



# **AUDIT FOLLOW-UP REPORT ANIMAL CONTROL DEPARTMENT**

**FOR THE PERIODS OF  
JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021**

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## Performance Audit of the Animal Control Department - Follow Up

The follow up audit revealed that most of the deficiencies cited in the original audit report were addressed and corrected. While process improvement is perpetual, the Animal Control department showed progress in addressing noted audit deficiencies as well as a number of audit observations. The summary below gives more specifics on both deficiencies cited and improvements made over the 4-month period since the original audit was completed.

1. **Unsafe Driving Pattern. High.**

**Condition:** The internal auditor observed on several occasions during ride-a-longs, ACOs and Codes Enforcement Officers visually referencing their laptops while driving (in some cases, on the interstate). **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Directly observe ACO interactions with laptops during ride-a-longs.

**Results:** The internal auditor conducted ride-a-longs with three ACOs, notating laptop viewing habits. ACOs consistently referenced their laptops before driving the vehicle, and pulled over when they needed to reaffirm laptop data. As a practice, ACOs kept laptops closed while the vehicle was in motion. **Date:** 4/22/2022

2. **Money Handling Deficiencies. Moderate.**

**Condition:** Interviews within the Animal Control personnel revealed that (1) monies are collected and transported in non-locking bags, (2) checks, money orders, and cashier's checks are not restrictively endorsed upon receipt, and (3) while monies are turned into the Utilities Department once per week by the Supervisor, monies may be placed into the lockbox on a daily basis by ACOs. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Acquire data about current money handling operations.

**Results:** Per an interview with the Animal Control Case Worker:

- Two or more people are present when opening the lockbox.
- Locking bags are used to transport monies to the Utilities Department.
- Financial instruments are not restrictively endorsed.  
An endorsed (stamped "For Deposit Only") financial instrument informs the receiver that such instruments are only to be honored when deposited as endorsed. This can deter theft, as well as protect financial instruments that are lost.
- Monies are still turned into the Utilities Department once per week.  
Per the DAC Animal Control and Codes Cash Transactions SOP, "Fees turned in will be logged into the transaction logs and turned into Dona Ana County Utilities department on the next business day following receipt." **Date:** 4/22/2022

Manager reply- Everything is correct however money is turned in everyday unless it is over a weekend, holiday and or there is no one in the office to complete the task.

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3. **SOP Deficiencies. Moderate.**

**Condition:** During the audit, numerous SOP deficiencies were identified in Addendum A.  
**Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Check SOPs in **Addendum A** (8/20/2021 Audit Report), for updates. Addendum A deficiencies are listed below.

<b>Results:</b>	<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>
	ACO On-Call SOP expires on August 1, 2021	Corrected – Date Removed
	ACO Shelter Interaction Sop expires on August 1, 2021	Corrected – Date Removed
	ACO Animal Complaints SOP expires on August 1, 2021	Corrected – Date Removed
	ACO Animal Impoundment Final SOP expires on August 1, 2021	Corrected – Date Removed
	Court Hold Fee Schedule SOP serves as a 1 year pilot program	Corrected – Addressed
	No handling procedures concerning lactating animals	Corrected – Addressed
	No guidance exists for ACO collaboration with the City	Not Addressed
	No guidance exists for collaboration with outside organizations	Not Addressed

**Date:** 4/22/2022

4. **Court Hold Facility Deficiencies. Moderate.**

**Condition:** A walk-thru inspection of the Court Hold Facility with the Safety/Loss Control & Training Specialist revealed the multiple discrepancies listed in Addendum B. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Check Court Hold Facility in **Addendum B** (8/20/2021 Audit Report), for updates. Addendum B deficiencies are listed below.

<b>Results:</b>	<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>
	Fire extinguisher tags did not indicate the completion of monthly inspections	Corrected
	Unlabeled human vs animal refrigerators	Corrected
	Breakers #35 & #36 were in the tripped position in Electrical Panel A	Corrected
	Exhaust fan in laundry room was not functioning	Corrected
	Several ceiling tiles showed signs of leakage (discolored stains)	Corrected
	Power cord plug for the freezer at the front entrance needs repair/replacement	Corrected

**Date:** 4/22/2022

**Auditor Comments:** As staff is hesitant to initial fire extinguisher tags during monthly checks, the Audit provides the links below, which serve as fire extinguisher inspection guides. Per Chapter 7 for NFPA 10, Paragraph 7.1.2.3 – Persons performing inspections shall not be required to be certified.

<https://www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/publications-and-media/blogs-landing-page/nfpa-today/blog-posts/2020/10/30/guide-to-fire-extinguisher-inspection-testing-and-maintenance>

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<https://forum.nachi.org/t/inspecting-portable-fire-extinguishers-online-video-course/73291/861?page=44>

5. **Recordkeeping Discrepancies. Moderate.**

**Condition:** Upon reviewing records for FY21, multiple shortfalls were noted that included months of missing data. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Check **Addendum C** (8/20/2021 Audit Report) for the missing months. Addendum C deficiencies are listed below.

<b>Results:</b>	<b>Discrepancy</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>
	Missing Bite Report for June 2021	Data Located
	Missing ACO Monthly Report for June 2021	Data Located
	Missing Court Outcome Logs for April - June 2021	Data Located
	Missing Impounds & Return to Owner Reports for May & June 2021	Data Located
	Missing Owner Surrender Reports for March, May & June 2021	Data Located
	Missing Live Evidence Logs for May & June 2021	Data Located
	Missing Court Hold Bite Quarantine Reports for May & June 2021	Data Located

**Date:** 4/22/2022

6. **Inconsistent Vehicle Safety Inspections. Low.**

**Condition:** Interviews with ACOs revealed that many conduct a brief visual vehicle inspection on a daily basis, but do not record the results of said inspections. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Check documentation for the 3-month period of October – December of 2021 for existence.

