



# Paw Prints

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## QUOTE OF NOTE

"An animal's eyes have the power to speak a great language."  
Martin Buber, philosopher

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## Delaware Animal Services in need of donations to keep animals warm

The Office of Animal Welfare's Delaware Animal Services (DAS) unit is in need of straw and dog house donations that will be used to help keep animals warm this winter. By Delaware law, those who keep pets outdoors must provide a dry, draft-free shelter from the elements that contains moisture-resistant bedding.

"One of our goals is to reduce pet relinquishment and enhance an animal's quality of life," said OAW Acting Director Christina Motoyoshi. "To accomplish these goals, officers educate owners and provide compassionate resources, when possible, to help them better care for their pets."

When officers recognize a need for better dog housing, and a pet owner who is struggling financially, they often provide straw, dog houses, and other donated resources to help keep animals comfortable.

Straw is one of the cheapest and easiest donations to distribute, and helps animals that are kept outside retain their body heat on cold days better than a blanket or towel, which can freeze after rain.

Thanks to a donation from Partners for

Paws, several officers were recently able to distribute straw to grateful dog owners.

Lt. Erv Smith recently responded to an animal welfare complaint in New Castle. While he found the dog in question to be in good health, Lt. Smith provided a bale of straw to help keep the dog more comfortable.

During one November weekend, Lt. Rebecca Stratton and Officer Andrea Scurti visited multiple homes with the goal of providing resources for animals for the coming cold months. The owner of a Millsboro dog that was identified as needing resources received a large dog house donated by the Brandywine Valley SPCA, along with straw, dog food, and treats. Other dogs in Milford and Milton received straw, food, and treats.

To donate straw, dog houses, and dog or cat food, call 302-255-4646 to request an officer pickup or information on how to drop off donations. Donations may also be purchased from the Delaware Friends of Animals Amazon.com wish list and shipped directly to OAW by visiting <http://a.co/fjgy5se>.



**DAS officers regularly deliver needed resources, such as straw, housing, and food, to pets in need. For information on how to donate, call 302-255-4646.**



# Call to NCCPD results in first DAS dog fighting conviction

OAW's Delaware Animal Services (DAS) law enforcement unit recently secured its first dog fighting conviction since assuming animal control and cruelty in 2016, after responding to a disorderly complaint involving dogs in Newark.

DAS Chief Mark Tobin said NCCPD located one of two suspects running through a park as well as a loose dog. Tobin and Officer Rick DaFonte arrived on scene, interviewed the NCCPD officers and the apprehended suspect, who confessed to taking part in a dog fighting event. The other suspect got away.

"His dog was then seized and he was arrested for dog fighting and other criminal charges," Tobin said. "He pled guilty to one count of dog fighting and will not be able to own a dog for the rest of his life."

Tobin said dogfighting is tricky to catch because most of the planning and exchange of money is now conducted over the Internet via apps, and time is of the essence.

"They're quick. They're usually there for an hour and a half and then they're gone," he said. "It's very difficult without search warrants to get into these apps to see how the movement of the money is working. We do work with the federal government, but it's so underground that it's

## Several dogs from Seaford cruelty case get homes for the holidays

One by one, dogs who were rescued by OAW Delaware Animal Services on October 8 from severe animal cruelty in Seaford have gone to new, loving homes. DAS officers found approximately 43 deceased dogs and removed 31 dogs and one cat in one of the worst cases of animal cruelty Delaware has ever seen.

The surviving animals were taken to the Brandywine Valley



**Turtle, one of the dogs rescued from animal cruelty in Seaford, is shown just after his rescue and after his matted fur was shaved.** BVSPCA photo

**If you suspect dog fighting**

Notify the OAW Delaware Animal Services unit immediately at 302-255-4646. Callers may remain anonymous.

**Signs a dog is used for dogfighting**

Source: [aspca.org](http://aspca.org)

- Multiple bite wounds
- Heavy scarring
- Missing and torn ears and lips

very difficult to trace because of the electronics that are involved."

Dog fighting is a felony and can result in the prohibition from owning or possessing animals. In some cases, federal charges apply. In 2016, OAW worked with the Delaware General Assembly to add animal fighting to the state's Racketeering and Organized Crime statute, which carries stiffer penalties. Animal fighting is often linked to other forms of criminal activity, such as illegal drug distribution, gun running, prostitution, and other violent crimes.

SPCA (BVSPCA), OAW's shelter partner, where they were treated for emaciation, severe fur matting, and other issues. Most have been put up for adoption and several still remain in medical care at BVSPCA.

Seaford resident Donald Eilander was taken into custody on October 13 and arraigned on 449 charges, including felony animal cruelty in connection with the case.



# Is your pet overweight? Here's how to tell and what to do

**By Dr. Kathryn Stoltzfus**

Chief Veterinary Advisor

At least half of all pet cats and dogs in the United States are clinically overweight or obese, according to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention's 2016 survey. This mirrors the human experience.

