training
- Touch screen kiosks
- Kennel information
- Medical/Veterinary/ Behavior documentation
- To Do Lists and Task Management which can be used with a PDA
- Bite Citations
- National Statistics

And it is a powerful public access tool that allows the shelter to get adoptable/lost/found/licensing data to the public thru PetHarbor, WebLicensing, email blasts and kiosks. SBCAS uses some of these features through posting adoptable animals to PetHarbor and using the web license feature to renew dog licenses. Public access also allows customers to reach you. Online they can file nuisance reports and make Field Service requests, inquire about lost animals, and veterinarians can submit vaccination histories.

The team observed that the version of Chameleon was not the most updated version. It was also widely felt that this software system was not being utilized to its full potential. Furthermore, the County utilizes Crystal Reports to aggregate data. It is not clear at this time if this is beneficial or restricting the full use of Chameleon for reporting purposes.

One employee bears the majority of the responsibility of Chameleon usage. This person just recently attended a Chameleon seminar with the hopes of becoming familiar with all the potential uses and training and implementation within SBCAS. The team was told that staff was cross trained on using Chameleon and that everyone has the basics, but some have more. The team observed that to be accurate, as several staff members appeared to be quite proficient and others were not aware what Chameleon was capable of or how to find out.

14.1 Record Keeping

Observations:

There were various SOPs pertaining to animal record-keeping.



SBCAS Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures, 3.20, 3.21 and 3.22 required data entry immediately during a transaction, rather than creating and maintaining paper records to then transfer to the database. SBCAS Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 3, Office Procedures, 3.22 “Chameleon Activities – Guidelines for Data Consistency,” provided detailed information on the use of Chameleon for records accuracy for ACOs. Many SOPs referenced Chameleon as it pertained to the particular shelter function or process. However, paper records were still used to record medical information, medical treatments and to do lists. Medical records from off-site veterinary care were not integrated into the animal’s shelter history. Behavior/ Medical records were not consistently recorded in the software. The records with medical and behavioral information were not as in-depth as they should be, not all veterinarians followed the same medical record keeping and not all of the records were legible. The SOAP (Subjective/ Objective/ Assessment/ Plan) Method of medical record keeping was not uniform.

Not all records were kept as part of the animal’s permanent medical record. For instance, treatment sheets were included in records in SB and thrown away in SM. Daily observation on animal’s appetite, elimination habits, and activity level were not recorded, only noted if there was an abnormality.

As previously mentioned, animals were observed by the team at each facility who did not appear on the animal inventory. The Policy and Procedures Manual included Chapter 4, 4.15, “Animal Inventory” which stated that the inventory was to be performed once per week, and also that it “could be informally done each day on an ongoing informal basis.” Procedure 4.06 “Kennel Duty Assignments” also included “U. Animal census as assigned.” In 2014 ten animals were deemed “missing” from the inventory.

Upon adoption, the adopter received a photo copy of the complete paper medical record. A process that takes time and resources.

Animal Control Officers also use Chameleon to write reports, log activity and record calls. The record keeping in this department appears acceptable.

Recommendations:

- Convert from paper records to electronic. Maintain all animal data in Chameleon. This includes medical records, behavior evaluations, medical treatments, vaccine and deworming schedules, medical rechecks.
- Establish SOP for consistent documentation of medical and behavioral information
- Ensure adequate staff training on data entry
- Utilize medical “to do” lists which automatically update treatments into medical record
- Purchase PDA’s or tablets for in kennel use for medical staff
- Create daily EDAPP (Eating, Drinking, Activity, Peeing, Pooping) forms and SOP. This information is useful to the medical staff to detect problems.
- Make sure SBCAS is using the most updated version of Chameleon.
- Ensure that the animal inventory matches the actual animals in care on a daily basis. Do this by conducting a daily walk through, cross checking each animal with each animal listed on the inventory. Ensure that this is a formal, daily process so that animals are always accounted for and discrepancies can be corrected immediately.



Discussion:

SBCAS is commended on keeping individual records on all animals sheltered. However, the process of paper records needs to be streamlined to enhance worker productivity. The Chameleon system was designed specifically to increase efficiencies and eliminate redundancies. Managing manual animal records while simultaneously utilizing robust animal management software can create redundancies and inaccuracies and be time-consuming if not managed well. If the paperwork and the electronic record do not match, vital information can be lost. Utilizing animal management software to its full potential increases productivity and provides consistent information for employees, adopters, transfer partners and statistical reporting.

Record-keeping accuracy greatly improves when animal inventory information is part of a software program designed to track animals. Like most businesses, animal services agencies are expected to maintain accurate records regarding their activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the accurate accounting of all animals received and their corresponding dispositions.

Medical records are legal documents, and must be kept in a manner consistent with the State Veterinary Boards requirements. The recording of controlled substances on the record is a DEA mandate as well.

Data entry is only as good as the person's ability to enter it. Training will be required to ensure full usage by all employees.

