

**217 ANIMAL COMPLAINTS (Dogs - Cats & Others)**

Traditionally the Breckenridge Police have been the primary enforcers for this public nuisance call. City ordinance provides various regulations to cover domestic and wild animal situations. The majority of animal problems will most likely involve dogs.

Except in a few cases the so called "dog call" is a low priority call. The officer assigned to a vicious animal call, however, will respond quickly. Cases involving dog bites and the potential search for, the missing animal will not be delayed. The City Ordinance covers the procedure and authority for handling the impoundment of this type animal.

Violations of the animal ordinance are directed to the head of the household. This precludes the need for the officer to contact the same person at the residence for a violation when the dog returns to the owners home and nobody is there or just children are at home. It has been found that very often the officer, will talk to a different person each time that h(goes to the same residence. The officer must, however, contact someone at some time to give the warning or issue the citation. This can be done later, by phone if nobody is at home when the officer, is at the residence. If animals cannot be secured at their residence they should be taken to the pound. Animals picked up with tags and the owner identified but cannot be immediately contacted to take charge of their pet will be taken to the pound and notice sent.

A warning policy requires good record keeping to be uniform and effective. The officer must get the name of the head of -the household on all warning situations. This information is to be recorded on the ICP so that when entry is made into the files the warnings can be counted. When records indicate 3 warnings for a dog ordinance violation the owner should be cited. The most common type of violation will be for an unlicensed dog or dog running at large. These warnings do not have to be for the same violation as the violation for which the citation is finally issued. Also an officer should treat each call or incident as a warning. (i.e. warning for, several violations of the animal ordinance on the same call should be treated as one warning to take care of the problem).

Owners who call the Department and advise us of a problem and request our, assistance will not normally be warned or cited. Many dogs or cats will not respond to commands of police. If attempts at capture are unsuccessful they should be followed, if time permits, to determine where they live.

Since officers are not dressed or equipped to handle calls requiring the capture of a wild or, uncooperative animal, the owner, if known, should be contacted to retrieve his animal. Should it be necessary to tranquilize an animal then veterinarian should be contacted for assistance.

Animals found running at large without identity tags will be impounded at the Dakota Veterinary Clinic, Wahpeton. No animals will be impounded without an officer's approval. The necessary impound notice will be completed at the officer and sent to the owner, if known. When animals are taken to the Clinic after hours a note must be left advising the staff of when the animal was brought in and where (city) the animal was picked up. When the Clinic is open for business the impounding officer will complete the appropriate portion of the log for the City.

In cases where animals elude capture or are wild, the "live trap" should be utilized. This device can be placed in the problem area and locked to prevent theft. The complainant will many times be able to monitor the trap and notify police when an animal is caught. Procedures for the handling of Impounded Animals at the approved boarding facility for the Breckenridge Police Department have been established by the Chief and City Clerk. They are attached to these guidelines.

**PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING IMPOUNDED ANIMALS**

For the Breckenridge Police Department

1. No Dog may be released unless a dog license has been obtained and the necessary vaccination shots administered. (See Article I, Section 4)
2. No dog may be released to anyone unless the boarding fee has been paid. Persons who refuse will be cited for violation that required the impoundment. The least amount of bail for this ordinance violation is \$27.00 payable only at the Police Department or County Court.
3. No dog may be released unless the Impound fee has been paid. (See article I, Section 15)
4. If pound personnel recognize an animal and know the owner, the Police must be contacted as soon as possible and be provided with that information. Pound personnel may contact the owner and advise them of the impoundment. The Police are required to notify the owner if the dog is identified. The license is the only positive form of identification recognized by Police.  
  
Also owners of dogs that have been recorded as impounded more than once in a six month period will be required to report to the Police Department and post bail for violation of the City Ordinance. This must be done prior to the release of the dog to the owner. Memory and past logs will be your only resource to make this determination. The owner will use his copy of the citation as proof that he has contacted the Police and can now pick up his dog. (See Article I, Section 16)
5. Animals may be acquired from personnel at the pound in lieu of euthanasiation. This may be done if the boarding fee that would normally be billed to the City is collected from the new owner. If four days of impounding are completed , shots and License are purchased for the dogs going to reside in Breckenridge. (See Article I, Section 16)
6. Dogs that are not claimed or acquired may be destroyed on the fifth day excluding Sunday and Holidays. For the purpose of counting days, we do not count the day the dog is picked up and impounded. Begin with midnight the day of impounding and allow -four, full days. (See Article I, Section 13). The pound personnel may wish to utilize the radio and newspaper, to notify the Public of lost animals in custody.
7. The pound personnel must keep an impoundment log of all animals brought in by authorities to show the disposition of animals impounded. This form will be approved by the Chief and furnished to the pound by the Police. The completed log or copy will be sent to the Police at the end of each month showing the pound activity and money collected. Money collected for impounding will be sent to the City Clerk along with a bill for any unpaid boarding and euthanasiation required.
8. Fees, penalties and other, costs are noted in the most recently dated pound approval letter or file.