Consequences of obesity in our pets include:

- Metabolic and endocrine disorders, such as diabetes mellitus
- Respiratory disorders
- Kidney dysfunction



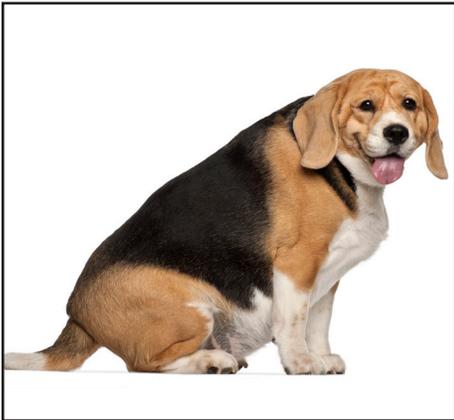
**Dr. Kathryn Stoltzfus**

- Orthopedic disease
- Skin disorders
- Chronic inflammation
- Reduced life expectancy
- Diminished quality of life

Pet owners should ask at every veterinary visit whether their pet is at a healthy weight. If the answer is "no," owners should discuss options with their veterinarian. At home, pet owners can visually check their animals. From the side, does your pet's belly sag to the ground or is it taut and angled upward? When you look down, is there an hourglass silhouette or does it look like a balloon? When feeling over the ribs with your hands, you should be able to easily feel the ribs. If you have to push to feel the ribs, chances are your pet is overweight.

The first step in fixing weight issues is to recognize there is a problem. Once you have recognized this is a problem, it needs to be treated like any medical condition. Pet owners should discuss diet and feeding recommendations, calorie control, and developing a daily activity regimen with their pet's veterinarian.

Food should be measured, including treats, to ensure pets are getting the calorie intake needed to be a healthy weight. Owners should create a weight loss plan to ensure their pets don't lose weight too quickly, as this can cause medical problems.



**Cats or dogs that look like a balloon from the top or have a belly that sags may need a weight loss plan.**

## Food Dangers

**It's tempting to feed dogs scraps of human food, but humans should keep the following food dangers in mind when it comes to pets:**

- Keep pets away from unattended plates of food. Rich holiday treats can cause vomiting, diarrhea, or pancreatitis.
- Fatty leftovers and bones can cause injury, too.
- Sweets can be a favorite, but chocolate can be toxic and xylitol can cause low blood sugar and liver failure.
- Keep holiday beverages out of pets' reach and consider that many holiday treats have alcohol in them.
- Remember: grapes and raisins can cause serious kidney injury.

Exercise needs will vary based on breed, age, and current physical status. Generally, dogs should aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise per day. For dogs, exercise has to be at a brisk pace, not the leisurely stroll they usually do on a walk. Cats should get at least three five-minute intense play periods.

Monitor your pet's weight loss and quality of life progress. In addition to following the numbers on the scale, focus on how much your pet can enjoy life again.

## Dogs must be brought inside during hazardous weather

In accordance with Delaware law, dogs cannot be left outdoors during a hazardous weather warning issued by the National Weather Service for the local area.

The American Veterinary Medical Association states on its website, [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org), that both cats and dogs are "susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia and should be kept inside" in extreme weather, regardless of the length or thickness of their fur.

**TOP 3**  
Reasons to License Your Dog

- 1 Easy identification is a lost dog's ticket home.**
- 2 Prevents the spread of rabies.**
- 3 It's state law! (fines are \$50 and higher)**

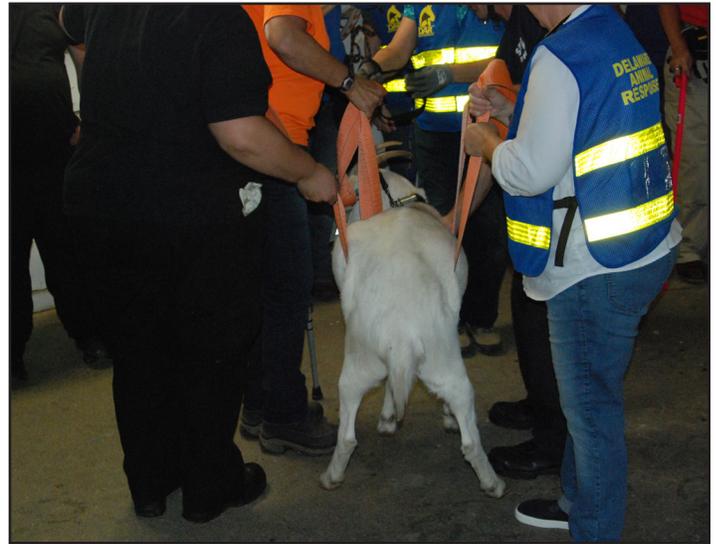
To apply for a license, call 877-730-6347 or visit [www.petdata.com/Delaware](http://www.petdata.com/Delaware)

DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health  
Office of Animal Welfare

# Delaware Animal Response hosts large animal emergency training



OAW's Delaware Animal Response (DAR) team hosted a large animal emergency rescue course from September 8 to 10, 2017, at the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington. DAR responders, large animal veterinarians, county technical rescue teams, and fire department members participated. They learned how to work cohesively using proper skills to safely and effectively assist with technical rescues, and evacuation. The training covered entrenchment and mud rescues, trailer overturns, a simulated barn fire, and a night search and rescue operation. At left, trainees practice placing specialized large animal strapping on a 600-pound horse mannequin trapped in a trench. At right, trainees practice removing a horse mannequin from an overturned trailer.



At left, firefighters practice attaching lead ropes to safely remove horses from a simulated barn fire. At right, rescuers practice safe lifting techniques with a goat.

## PURCHASE THE NEW DELAWARE ANIMAL WELFARE LICENSE PLATE AND YOU'LL HELP DOGS AND CATS IN NEED.

You don't have to wait until you renew your license plate to buy one. Go to [de.gov/petplate](http://de.gov/petplate), enter some basic information, and the DMV will mail the new tag and a replacement registration sticker. More than half of the one-time fee goes to provide low-cost spaying, neutering, immunizations, and other services to dogs and cats in need.



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