14.2 BENCHMARKS & REPORTS

Observations:

Statistics from 2009 to the present that indicated intake and outcome information and live release rates were provided to the team, by request, prior to the site visit. The AHA team requested several reports during the site visit and each was delivered promptly, which included spay/neuter statistics, animal inventory, census tracking, and animal intake and length of stay data. However, it was mentioned that these reports are not run on a regular basis as there is no procedure for monthly data collection.

During the subsequent visit, additional report details were requested that could not be readily provided. The challenges were with Crystal report limitations, IT issues, and not enough people knowing how to run the reports.

Because there is no official Strategic Plan, data collection and benchmark analysis is not being done routinely. Data was not collected in an effort to drive decision making, manage populations, establish new programs, record volunteer hours, track efficiency or productivity. Data and statistics were not used to assess employee performance, identify problems, assess status of organizational goals and objectives, or integrated into the strategic planning process.

Shelter statistics were not found to be reported on the County website, and made available for public transparency.



Recommendations:

- Create SOP for organizational benchmarks and establish frequency of collection and report generation. Data to measure may included:
 - Daily Census
 - Animal disease rates
 - Intake by location, breed, age, zip code and relinquishment reason, if spayed/neutered, strays
 - Outcome by type
 - Live release rate
 - Length of Stay per species, age, location in shelter
 - Field calls by type and zip code
 - Field Call response time
 - Customer Service Ratings
 - Employee turnover
 - Number of bites, employee and volunteer
 - Number of accident reports
 - Absenteeism
 - Overtime
 - Extra help hours
 - Volunteer hours and numbers
 - Foster care hours and numbers
 - Number of Vet checks scheduled, Number of Tech checks (identifies medical work load).
 - Free S/N procedures for community
 - License Procurement rates
 - Community Bites
- Follow the guidelines and format of the Asilomar Accords for calculating live release rate.¹ If your current version of Chameleon does not allow entry of Asilomar statuses of animals at intake and outcome, strongly consider adding those fields to your Chameleon database.
- Place SBCAS statistics and data on the county website² in Asilomar Accord format
- Use benchmarks to drive strategic planning objectives.

Discussion:

An accurate and easy-to-use data collection and analysis system is essential for reporting such information to local government, donors, and the community. In addition, such reporting is essential for assessing the

¹ http://www.asilomaraccords.org/statistics_and_formulas/annual_animal_statistics_table_template_2-07.pdf

² <https://multcopets.org/reports-and-agency-statistics>, www.nycacc.org/Statistics.htm



organization's performance, formulating strategic plans, and setting goals. Chameleon allows for the collection of important statistics and actually has a feature that enables you to compare your agency to others.

It is important to remember that computers can only be as helpful as the actual information placed within, and the accurate gathering and analysis of statistical information are fundamental components of a modern animal services organization. Animal care agencies now have the ability to produce an inordinate amount of data on a daily, monthly, and yearly basis. Prior to the advent of robust animal management software, there had been little guidance regarding the importance of record-keeping, and the method of trial and error was all too common. Clear and concise reports and reliable data are necessary, not only for supporting budgetary issues, but also to ensure accountability, effectively monitor operations, plan strategies and evaluate programs.³

A lack of clarity and/or errors in record-keeping or data presentation can give the appearance of carelessness, apathy or even impropriety. On the other hand, clear and easy-to-follow animal statistics can be a valuable tool in defining the scope of the many complex variables which make up the homeless animal problem. SBCAS should put the numbers it has to work for it in ways that will improve the quality of work. Shelters of all sizes benefit from keeping accurate statistics on every aspect of their work. Numbers tell people who an organization is and what challenges it faces. Presented below are reasons to keep an accurate count of the animals an agency handles.

Accountability: Numbers explain a shelter's existence to government entities and the general public. An agency knows it is productive and accountable, but others must know this as well.

Liability: Proper recording of numbers will show that each animal was kept the legally required amount of time.

Public Image: Numbers increase public awareness about the magnitude of a shelter's mission. Numbers help convey the results of an agency's efforts and also help convey the public's role in generating stray and homeless animals.

Budgeting/Fundraising: A good budgeting process requires statistics in order to identify needs. Numbers assist in planning for the future and paint pictures that generate donations.

Program Evaluation/Planning: Strengths and weaknesses are exposed through statistics. Analysis of a shelter's numbers identifies successful as well as ineffective programs. Statistical analysis can assist in the design of future programs. Comparison of statistics may expose animal population trends (local, regional, and national).

It is important to recognize that collection of statistics is only one aspect, this data needs to be used to drive decision making on all levels. The data collected can be used to:

- Determine employee staffing needs
- Identify target areas in the community where there is the greatest stray population, and implement programs for reduction.

³ <http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-12-12/how-shelters-can-use-data-save-lives>



- Identify susceptible communities with high owner relinquishment rates
- Identify high risk animal populations
- Disease trends
- Employee productivity and work load
- Assess the fee for service charged to each city
- License compliance
- Report Live Release Rate

You can never recognize a problem or document a trend without data collection.

A sample benchmark template was created specifically for SBCASuse and can be customized based on objectives set in the strategic plan.

