
Animal Services and Rabies Control Program Cluster

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Goal:

To promote and support a harmonious environment where humans and animals can co-exist free from conditions that adversely affect their health and safety.

Selected Animal Services Indicators:

Approximately 2,000 animal bite incidents are investigated each year. This figure includes bites from all domestic and wild animals. There were 386 dog bites reported to Toronto Public Health in 2003. All animals that are involved in a bite incident are quarantined by Animal Services.

Selected Animal Services Activities:

Toronto Animal Services operates six Animal Shelters, and is responsible for sheltering animals that are lost or surrendered by owners or are available for adoption to new homes. The newest Animal Shelter opened June 5, 2003 at Exhibition Place. Toronto Animal Services provides:

- 24-hour emergency response to calls for stray animals that are injured, in distress, or are jeopardizing the safety of the public;
- Public education programs with a focus on rabies and dog bite prevention to school-aged children;
- Dog and cat registration and identification;
- Dog and cat sterilization at our spay/neuter clinics;
- Promotion of responsible pet ownership through the enforcement of the Municipal Code, Chapter 349, the Dog Owner's Liability Act and other animal related laws;
- Adoption of dogs, cats and other companion animals into life-long caring homes;
- Euthanasia and cremation services for owned animals where the animal is not adoptable; and
- Information on how to live in harmony with wildlife in an urban setting, including long-term deterrent strategies for dealing with nuisance wildlife.



In 2003, there were:

- Approximately 2,500 animals adopted from the six animal centres;
- Over 66,000 calls received per year at the 24-hour emergency response line (416-338-PAWS), which accepts calls about animals that are injured, in distress, or jeopardizing the safety of the public;
- 194 classroom education sessions; and
- 31 days of special events.

Pet Adoption. Animal Services has dogs, cats and other furry and winged animals up for adoption at each of six Animal Centres. The animals are vaccinated, dewormed and microchipped, before they are adopted. Adoptions also include refundable certificates towards sterilization, rabies vaccination and a veterinary health check. Prospective pet owners complete an Adoption Questionnaire designed to assist staff in finding the right match. Available pets can be viewed at www.toronto.ca/animal_services.

Pet Identification: It is estimated that one-third of all cats and dogs will be lost at least once in their lifetime. To ensure these pets are returned safely, all cats and dogs must be registered with the city's Animal Services and wear an issued tag. Additionally, if the pet is microchipped and sterilized, the registration fee is reduced from \$50 to \$10 per year. All cats and dogs found by Animal Services, where possible, get a free ride home if they are wearing a current City of Toronto tag. This registration is mandatory under Municipal Code 349.

Rabies is a contagious disease that affects the nervous system in warm-blooded animals, including humans. In most cases the main carriers of rabies are foxes, skunks, raccoons, and bats. The rabies virus is transmitted by saliva from an infected animal's bite, scratch or lick. Some signs of rabid animals may include loss of fear, restless and aggressive behaviour, and depression. Although there is no cure for rabies, prevention measures are available. TPH promotes keeping pets under direct supervision, reporting stray or sick animals to Animal Services and always keeping pet vaccinations up-to-date.

Pets and Pucks. Toronto Animal Services (TAS) and the Toronto Roadrunners Hockey Club of the American Hockey League partnered to promote the adoption of animals from TAS animal shelters. Pets from the South Animal Centre were featured for adoption at last season's hockey games. The new Ricoh Coliseum and the South Animal Centre are both located on the grounds of Exhibition Place. The adopt-a-pet program occurred during the 2003/2004 season whenever the Roadrunners played the Hamilton Bulldogs. Approximately 39 animals were adopted from the South Region during the Pets for Pucks program from Nov 26th, 2003 to April 1, 2004.