

Signs of Animal Cruelty

By Mathew B. Tully

I have noticed that it has become extremely common to see stories about acts of animal cruelty in the news, with reports appearing almost every day. Given this alarming trend, we thought it would be helpful to do a show explaining what exactly constitutes as animal cruelty and what organizations are out there protecting those who cannot speak for themselves.

The definition of animal cruelty is any unnecessary infliction of physical pain, suffering or harm to an animal beyond normal discipline. Examples of acts of cruelty could be denying your animal proper veterinary care, leaving your pet in the sun for extended periods of time without adequate shelter, or withholding food and water. One common mistake I've seen pet owners make is leaving their pet in the car in high temperatures. It takes only a matter of minutes for temperatures to rise to sweltering degrees, and if something were to happen you could be charged with a Class A misdemeanor and be banned from owning animals for three to five years.

Check this out to find more information on New York State animal cruelty laws

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Detecting and reporting acts of cruelty are the two most important steps in bringing animal cruelty to an end. Your local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) or humane society will have an emergency hotline- a number to call to make a complaint- which Peace Officers will then investigate. Because police departments are swamped as it is, SPCA Peace Officers take on the role of a nonprofit law organization whose main mission is to help animals.

Visit the Schenectady County SPCA website

to learn more on how to detect and report acts of cruelty.

On a lighter note, we also got the chance to discuss the increasingly popular trend of setting up trusts for your pet. The most famous example is that of Leona Helmsley leaving over \$10 million to her dog. She even went as far as to arrange for grief counseling for the pet! While some find this utterly ridiculous, many animal lovers are taking steps to ensure their pet will be taken care of when they are no longer around, just as they would with any other family member.