Appendix 14.A - SBCAS Benchmark Template

Appendix 14.B - Magical Metrics and Dazzling Data PPT PDF

Appendix 14.C - Monitoring and Population Management in Shelters PPT

Appendix 14.D - A matter of Measurement

Appendix 14.E - What is your Rate?

Appendix 14.F - Arlington Animal Services Benchmarks

Additional resources

<http://www.maddiesfund.org/using-shelter-metrics-to-measure-and-set-goals.htm>

<http://www.maddiesfund.org/magical-metrics-and-dazzling-data.htm>



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*15. Finance and
Budgeting*

15. Finance and Budgeting

General Overview

The county operates on a fiscal cycle from July through June. Each year, the budgeting cycle begins in the preceding January. The Animal Services budget is a collaborative effort between the Animal Services Director, the PHD Deputy Director, and Fiscal Services. The budget is approved by the Board of Supervisors. The County operates within a balance budget.

Animal Services contributes 2 revenue streams, one from the sale of dog licenses and the other is a fee for service charged to 7 of 8 cities within the county for Animal Control and Sheltering. The revenue received contributes to cover approximately 70% of the Animal Services operating budget. The other 30% is funded by the County's general fund.

In FY2015, the operating expenditures for SBCAS is \$4,324,249 (projected).

FY2014 Budget was \$3,893,318

FY14 Per capita SBCAS government spending on Animal Services is \$8.95

In 2009, Dr Andrew Rowan, CEO Humane Society International presented a workshop at the Pegasus Foundation Seminar. He estimated, on average, communities spend \$8.00 per capita on Animal Services. (2015 value - \$8.93) They handle (there is no reference to the level of care provided, which is an important consideration) approximately 30 animals per 1,000 people. In calendar year 2014, SBCAS took in 6,868 animals in 2014 which is the equivalent to 15.8 animals per 1,000 people. (see Table 1.1, which was derived from data collected by UC Davis Koret in the Animal Services Evaluation for Yolo County in 2012-2013)

Though the annual operating budget of SBCAS is balanced, five outside organizations contribute funding for operating expenses of the SBCAS. Collectively they contributed over \$325,000 in additional funds to cover food, medical expenses and basic shelter improvements. Without this gift, life-saving care could not be afforded to the animals in SBCAS. In addition, it is estimated that over 20 FTE are provided through SBCAS volunteers, and the BUNS, ASAP, and CAPA volunteer programs. BUNS and ASAP contribute essentially 100% of care to rabbits and cats of Santa Barbara.

Despite this seemingly adequate budget as compared to other California communities, SBCAS is lacking several key positions that warrant a budget re-evaluation.

Expenses

With 71% of expenses allocated to salary and benefits and 11% going to fixed expenses and overhead, that leaves 18% in variable expenses, in theory.

If you subtract out the Public Health Department allocations in for support services (\$169,000) that leaves 14% in variable expenses to troll for cost savings. In reality, some of these variable costs are not truly



variable, thus restricting the Executive Director from making any head way toward cost savings initiatives that would be able to fund additional staff positions.

Note: Variable expenditures include veterinary services and outreach, excludud spay/ neuter and general administrative expenses.

Table 1-1

FY 12-13 data from communities	Annual Budget	Population	Annual Intake	Governance	Per Capita spending	Cost per Animal impounded	Animals handled per 1000	Live Release Rate%
Yolo County	\$1,932,924	204,118	3,632	County	\$9.47	\$532	17.8	88%
City of Chico	\$606,223	87,714	3,497	City	\$6.91	\$173	39.9	82%
City of Sacramento	\$3,136,007	475,516	9,450	City	\$6.59	\$332	19.9	53%
Placer SPCA	\$2,000,298	126,000	3,714	Private with city contract	\$15.88	\$539	29.5	80%
Sacramento County animal care	\$4,301,544	756,164	10,336	County	\$5.69	\$416	13.7	56%
SLO County Animal Services	\$2,409,096	274,804	4,034	County	\$8.77	\$597	14.7	83%
Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter	\$3,532,425	254,389	5,214	JPA	\$13.89	\$677	20.5	77%
Silicon Valley Animal Control	\$1,805,565	233,324	1,407	JPA	\$7.74	\$1,283	6.0	87%
SBCAS (FY 14)	\$3,893,318	435,697	6,868	County	\$8.94	\$567	15.8	86%



Santa Barbara

Department	Expenditures	Animal Intake	Field Calls
Field Services	\$399,064	n/a	3939
Animal Services	\$556,501	2237	n/a
Cost per unit	n/a	\$249	\$101
% of Total Budget	22%	13%	9%

Santa Maria

Department	Expenditures	Animal Intake	Field Calls
Field Services	\$483,769	n/a	7678
Animal Services	\$857,449	3159	n/a
Cost per unit	n/a	\$271	\$63
% of Total Budget	31%	11%	20%

Lompoc

Department	Expenditures	Animal Intake	Field Calls
Field Services	\$312,289	n/a	4306
Animal Services	\$412,337	1389	n/a
Cost per unit	n/a	\$297	\$73
% of Total Budget	17%	7%	10%

Inventory Management could result in some cost savings initiatives. While there were consolidated storage locations not all were kept under lock and key. Pharmaceuticals were maintained in a locked cabinet in Santa Maria and medicines distributed to the other sites. Some items seem to be carried at an excessively high inventory level. High value items like flea and tick control were not monitored as closely as they should be for employee theft. It was indicated that kitten food in Santa Maria was missing and now that is kept locked in an office. Safeguards for shrinkage were not in place.



