

YOLO COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT  
PRESS RELEASE

Re:	Yolo County Animal Services has Urgent Message for the Public
Date:	April 24, 2008

Contact: Michele Wallace, Public Information Officer (530) 406-5163

The Yolo County Sheriff's Department, Animal Services Section has an urgent message for the public. The Yolo County Animal Shelter has identified its first definitive case of Canine Distemper. The diseased dog came from the community and the Animal Shelter is attempting to keep it from amplifying back into the community.

Distemper is an airborne single-stranded RNA virus that affects dogs. There is no danger to other pet animals, or to humans, however it has been known to be carried by raccoons. It often begins with a cough or runny nose, resembling kennel cough. But instead of getting better distemper, having a four to six week incubation period, progresses to an illness that invades multiple body symptoms. This disease is preventable if you have your dog vaccinated for distemper, part of the DHPP vaccine commonly recommended by veterinarians. Vaccinations usually cost from ten to sixty-three dollars.

The diseased dog at the shelter was first diagnosed with kennel cough, due to the symptoms found by Animal Services veterinary staff and lab work done by UC Davis Veterinary School. Within the last few weeks symptoms have increased, and the disease has now spread to other dogs in the Animal Shelter. Once the disease was diagnosed in the shelter, a task force was established to look for solutions. The task force includes veterinarians from the University of California, Davis Shelter Medicine Program, along with staff and volunteers of the Animal Shelter. The seventy-two dogs in the shelter have been quarantined into risk populations and are undergoing testing to determine any level of risk.

Sheriff Prieto stated, "We're fortunate to have one of the few shelters in California that has a veterinary staff on the premises, and to have the services of UC Davis veterinarians, along with a dedicated Animal Services staff to quickly contain and eliminate this outbreak and to soon bring the shelter back to a normal status."

Yolo County Animal Services is unable to receive any dogs from the public for the next two weeks. In case of an emergency, please contact the shelter at (530) 668-5287 for further instructions. This will allow the shelter ample time to manage the current canine population. In addition, the shelter will be temporarily closing the night deposit boxes.

Shelter veterinary staff stated, "It is extremely important for pet owners to have your dogs vaccinated as part of regular care for your pet. Keep your pet on a nutritious diet;

give it exercise and ample fresh air. It will help save your pet from disease and offer it a long and healthy life.”

If you have any questions please contact Yolo County Sheriff's Department, Animal Services Section at (530) 668-5287.