



LOUISIANA ANIMAL  
WELFARE COMMISSION

*Governor's Office of Community Programs*

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P.O. Box 66072, Baton Rouge, LA 70896

(504) 568-8315

September 2, 2014

Parish President Patricia Brister and Parish Council  
St. Tammany Parish Government

Dear Ms. Brister and Council,

The LAWC inspection team performed an inspection of the St. Tammany Parish Animal Shelter on July 8, 2014. The St. Tammany Parish Animal Shelter is an excellent facility that performs an exemplary job in its mission to serve your parish and its people. The structure is expansive, yet functional and well maintained. Many standard operating procedures are recorded in written policies; records are strictly maintained and readily available for review. In general, animals appear to be adequately cared for and are housed under conditions that promote health and hygiene. Cages and other enclosures are easily sanitized and of sufficient durability to provide a secure and healthy environment. The facility's procedures regarding cleaning are excellent. Adequate ventilation and protection against the elements are provided to all animals. The shelter complies with state requirements for animal population control.

Please see the attached Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission Inspection Form. You will see that the inspection identified several minor departures from the state standards, none of which presently affect the health and welfare of the animals. Two major violations were identified. One major violation of LAWC recommendations, a recommendation by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that animal contact personnel be vaccinated against rabies, was observed. CDC recommends that animal control personnel receive pre-exposure rabies prophylaxis. The vaccine regimen is comparatively expensive and many shelters only administer vaccinations to workers who have been employed for some specified duration (usually 6 months to one year). St. Tammany Parish Animal Services should pursue a goal of administering pre-exposure prophylaxis to animal contact shelter employees who complete a probationary tenure of work. Workers who refuse vaccination should sign a release of responsibility, holding the shelter harmless should a rabies exposure occur. Other major problems are the holes in the floors present in hallways and animal holding areas, and the conditions in the cat isolation facility. These problems should be corrected as soon as possible.

Thank you for permitting LAWC to tour and examine your facility. Should you have any questions for the commission, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Balsamo, DVM, MPH&TM  
Vice-chair, Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission  
State Public Health Veterinarian

Attachment:  
LAWC Inspection Form

*...to ensure and promote the proper treatment and well-being of animals*

Name of shelter: St. Tammany Parish Animal Services Shelter	Contact person: Melisa Sullivan Piwetz
Phone: 985-871-4500	Email address: msullivan@stp.gov.org

Physical address: 31078 Highway 36  
Lacombe, LA 70445

Name of inspector:  
Dr. Gary Balsamo, Stare PH veterinarian, Dr. Wendy Wolfson,  
LSU Shelter Improvement Program, Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood,  
LAWC, Derecka Alexander, LSU School of Public Health

Date of inspection: July 8, 2014

Initial  Re-inspection

Critical	Major	Minor		Category
				<b>A. Animal euthanasia</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>B. Management</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	B20,21	Animal contact personnel should be vaccinated (recommendations from CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>C. Records</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>D. General structure</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D4	holes in impervious floor surfaces do not permit effective disinfection and should be repaired a.s.a.p.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D7, K2	rabies isolation should be separated from other areas and should be demarcated in an apparent manner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D23	Change air conditioning filters more frequently (suggest weekly) in animal holding areas.
				<b>E. Water and electric power</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E3	The facility lacks a sufficient number of sinks in animal housing areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>F. Waste disposal</b>
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				<b>G. Storage</b>

			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>H. Primary Enclosures</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>I. Feeding and watering</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>J. Pest control</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	J1	Small amounts of rodent feces were found in the room where food is stored. Pest contractor should be notified.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	J1	Unkempt area of yard with old damaged cages should be cleaned up, may provide rodent harborage.
			<b>K. Rabies quarantine</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K2,K3	Signs should be obvious on kennel doors and cages where rabies quarantine animals are held.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>L. Infection control and rabies vaccination requirements</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	L3	Cat isolation cages do not provide barriers laterally or horizontally to the spread of potentially infectious materials. Cages should not be stacked.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<b>M. Population control</b>	
			Citation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>Additional comments:</p> <p>This is an excellent facility, one of the best in the state. Additional recommendations include: Improve lighting in euthanasia room, provide mop buckets for each ward to prevent cross contamination, provide cooling or improved ventilation to food storage area. The number of sinks in animal housing areas is inadequate. Should funds become available, sinks should be present in animal holding areas. Employees should not wear clothing that "drags" on the floor. This interferes with effective sanitation and may provide a means to spread infection throughout the facility.</p>				
<p>Rating: Below standards <input type="checkbox"/> Meets standards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exceeds standards <input type="checkbox"/></p>				