The cost of a benefits package for the county employees is approximately 50-60% of salary. A well managed private business would strive to keep benefit package expenses under 27%, most government benefits costs estimates 35%.

Revenue

SBCAS has 2 major revenue streams. Revenue from licenses contribute 18% to total revenue and revenue from city contracts contribute 52%, revenue from grants contribute about 1%. SB90 reimburses some expenses incurred.

As stated in the Field Services section, license compliance statistics based on estimated dog population is approximately 27%. This does exceed the national average of 15-20% and it is an opportunity for additional revenue.

Each city that contracts with SBCAS pays a per capita use fee of \$7.11 for full (animal control and sheltering) and \$3.74 for animal control only (plus rabies test costs).

Recommendations:

- Undertake usage fee analysis to ensure city fee assessment is appropriate for services provided.
 - Track field calls per zip code
 - Track animal intakes per zip code
- Increase licensing renewals by 20% using robust marketing programs, www.petdata.com, Chameleon, and through website. Door to door canvassing is the most cost inefficient method. See City of Calgary's successful bid to increase license sales
- Increase budget by \$750,000 to cover additional essential positions
- Implement comprehensive inventory management system for additional cost savings
- Create additional account with MWI (Medical supply vendor) for the K9 Pals supplies and do a direct third party billing.
- Investigate additional grant funding to cover essential positions, or program development and increase funds from SB90 which may cover cost of Behavior and Training Coordinator.

Discussion

Despite seemingly adequate funding on a per capita basis and considering the enormous contributions of SBCAS internal and external partners SBCAS does not appear to be operating an efficient business model. Salary contributions exceed 70% of the budget, yet even with the volunteer hours the shelters and field services are seemingly understaffed or not working at maximum efficiency. Key positions to improve efficiency, animal care and public safety are needed, and cost savings initiatives can not be undertaken to fund these positions due to the narrow margin.

Thoughtful evaluation and assessment of fee determination should be undertaken to ensure that the cities that contract services with the county are being charged appropriately. Data available from the SBCAS



Chameleon software system can generate statistics indicating the animal relinquishment and field services call by zip code.

The variable expenses an animal shelter incur are directly related to the number of intakes. In the community of Santa Maria where the intake number is the highest, intakes could possibly be reduced by an ordinance change requiring spay/neuter. They are the only city in the county that has not adopted that resolution. Hence, one could argue that higher fees should be levied against them for non compliance resulting in an increased burden in that shelter.

Additional revenue streams should be investigated. Increasing license renewal is an ongoing effort that has resulted in only a 1.5% increase in licenses over 2011-12 despite spending over \$170,000 per year in salary and benefits to Responsible Pet ownership canvassers. The cost-benefit ratio of these positions should be evaluated. Outreach and marketing efforts could be expanded or outsourced to a third party.

<http://www.petdata.com>

Adding fee for service programs, such as low cost vaccine clinics, could be considered. However there was some indication that the County could not sell services for a profit, thus making this endeavor pointless.

The County will need to give thought to if they want, or should be, in the animal services business. Due to the high cost of labor of SBCAS there is a concern that a County operated shelter may not be the most efficient business model to serve the public and the animals in the community.

If the County is committed to providing Animal Services to the community, additional funding will likely be needed to add key positions.

Many options can be considered to provide cost effective animal services to the community:

1. Privatization of shelter services (all or part) who then engage in a city contract
2. Turning animal control over to local law enforcement
3. Joint Powers Authority with neighboring communities
4. Consolidation of services -
 - One shelter and central dispatch serving the entire county
 - Two shelters and one central dispatch serving the entire county

With the Lompoc shelter being 24 miles from Santa Maria, it is questionable whether this structure is needed. Lompoc only did 365 adoptions in FY 14, 15% of total adoptions, and 19% of annual intake.

There is an apparent expectation of the community to adequately fund SBCAS, yet with all governmental agencies, the cost of doing business is high. Alternative business models should be investigated to ascertain if County management and responsibility is the best model.

This report identifies many improvements that need to be made to correct a system that seems to be causing a great deal of distress within the community. Some of those improvements are operational and others capital and budgetary. The strategic plan should set the course for budgetary decisions.





SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*16. Marketing,
Public Relations,
Customer Service*

16. Marketing, Public Relations, Customer Service

16.1 WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA, MARKETING

Observations:

The website for the Santa Barbara Animal Services is found within the infrastructure of the County website and immediately populates in search engines results.

The content of the website and its navigation is user-friendly and identifies appropriate resources for visitors including disaster planning in both English and Spanish.

The website includes the contact information, hours of operations, and other relevant information for each shelter location.

The website uses PetHarbor which is the search engine for Chameleon database which allows visitors to search found animals and potential pets. Users might easily pass over the three hyperlinks to each individual shelter that are listed immediately beneath the Lost and Found title. It is not easily understood that the user must click on each shelter to review their inventory.

