

HELPING ANIMALS IN TROUBLE



What would you do if you saw someone kicking a dog? **We hope you would immediately tell a parent or teacher!** They would then call the BC SPCA. It's against the law to hurt animals on purpose or allow them to suffer.

SUPERHEROES FOR ANIMALS

The BC SPCA are the police for animals. SPCA officers, called **Special Provincial Constables**, are trained to investigate cases of animal cruelty. Each year, the BC SPCA gets more than 10,000 calls from members of the public reporting animal cruelty.

WHAT EXACTLY IS ANIMAL CRUELTY?

Animal cruelty is when someone causes harm to an animal or fails to provide proper care. **The result is animal suffering.** There are three typical situations when the SPCA is called.

1. ANIMAL NEGLECT

Neglect is when someone isn't providing proper care. Maybe a cat is infested with parasites like fleas, ticks or worms. A badly matted dog spends day after day alone outside without proper shelter. **Cruelty officers explain what needs to be done to fix the problem.** The caregiver is given a set date to correct the situation. If not corrected, the person could have their animals taken away and be charged with animal cruelty. Neglect is the most common type of animal cruelty.

2. ANIMAL HOARDING

Some people take in so many pets – often cats – that they can't keep up with their care. They may have more than 100 cats in their house. Sadly, in the worst cases, **caregivers can't even tell their animals are sick, hurt or starving.** Cruelty officers work with them to get the animals the

help they need. In these cases, both the animals and the caregivers need help. People who collect animals are called animal hoarders, which is a mental illness.

3. ANIMAL ABUSE

The most disturbing animal cruelty is when people harm animals on purpose. This is called **intentional animal cruelty**. Maybe someone loses their temper and kicks a dog. Perhaps a person shoots a defenceless cat with a pellet gun. Animal cruelty can even occur when someone constantly yells at a dog or violently jerks a choke chain, causing pain or injury. **Cruelty can be emotional abuse (yelling) or painful (physical abuse).** Thankfully, there are way fewer cases of intentional cruelty than neglect.



RESPONDING TO CRUELTY CALLS

Calling the BC SPCA cruelty hotline – **1-855-622-7722** – anywhere in B.C. gets animals the help they need. Operators get a description of the situation and location. A cruelty officer is sent to investigate.

CARE AND RE-HOMING

Seized and surrendered animals get immediate veterinary care. Then SPCA staff and volunteers work with the animals to **rebuild their trust in people**. When they're ready, they are adopted into loving families.



YOUR ACTIONS!

1. Make sure your parents and teacher have the BC SPCA animal cruelty hotline number in their phones: **1-855-622-7722**.
2. **Speak for animals!** If you see someone hurting an animal (including wildlife), report the incident to a parent or teacher.



PROVIDING THE FIVE FREEDOMS

The BC SPCA uses the **Five Freedoms of animal care** as a checklist of what all animals need:

- ✓ **1. Freedom from hunger and thirst...** by providing fresh water and a proper diet.
- ✓ **2. Freedom from pain, injury and disease...** by promptly taking animals to the vet when sick or hurt.
- ✓ **3. Freedom from distress...** by not allowing animals to suffer, be yelled at or be stressed most of their lives.
- ✓ **4. Freedom from discomfort...** by making sure animals have a warm, comfortable place to live and sleep.
- ✓ **5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being...** by allowing animals to play, groom, exercise and thrive in your care – to live happy lives!

