



Sheridan Police Department
Policies and Procedures
24.3
Chapter 24 – Animal Control
Section 3 – Call for Service & Enforcement

Date: January 1, 2013
Revised: 03/23/2022

Signature:

The Sheridan Police Department is responsible for the enforcement of animal control laws in the City of Sheridan.

24.3.1 Calls for Service

- A. Community Service Officers (CSO) have primary responsibility for delivery of animal control services in Sheridan.
- B. Primary duties of animal control officers include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Investigation and enforcement of animal nuisances;
 - 2. Apprehension, transportation and impoundment of stray animals;
 - 3. Investigation of animal neglect and cruelty cases;
 - 4. Investigation of animal bites;
 - 5. Removal of dead animals; and
 - 6. Public education on animal control issues.
- C. Communications personnel who receive requests for animal control services will document the incident in the CAD system for retrieval by animal control officers.
- D. Since CSO's are not on duty twenty-four (24) hours per day, communications personnel will convey to the caller when the call is expected to be handled. If the caller is not satisfied with a delay in service, communications personnel will forward the caller to the shift supervisor, who will take appropriate action. Animal calls may be assigned to patrol officers at any time.

24.3.2 Response to Calls for Service

- A. Animal Nuisances
 - 1. Animal nuisances (Sheridan City Ordinance Chapter 6 Animals and Fowl) include:
 - a. Excessive, continuous or untimely animal noise;
 - b. Molesting passersby;
 - c. Chasing motor vehicles or bicycles;
 - d. Attacking other animals; and
 - e. Trespassing upon public or private property.
 - 2. A CSO will respond to all nuisance complaints. If the complaint is justified, the officer should document the incident and take enforcement action with a warning, citation and/or impoundment if appropriate.
 - 3. CSO's may not seize or impound an animal located on the owner's property except as authorized by court order or exigent circumstances (24.3.2.D). This provision does not preclude the impoundment of an animal observed to be running at large when

residents of the property are not readily available and the likelihood exists that the animal is aggressive and poses a threat to public safety.

- B. Animals at Large
 - 1. CSO's will respond to reports of animals running at large. If the animal can be captured, it may be returned to the owner/custodian or transported to the shelter.
 - 2. Animals that cannot be captured may be trailed home.
 - 3. CSO's should not respond to wild animals running at large unless it has harmed or poses a serious threat to a domesticated animal, property or human life.
 - 4. CSO's impounding animals shall follow impoundment procedures (see section 24.2.1) and complete any citations that are appropriate for the impounded animal's owner.
- C. A CSO will respond to all complaints of abandoned, neglected, or abused animals. The officer should assess the scene and condition of the animal. If no one is home and the animal doesn't appear to be in imminent danger of death, the officer should leave a notice to comply in a prominent location requesting to be contacted as soon as possible. Examples of imminent danger of death may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Lack of adequate shelter from the elements;
 - 2. Lack of water;
 - 3. Tethered in a fashion that puts the animal's life in danger due to strangulation; or
 - 4. The animal is unresponsive or injured.
- D. When an animal is in imminent danger of death, neglected or cruelly treated, Wyoming Statute 11-29-109 authorizes a peace officer to take charge of the animal.
- E. In cases of animal bites the CSO will:
 - 1. Assist the person bitten and direct the bitten person to get medical attention;
 - 2. Attempt to locate the suspect animal and arrange quarantine (see section 24.4.2) or testing (see section 24.4.6); and
 - 3. Complete follow-up and required paperwork and reports.
- F. Dead Animals
 - 1. CSO's shall pick up all dead animals within the city limits or make other arrangements for their removal and:
 - a. For pets, including cats and dogs:
 - 1. Place the animal in a bag in the shelter freezer.
 - 2. Fill out the shelter log.
 - 3. Shelter personnel will attempt contact with the owner.
 - b. For large wild animals and livestock;
 - 1. CSO's shall remove animal to a safe location and call city solid waste for removal.
 - 2. Brand inspectors will be contacted for the identification of the owners of livestock.
 - c. For smaller wild animals the CSO shall bag and dispose of at the city landfill.
 - d. The CSO will complete an incident report with all necessary documentation.
 - 2. All dead animals that are put in the freezer will be bagged.
 - 3. All dead animals on public roads within unincorporated Sheridan County should be referred to the appropriate agency responsible for maintenance. In other cases, animals are to be picked up by the owner if the owner is known.
- G. Injured animals

1. CSO's encountering injured animals should make an attempt to locate the animal's owner. Animals with a non-life threatening injury may be transported to the shelter. Animals that have a life threatening or serious injury may be taken to a veterinary office.
2. Terminally sick or injured wild animals that are suffering may be destroyed after securing the scene and receiving proper authorization from a supervisor and/or the appropriate authority such as Wyoming Game and Fish.