**Results:** Samples revealed completed vehicle inspection reports for the period above. **Date:** 4/22/2022

7. **Missing Annual Training. Low.**

**Condition:**

**A.** The Audit failed to reveal recent documentation of HAZCOM and Disposal of Dead Livestock training, which should occur annually for employees. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**B.** The Audit discovered that one ACO had been issued and carries both pepper/oleoresin capsicum spray and a baton, but has not yet been trained by the County in the proper usage of these items. **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Check documentation for HAZCOM and Disposal of Dead Livestock training; check training documentation for ACO who had been issued and carries both pepper/oleoresin capsicum spray and a baton.

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**Results:** Per the Safety/Loss Control & Training Specialist, HAZCOM training is only required annually when a new chemical is introduced into operations by the department.

Per a review of records, staff received Disposal of Dead Livestock training in September 2021 (the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>). The ACO who had been issued and carries both pepper/oleoresin capsicum spray and a baton has left county service. **Date:** 4/22/2022

8. **Inaccurate Vehicle Refueling Data. Low.**

**Condition:** The Audit reviewed 1,036 fuel transactions for FY21, noting 101 discrepancies. Nine transactions indicated the afterhours refueling (187 gallons – UNL) of vehicles when no one was on duty (per timekeeping records), and 92 transactions indicated vehicle mileage ranging from 109 to 99,999 miles per gallon (MPG). **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Test:** Inquire with management about monthly inspections of vehicle refueling activities.

**Results:** Per a conversation with the Animal Control Manager and the Case Worker, they have started collecting fuel receipts from officers monthly, to verify fuel purchases. **Date:** 4/22/2022

**Auditor Comments:** The Audit recommends a comparison of fuel receipts to the monthly fuel card report from Fleet. This comparison could be conducted with a sample of fuel receipts, as an added internal control.

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## Management Letter – Auditor Observations

### A. Pending Projects for Calendar Year 2021 –

**Management's Response:** *The Animal Control Officer Supervisor is actively working on the spaying/neutering project. The project is pending a Veterinarian and the securing of a facility license for the mobile unit. She currently has no plans for the Solar Animal Repellers.* **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Current Status:** Per Management, the spaying/neutering project is a process. Herein, Management's first objective is to advertise for and secure the services of a Veterinarian. This will allow for an authorized person to order anesthesia, which is a requirement for having the mobile unit's equipment tested and certified. Currently, advertising preparations are being made. **Date:** 4/22/2022

### B. Inefficient Recordkeeping – Shelterluv software

**Management's Response:** *The Animal Control Officer Supervisor will submit a ticket to IT by the end of September 2021, to secure alternate email addresses for staff.* **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Current Status:** The Audit notes that Management has not yet taken action on this matter. **Date:** 4/22/2022

### C. County Webpage - types of emergency incidents were the same as types of non-emergency incidents

**Management's Response:** *The Animal Control Officer Supervisor stated that the website should be updated in the month of September 2021.* **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Current Status:** As of the date of this report, the Audit notes that the website appears unchanged, and does not make a distinction between emergency versus non-emergency incidents. Thus, Management has not yet taken action on this matter. **Date:** 4/22/2022

### D. Court Hold Policy and Procedures Updates - Court Hold Policy and Procedures manual uses the language 'Animal Caretaker;' county website recognizes the titles of 'Animal Caregiver' and 'Live Evidence Technician.'

**Management's Response:** *The Animal Control Officer Supervisor will update the policy's language by the end of September 2021.* **Date:** 8/20/2021

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**Current Status:** The Audit notes that Management has defined ‘Animal Caretaker’ terminology in its SOP, but has not equated it to nor distinguished it from the language of ‘Animal Caregiver’ and ‘Live Evidence Technician.’ Thus, the Audit notes that Management has not yet taken action on this matter. **Date:** 4/22/2022

- E. Desired Training** - Interviews with Animal Control Officers revealed their interest in receiving such annual or one-time instruction as livestock handling, snake handling, de-escalation, chemical immobilization, and animal behavioral assessment training. If continuing education is required to attain or maintain certifications, Animal Control leadership should weigh the costs vs benefits of administering (or acquiring) such training to staff. Although SOP-required education should be a priority, this does not demean the benefits of providing discretionary training that could add value to the department as a whole.

**Management’s Response:** *A new staff member will begin acquiring the necessary training on 7 September 2021; the required dead animal (large carcass) training was administered in December 2021; criminal complaint training was completed on 2 September 2021; and there are plans to take advantage of future training opportunities to keep staff current on required trainings.* **Date:** 8/20/2021

**Current Status:** The internal auditor reviewed records confirming the administration of the above training. **Date:** 4/22/2022

**Auditor Comments:** In an April 12, 2022 Board Of County Commissioners’ meeting, County Commissioners voiced concerns about the revising of the County’s Animal Control Ordinance, as well as about staffing shortages. The Animal Control Manager stated that she and her staff are currently working on getting a revised ordinance to the Legal Department, which should be completed within one month. The revision would include areas that are unaddressed in the current ordinance. Also, the County Manager purported that an improved compensation package would be going before the Union for consideration, in the near future.

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