

SPCA of Westchester
24/7 Hotline (914) 941-7797
Dedicated enforcement staff
To Strictly Enforce Animal Cruelty Laws

Humane Law Enforcement Initiative
County's Only Humane Law Enforcement Agency Moves
To Strictly Enforce Animal Cruelty Laws

The HLE department responds seven days a week to calls placed to the SPCA of Westchester's 24-hour hotline, **(914) 941-7797**. Anyone who suspects that a pet or other animal in Westchester County is being abused or neglected is advised to report what they have seen to one of the operators standing by, who will then immediately relay the report to the HLE Department. All calls are confidential, and callers can choose to remain anonymous.

SPCA of Westchester new 24/7 expanded phone line toll-free for reporting suspected animal cruelty anywhere in Westchester County

The SPCA of Westchester has responsibility countywide in Westchester for:

- receiving information about suspect animal cruelty (dogs, cats, horses, pets, strays, works animals and any type of animal) for the entire Westchester County area of New York;
 - investigating reported animal cruelty;
 - enforcing animal cruelty laws.
- receiving information about suspect animal cruelty (dogs, cats, horses, pets, strays, works animals and any type of animal) for the entire Westchester County area of New York;

BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NY (September 2006) – The SPCA of Westchester announced that it is unveiling an enhanced comprehensive Humane Law Enforcement program to save animals from abusive situations in Westchester County. As the only private agency in the county mandated by New York State to enforce animal cruelty laws, this proactive effort to prosecute animal abuse will position the SPCA at the forefront of animal protection in the region.

Key elements of the initiative include:

- A full time Chief of Humane Law Enforcement, supported by a staff of eight investigators.
- A 24/7 hotline for reporting suspected animal abuse or neglect.
- An increased presence of uniformed Humane Law Enforcement officers patrolling Westchester County.

The SPCA's new Humane Law Enforcement (HLE) Division investigates suspected animal cruelty throughout Westchester County, including complaints of animal cruelty, pet shop investigations, and seizure of animals in jeopardy. Under New York State's

Agriculture and Market Act, Article 26, the SPCA of Westchester is authorized to enforce the animal cruelty statutes. Responses can vary from a simple "Notice to Comply" with a subsequent follow-up visit, to arrests for misdemeanors and felonies. The HLE Division is working cooperatively with the Westchester County District Attorney's Office in prosecuting cases.

Animal cruelty, as defined in New York State, is the intentional effort to hurt or kill pets and other companion animals (as opposed to wildlife) or the failure to provide adequate food, water, shelter or necessary care.

The Humane Law Enforcement Agents at the SPCA have police powers under the specific legal statutes of the State's Agriculture and Market Laws. Humane Officers can seize pets from abusive environments and arrest owners if they believe the pet to be in grave danger.

More information about the SPCA of Westchester including its Humane Law Enforcement Department; volunteer opportunities such as the Animal Foster Care Program; dogs and cats available for pet adoptions, is at www.sPCA914.org, or you can call **(914) 941-2894**.

Ken Ross is the Chief of the Humane Law Enforcement Department at the SPCA.