H. Rabid Animals

1. Rabies is a deadly viral infection that is spread by warm blooded mammals. A person or animal can become infected by the introduction of saliva from an infected animal into bites or cuts in the skin or through contact of saliva with mucous membranes. Rabies occurs only in mammals and is locally most commonly diagnosed in skunks.
2. Signs of rabies vary widely. The animal usually exhibits some type of behavioral change and may be either aggressive and excitable or depressed and lethargic. The animal may become uncoordinated and unfocused on the activity or presence of humans nearby. Other signs may include:
 - a. Stands, then falls;
 - b. Repeatedly attempts to stand;
 - c. Walks in a circle or sways when walking;
 - d. Cannot stand and moves legs in a swimming motion;
 - e. Irritability;
 - f. Restlessness;
 - g. Seizures;
 - h. Has a drooping mouth and/or excessive saliva; and
 - i. Paralysis.
3. Disposable rubber gloves and eye protection shall be used when handling suspected rabid animals, using care not to come into contact with the animal's saliva.
4. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after handling the animal.
5. If unable to safely contain an animal believed to have rabies, a police officer may shoot the animal. If at all possible, the officer should avoid shooting the animal in the head or upper neck area. The brain stem is needed for testing to confirm rabies.

- I. CSO employees shall continually provide education on animal control issues during formal and informal public contacts.

24.3.3 Violations of City Ordinance

A. Citations

1. If there is probable cause to believe a section of the Sheridan municipal code has been violated, an animal control officer may issue a citation to the owner of the violating animal.
2. Citations shall be processed in municipal court.
3. Citations are issued using the state citation form.
4. Citation forms are issued to officers from the Sheridan Police Department records division or may be issued through DigiTicket. Employees are accountable for the return of all citations checked out to them. Lost and voided citations will be reported as required in section 14.1.5.
5. Any time a citation is issued for a city animal violation, an incident report is required.

6. If a citation is to be issued because of an impound, a notation will be made at the shelter impound log book. Shelter personnel shall notify the Sheridan Police Department and an officer will respond to the shelter and issue the citation.
- B. Notice to comply
1. A notice to comply shall be left in a prominent location when a community service officer responds to a complaint or observes a violation and cannot reach an owner.
 2. The nature of the concern shall be listed along with a request that the owner contact the community service officer within a specified time.
 3. If a response is not received within the timeframe set in the notice, follow-up contact shall be attempted.
- C. Community service officers do not have arrest powers and therefore they may not arrest individuals for violations.

24.3.4 Sworn Officer Responsibilities

- A. Assistance and Response to Animal Control Calls
1. Sworn personnel will assist community service officers as requested when community service officers are dealing with volatile situations or persons.
 2. Police officers may be assigned to answer animal calls in the absence of a CSO. Sworn personnel will respond to any calls involving vicious animals, or other incidents determined to be serious enough to warrant an immediate response. The shift supervisor will determine the seriousness of the response. In cases that involve animal bites, officers will attempt to impound the animal. After the animal has been impounded the officer shall make the determination if home quarantine is appropriate.
 3. In general, police officers will not handle animal related nuisance calls; however, some incidents may require an immediate response. For example, a dog running at large on a school playground during a school day or special event, barking dog complaints, or incidents where an animal has been trapped and could perish if not transferred to the animal shelter. Also if the animal presents a health hazard to the public or if in the case of a predator, migratory bird or snake, the animal damage control officer is not available and an animal control officer is not working (see section 24.7.1).
- B. Destruction of Animals
1. Officers will not destroy animals that are only deemed to be a nuisance. The killing of an animal is justified for self defense, to prevent substantial harm to the officer or others, when the animal is so sick or badly injured that humanity requires its relief from further suffering, or when the animal presents a health hazard. When possible, officers will get supervisory approval prior to destroying an animal. If available, the animal control officer should be notified to determine if the animal can be saved or should be destroyed in a safe manner.
 2. In those cases requiring an animal be killed, officers may destroy the animal using their service weapon. Officers should not use the rifle to destroy an animal, unless the size of the animal and the location would warrant the use of the weapon.
 3. After destroying an animal a use of force report will be documented in the department's current use of force recording system.

24.3.5 Equipment and Training

- A. All uniforms and equipment issued to CSO employees will be worn in a manner consistent with department policy (see section 17.1.4).
- B. CSO vehicles will be operated in a safe and responsible manner in compliance with city and department policy (see section 19.1.1).
- C. CSO's shall ensure animal control vehicles are properly equipped with supplies to perform their duties in a safe efficient manner.