The website is clean and clear and within the branding parameters of the county website.

The website allows dog owners to renew dog licenses on line, a convenient feature that has enhanced licensing efforts. In 2014 web license sales were about 20% of overall efforts and has increased exponentially since it was launched. The animal services software system, Chameleon also allows a user interface that would enable people to file animal related complaints and post lost and found animals. This feature was not currently utilized. In addition there is no ability for volunteers to submit applications online.

A Twitter account was not found. Santa Barbara County Animal Services has a Facebook page with more than 1,300 followers. The Facebook page did demonstrate a varied content management strategy but engagement is low due to limited number of followers. The Facebook page is not listed on the County website so there is no cross promotion of the social media tool.

The Facebook page featured photos of pets being reunited with their owners, announcements about upcoming events, stories about adoptions, and photos of pets available for adoption. The content appears to be relevant.

The trend was to post a few times a week, which is sufficient; however, with a limited following of 1,300 in a community of more than nearly half a million, the postings aren't receiving significant impressions or engagement.

Active adoption promotions were not consistent, especially with long term residents.

Recommendations:

- Full utilization of Chameleon software integration to website
- Initiate monthly adoption promotions highlighting harder to adopt animals
- Increase social media engagement by employing best practices of content creation, increasing



constituencies, and cross promotion of social media on the County website.

- Issue an RFP for a local marketing agency or university program to prepare a strategic social media plan at no cost to the agency. This could easily be a community service project for a graduate level marketing student. Here is a link to a social media RFP example:
<http://istrategylabs.com/2013/10/example-social-media-agency-rfp/>

Discussion:

There are several free webinars available for social media found on the internet. Specifically in the animal welfare sector, ASPCAPRO.ORG offers several free best practices blogs and webinars that offer that can help increase constituencies and engagement. Social media functionality updates often which requires constant attention to environmental changes especially in Facebook. Here are several free webinars worth reviewing:

<http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2013-03-13-000000/trail-blazing-facebook-save-more-lives>

<http://aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-management-marketing-media/using-social-media-9-donts-and-giant-do>

<http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2015-01-13/engage-your-audience-social-media>

<http://aspcapro.org/webinar/2014-08-12/maximizing-facebook-mega-match-thon-success>

<http://aspcapro.org/blog/2013/08/02/social-media-201-increase-rto-using-twitter-and-chameleon>

Appendix 16.A Adoption Promotions Guide

Appendix 16.B Animal Farm, Best Practices for Marketing & Advertising

16.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA

Observations:

Animal Services follows the media inquiry policy of the Public Health department. Jan Glick serves as the primary spokesperson while Susan Klein-Rothschild is the Public Information Office for the Public Health Department. Stacy Silva drafts press releases and works with the media and oftentimes other staff is used for media depending on their expertise. Both Jan and Stacy have received media training through the county whereas the officers being interviewed are coached prior to the interview by Jan or Stacy.

This is difficult to ascertain as media clips aren't catalogued. The Director (Jan Glick) expressed concern about the agency's reputation in the community and she would like to improve the public's perception of the agency and further engage the community.

Over a period of six months, there were several press releases issued from the County regarding pet related issues. The most recent animal services related news release issued by the County was in to encourage adoptions during the holiday season. Prior to that release an October 15, 2014 release was distributed related to the increase in Parvovirus in northern Santa Barbara County. In September 2014, a news release was issued about October being National Pit Bull awareness month. Earlier in September, a joint adoption promotion between BUNSand Santa Barbara animal services was issued. Another press release was issued in early September regarding the overcrowding in the Santa Barbara animal shelters calling for citizens to "Don't Shop, Adopt" adoption. On August 27th, a public meeting was held to garner comment on the new



adoption partner program agreement policy. Earlier in August, a press release regarding the importance of spay/neuter was issued. In July, a news release about a License/Microchip/Vaccinate clinic being held in Goleta was also issued. There was a four-month gap between the March press release regarding dog bite prevention and pet safety.

Each Wednesday, a vaccination clinic is held at the Santa Maria shelter that offers vaccinations, licensing, flea treatment, worming, and microchips. This information is found on the County website but it is unclear that you need to click on the photo which then opens up to another page explaining the vaccination clinic. This needs to be remedied as most users won't understand to click on the photo of the flyer.

Aside from the vaccination/license/microchip clinics, there doesn't seem to be any additional programming. Some of this is due to the lack of resources and opportunities.

This is a collaborative effort between Jan Glick, the Director, and Stacy Silva, the community outreach coordinator.

Recommendations:

- Issue an RFP for a marketing agency to provide a pro bono integrated marketing plan. Develop an annual marketing and community outreach plan that includes an integrated mix of publicity, social media, community events, adoption promotions, and other deliverables. A comprehensive marketing plan can also be prepared by a college-level class from a community college or university as a class project that will serve as portfolio-building for the students.
- Conduct a job audit including a scope of service analysis for the Community Outreach position to determine objectives, benchmarks and priorities based that are within realistic deliverables based on the volume of animals and volunteers.

