

The Pet Club



Canine Influenza Can Really Hurt Your Dog

In this month's column, I wanted everyone to know what the Canine flu was. There is a lot of news these days about the bird flu. But canine influenza affects our best friend, our dog. So I gathered some facts and would like to share them with you. I hope it helps.

Canine influenza is a new virus that causes a respiratory infection in dogs and is highly contagious. It is believed to have jumped species from horses to racing dogs in Florida sometime in the last few years, and gradually spread out to dogs around the United States, including Southern California. This virus is spread by aerosolized respiratory secretions, contaminated inanimate objects and even by people moving back and forth between infected and uninfected dogs. It occurs most easily where numbers of dogs are kept in close proximity but could also be passed "on the street" or in kennels.

The symptoms can look a lot like the common disease "kennel cough," because coughing is the most common symptom. However, dogs with canine influenza are usually sick for a longer period (weeks), and are more likely to have a fever and nasal discharge, and to develop pneumonia. Most dogs develop the milder form of the disease (cough, mild fever). Some require hospitalization and intensive care.

Because this is a newly emerging pathogen, all dogs, regardless of breed or age, are susceptible to infection and have no naturally acquired or vaccine-induced immunity. Virtually 100 percent of exposed dogs become infected. Nearly 80 percent have clinical signs. There are two general clinical syndromes – the milder syndrome and a more severe pneumonia syndrome. The milder disease syndrome occurs in most dogs. The incubation period is two to five days after exposure before clinical signs appear. Infected dogs may shed virus for seven to 10 days from the initial day of clinical signs. Nearly 20 percent of infected dogs will not display clinical signs and become the silent shedders and spreaders of the infection.

Unfortunately, there is no vaccine for canine influenza virus at this time. There are ways to treat it, so if you suspect your dog has acquired canine influenza, waste no time and take your pet to your vet.



Send Questions

Karen Knipscheer has worked for Animal Services for 16 years; she worked in the field as an officer, then lieutenant, then captain. She was a district manager and a hearing examiner before recently becoming the public information officer. Feel free to welcome her; write to her at: talkback@cityemployeesclub.com

Karen Knipscheer,
Public Information Officer,
Animal Services



Animals Out of the Fire

Animal Services acts to save animals during recent Topanga firestorms.

People and their animals were displaced during the firestorm that started in the City of Los Angeles and through the City's lead agency for animals, Animal Services, they needed the assurance that their animals would be taken care of.

The calls came in from the residents that lived in the area that either they were not allowed to go in and get their animals or had to leave their animals behind. When the Department's employees deployed to the area, residents stopped and asked if they could take their animals. The Department complied.

Animal Services was the first on scene and stepped up and took control and started evacuations with the approval of the LAFD and LAPD. The employees worked with volunteers of the Emergency Equine Response Team (E.E.R.T.) and the LAPD's mounted unit, to evacuate hundreds of animals including horses, dogs, cats, alpacas, birds, rabbits, etc. At this time of emergency need, it didn't matter if they were County or City residents; the Department helped anyone who asked.

The animals were taken in, medically assessed, issued identification and housed at three locations: Pierce College, LA Equestrian Center and Hansen Dam Equestrian Center, at no charge. The Department also set up temporary housing at the Red Cross locations for smaller animals.

After it was safe and approved by the LAFD,

the Animal Services returned many of the animals to their owners, again at no charge to them.

The residents in this area have been so thankful for the great job the Department did, and for the care we took in evacuating their animals, that they have been donating to the Department. Employees worked countless hours under extreme stress. And kudos go out to the LAPD Mounted unit, which offered Animal Services the use of the unit's trailers and officer; and to the Department's Emergency Equine Rescue Team.



The recent firestorm in Chatsworth.

New Hours for Shelters

Animal Services extends the hours of its shelters.

ANIMAL SVCS. — LA Animal Services has extended its normal business hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays; shelters will now be open between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. The extended hours on these two days of the week are to accommodate those who cannot make it during normal business hours.

New hours of operation:

Monday and Holidays:	Closed
Tuesday:	8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Wednesday:	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Thursday:	8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday:	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday:	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday:	11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Shelter locations:

- East Valley, 13131 Sherman Way, North Hollywood
- West Valley, 20655 Plummer St., Chatsworth, CA
- North Central, 3201 Lacy St., Los Angeles
- West Los Angeles, 11950 Missouri Ave., Los Angeles
- South Los Angeles, 3320 W. 36th St., Los Angeles
- Harbor, 735 Battery St., San Pedro

For information or assistance:

Residents can call L.A. Animal Services at (888) 4LA-PET1/(888) 452-7381 (TTY hearing impaired: [877] 875-8205) or visit the Website at www.LAAnimalServices.com.

L.A. Animal Services rescues, houses and cares for lost and abandoned animals, enforces animal-related laws and acts to prevent cruelty to animals.





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