Discussion:

With multiple volunteer organizations affiliated with the department, the agency brand is stifled and confusing to the public. Upon entry into the Santa Barbara facility, there is competing signage which further exacerbates confusion for citizens. A marketing plan can establish branding parameters and graphic standards to help enhance visibility and a consistent identity.

16.3 COMMUNITY RELATIONS

GENERAL OVERVIEW

A desire and intent to work with the community through collaboration and partnership is evident through the current systems and structures in place at the agency. However, many of the structures have been implemented in reaction to complaints or concerns from citizens rather than a comprehensive strategic planning process. There has been no formal recent market research conducted to ascertain general public perceptions of the agency. There is a long history of strained relationships between various community groups and the agency. Interviews of current employees, volunteers, and community group members indicated a history of misunderstanding, unrealistic expectations, and mixed messages from various internal and external stakeholders.



Without a strategic marketing communications and community engagement plan, it becomes difficult to determine areas of priority and focus for the agency leading to reactionary efforts. The Community Relations programming is under supported and overburdened with one Community Outreach Coordinator position responsible for multiple programs including foster care, adoption partner relations, animal transfers and transport operations, volunteer program oversight, media relations, social media management, community event programs, and other deliverables that exceed the realistic scope of one position for a three campus agency. A new budget allocation for a second Community Outreach Coordinator was approved the previous fiscal year for the Santa Barbara shelter location but staffing the position has proven difficult given that at least two employees resigned their positions within months of beginning the position.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Observations:

There are several external relationships and strategic partnerships associated with the agency specifically affiliated with the Santa Barbara and Lompoc campuses including ASAP, BUNS, K-9 Pals, DAWG, and CAPA. Each of these affiliated groups are associated with the agency in some type of operational capacity whether it be providing supplemental veterinary care to adoption of animals to volunteer support to resource assistance. Given the investment these groups have made in the agency over the years, speaking with representatives and members was prioritized during the onsite evaluation. Additional feedback was solicited via email as well through in-person interviews. Feedback from local humane societies and other humane organizations was also vital to capturing stakeholder concerns.

Stakeholder feedback revealed overall dissatisfaction with the management of animal services. Concerns expressed ranged from under-skilled staff providing poor customer service to a perception of apathy from the employees to an environment of permissible bullying from volunteers. Other issues raised included criticism of the veterinary program and how animals were receiving resources at the different shelters. There was a consensus among the stakeholders that the Lompoc shelter requires the greatest level of resources given the community served yet continues to receive limited staffing and resources. There are significant feelings of distrust between affiliated groups and the agency staff. Examples of communication breakdown, hostility, and dismissiveness from staff were shared during the stakeholder meeting. Volunteers feel unappreciated and resented in addition to feeling run-off by staff members. During the stakeholder meeting, attendees conveyed their belief that staff did not have the appropriate training or tools to do their jobs. When asked how to best rectify the situation, the overwhelming recommendation was to outsource the animal sheltering program to nonprofit groups better suited to provide animal welfare services.

Interviews with staff also revealed a significant level of distrust and conflict between the affiliated groups. Several employees felt that political influencers led policy and procedural decisions rather than having a supportive and appropriate program infrastructure. Each affiliated group provides specific assistance for a certain area which impacts operational programming differently at each campus resulting in erosion of program integrity and confusion between staff members, the public, and leadership. As differing levels of county management engage in the operational functions and decision-making – including euthanasia



approvals – a message of distrust and lack of confidence is repeatedly relayed to the staff. Having a responsive and transparent relationship with constituencies is good practice for public officials; however, when decisions are made in reactionary mode and administration is usurped from the program managers, the integrity the program is lost and becomes dysfunctional.

Feedback from other area shelters and organizations relayed a lack of trust that the agency is able to function at appropriate service capacity. It was conveyed through interviews that historically subversive actions from county administration as well as public officials has created a systemic dysfunction that has contributed to program enervation. Until the systemic issues are resolved and public policy administration is returned to the personnel responsible for delivery, the cycle will continue.

There were numerous stories citing historical and current concerns. Each person interviewed shared a personal experience they felt demonstrated their lack of confidence in the agency's ability to provide a program of quality animal care. Examples included dissatisfaction with the veterinary care administered, the communication inconsistencies between internal and external parties, the lack of responsiveness from employees and the inconsistencies in animal care and volunteer management.

Each interview resulted in complaints and significant disappointment regarding the relationship and the agency program resulting in a deduction that these relationships require major repair or severance.

It does not appear that conflict resolution solutions have been recently employed or have been effective to resolving long-term issues, perceptions, and relationships.

The relationships between the agency and outside partner groups are at best inefficient and at worst an egregious example of dysfunctional operations leading to compromised animal care and health and mismanaged public health policy. The stated mission of Santa Barbara Animal Services is to establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment between animals and humans in Santa Barbara County. When the professionals charged with administering that public health policy are required to seek permission or approval from outside volunteer groups who have been allowed to influence euthanasia decisions, veterinary care, behavior evaluation, and other program specifics, a lack of professional accountability develops and program efficacy is compromised. When volunteers or representatives from the associated groups seek and receive policy and protocol exceptions from county management above the Animal Services Director level, the operating decisions made by the county animal services personnel are undermined. It is the opinion of the American Humane Association evaluation team that a repeated pattern of undermining the staff responsible for administering the county policies has led to an environment of dysfunction and debilitation that should be immediately rectified.

Recommendations:

The need of a third party facilitator is highly recommended before embarking on the following suggestions.

- In order to regain program integrity and appropriate administrative oversight, the agency should evaluate all partnerships and create a standard Memorandum of Understanding or a contract that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the agency and the partner organization. These MOUs and/or contracts should be with the entire agency and not campus specific as unique deliverables to each campus leads to inconsistencies in policy administration and protocols



resulting in eroded program consistency. The MOUs and/or contracts need to be consistent and applicable to each partner to bring continuity of expectations and deliverables. The roles and responsibilities should be very clear and operational boundaries should be put in place immediately. For instance: Staff members should not have to seek outside approval from volunteers or organizations regarding the health and welfare of the animals in custody of Santa Barbara Animal Services. Volunteers or outside groups should have no decision-making authority over the health, behavior assessment, care, or final disposition of any animal in custody of Santa Barbara Animal Services.

- As a best practice for transparency and public accountability, volunteer or adoption partner organizations should have access to and receive full disclosures regarding the health and temperament of the animals available for transfer. Partnership groups should be able to make decisions within parameters of their own operational protocols as to whether or not they wish to transfer the animal into their custody. There should be no barriers to allowing adoption partners or rescue groups from transferring an animal from the custody of Santa Barbara Animal Services. This clarity of custody will enable more efficient decision making for health and behavior treatment.
- A veterinary care program should be appropriately funded by Santa Barbara County to ensure that the personnel, medicine, and necessary supplies are available to administer a minimum level of care by state standards. If Santa Barbara County cannot allocate funding for a veterinary medical team to oversee the health and care of animals at each shelter, animals exhibiting any type of medical issue, infection, or illness should be transferred out to a rescue group or partnership organization who can afford the medical care for the animal. More specific recommendations regarding an appropriate veterinary program are found within this report.
- Remove the volunteer seat from the Care and Evaluation Committee so that lifesaving pathways can be identified by staff. Once a professional assessment has been conducted, the findings can be shared with outside rescue groups who can choose to take custody of the animal and provide lifesaving resources.
- Set performance standards for each employee position, identify qualifications and criteria for hiring, provide training for the employee, give the employee tools necessary to complete the job, and provide feedback on performance that leads to a culture of accountability.

Discussion:

The adversarial relationships between volunteers, outside groups, and the staff at the agency are exacerbated by the allowance of volunteers playing a role in operational decisions. Operational decisions must be made by staff who are experienced, trained, and trusted to fulfill the mandates of public health policy in animal services. Removing the ability for staff to make decisions or placing staff in a position where their decision are continually questioned by volunteers is an unrealistic burden that leads to lack of accountability and policy and protocol inconsistencies.



16.4 CLIENT RELATIONS

HOURS OF OPERATION

Observations:

For all business services: Santa Barbara Shelter Hours were Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Lompac Shelter Hours were Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. (Closed for lunch 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.) and Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Santa Maria Shelter Hours were Monday through Friday 10 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. All shelters were closed on Sunday.

Note: Staff members were on site during business hours and arrived for early morning staff meetings at each facility; however, none of the three shelters have a time clock to track non-exempt employee hours which leads to discrepancies in accuracy. For example, members of the evaluation team witnessed a discussion between a supervisor and an employee regarding time actually worked.

Recommendations:

- Purchase, install, and implement appropriate employee time tracking device (time clock).
- Extend evening hours 2 days a week. Open later on those days
- Open Sundays

Discussion:

While visiting one of the shelters, the evaluation team observed an employee justifying to a supervisor time actually worked to explain a discrepancy between what the supervisor had noted and what the employee believed was correct. Without accurate time logs for docking in and out, the burden is placed on the employee and the supervisor to prove start/end times and hours actually worked. While time clocks are not required under FLSA (Fair Standards Labor Act), accurately tracking employee time consistently throughout each shelter and will help identify trends, provide better record keeping for wage/labor concerns, maintain sick time/vacation/hours worked more accurately for payroll purposes. This will also eliminate a potentially adversarial conversation between supervisors and employees thereby increasing employee morale. This is an article from the Small Business Chronicle that outlines the pros and cons of using time clock:

<http://smallbusiness.chron.com/pros-cons-time-clock-workplace-11026.html>

With most citizens working traditional hours in the community, offering citizens services that are more aligned with retail such as closing at 7 p.m. rather than 4:45 allows opportunity for higher or faster reclaim and adoption rates. Weekend hours will increase adoptions. Closing for an hour at lunch at the Lompoc Shelter also places a barrier for citizens to retrieve their lost pet or view adoptable animals if they are coming on their lunch hour. Many animal shelters across the nation have at least one evening of extending hours until 7 p.m. to accommodate citizens with traditional work schedules

http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph/acc/programs/shelter_services/shelter_services_hours.asp



16.5 CUSTOMER SERVICE

Observations:

The interactions observed at all three campuses between staff and customers were appropriate and respectful. Employees were also polite and appreciative with each other during observed interactions.

Activities that increase customer perception, such as call back after adoptions, were not routinely done. No client satisfaction surveys have been conducted, though this is a function of the Chameleon Software system. In depth owner surrender counseling was not consistent.

Santa Barbara

On Monday, January 12, 2015, an employee was responsible for working the front desk and answering incoming phone calls. The observed employee was pleasant, informative, and worked to solve problems for the callers. The employee was the only one providing customer service at the front desk and on the phone which was challenging with diverted attention.

Santa Maria

On Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at 2:20 p.m. an employee returned a phone call to a person interested in adopting a border collie. His tone was pleasant, polite, and guest-centric while he left the customer a message on their voicemail. He addressed their question/interest and provided a call back phone number.

During another customer interaction, an employee spoke with an interested adopter who rented their home. He asked whether the landlord was aware of her interest in adopting. He then explained how he needed to call the landlord to make sure it was okay for her to adopt. The employee did a nice job of connecting with the customer and made his interaction with her personable. He then placed a call to the landlord. The employee explained that she was the first applicant at this point pending the landlord returning the call and issuing approval. He thanked the citizen for coming down.

Lompoc

On Wednesday, January 14, 2015, an employee was observed assisting a citizen who came to find their lost dog, a Chihuahua in kennel #22. He was extremely patient and provided her with pertinent information, counseled her about microchipping (Home Again microchip), and told her that this was the second time the dog had been brought to the shelter. He explained that it was going to cost \$83 for Return To Owner fees and explained each additional day was \$13. The employee then carried the dog out to the front lobby reunited the citizen with the dog. He also asked her how the dog was escaping and offered advice regarding how to keep the dog from escaping the fence. The employee was calm, professional, and thorough with his customer service.

Recommendations:

- Provide a comprehensive customer service training to all staff this is to include owner surrender counseling.
- Establish post-adoption call back system



- Use Chameleon software system and an online survey through the website, to survey patrons, post adoption
- Set a customer service benchmark for excellence and post results on line

Discussion:

American Humane conducted a community stakeholder and volunteer survey which overall had good things to say about the agencies customer service and employee demeanor. However, it is too easy to get overshadowed by those more outspoken nay-sayers that can unduly influence public perception. By routinely surveying your patrons you can get a more accurate reflection of the job you are doing for the community.

An excellent resource for customer service training is Animal Friendly - Customer Smart by Jan Elster and can be ordered on line at <http://www.shelterskills.com>

Appendix 16.C Adoption Counseling Guide



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
ANIMAL SERVICES

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

American Humane Association

*17. Information
Technology*

17. Information Technology

17.1 TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Observations:

Santa Barbara

An after-hours voice mail message was recorded instructing the caller on the hours of operations and directions for the animal shelter; however, there were no instructions on how to handle an emergency veterinary situation with an owned or lost pet.

Santa Maria

An automated message offers options for the caller.

Lompoc

An outgoing message in both Spanish and English outlined hours and options for callers.

If there is a PA system, it was not in use at any of the facilities that could be heard easily. Employees used walkie-talkies to communicate throughout buildings.

Recommendations:

- Provide directions for emergency veterinary care for individuals calling about a found animal during closed hours.
- Consistency in messaging that includes Spanish at all locations.

Discussion:

Including directions for citizens when they've found a lost pet after normal business hours will help mitigate confusion and direct citizens accordingly. Providing a bilingual message is conscientious to the demographics of the county.

17.2 COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT

Observations:

Laptops utilized in the field are outdated. Models running Chameleon on 3G networks function poorly and often drop connection or freeze requiring a full system reboot that may take 30 minutes or longer via remote connection. In some areas, data connectivity is non-existent rendering the laptops useless for network access. One laptop was observed running on a 4G network. The ACO noted that this unit seldom failed and was able to function in many areas where other 3G units would not respond.

The Public Health department has IT support that services over 500 people. One person in the IT department is assigned to Chameleon, the shelter management software system. One of the concerns expressed from interviewed staff was the slow turn-around time for Chameleon requests being processed. For example, one employee explained that a request for Chameleon support was made over a year ago but that request has not yet been fulfilled.



Supervisors were not aware of when the server is backed up but it is located at the Public Health department. Chameleon has been in use since 2000.

Recommendations:

- Replace existing ToughBooks with updated models operating on 4G network or consider transitioning to a similar mobile platform such as a Microsoft Surface Tablet.

Determine a routine Chameleon support/helpdesk schedule that enables the staff to have the tools and updates necessary to successfully use the animal inventory database software.

Discussion:

Being able to use the software program effectively and with updates will allow for more efficient animal inventory. In case the county doesn't have a ticketing systems, there are free helpdesk management tools available for organizations and companies to use such as Spiceworks that will help manage and prioritize requests so that needs are met for employees encountering IT issues. Learn more about Spiceworks here: <http://www.spiceworks.com/>

