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San Bernardino City Animal Shelter Update

San Bernardino, Feb. 21, 2019 - For the past several months, a variety of animal activist groups have targeted the City of San Bernardino’s animal care program and staff with false allegations of animal neglect and cruelty. Most recently, these groups have spread misinformation via the internet that a dog froze to death while housed at the City’s shelter. This allegation is blatantly false as the dog referenced by these groups was housed in a kennel that was heated both geothermally and by electric overhead heater.

The facts of this incident comprise the following: On February 14, 2019, a female Chihuahua in the City’s care died subsequent to undergoing a spay/neuter operation. While fatal complications stemming from such procedures are rare, they can unfortunately occur. This does not prevent the City from employing spay/neuter protocols as part of its strategy to reduce pet over-population.

Even though no animals have frozen to death, the City’s animal program continues to face many challenges. Since December, its shelter has experienced five confirmed cases of distemper and seven additional reported cases from private adopters and rescue groups. The City has worked to assess exposure by testing dogs from various kennels to determine the prevalence of the disease within its facility. So far, tests indicate the confirmed cases were isolated.

Due to concerns over distemper, adoption rates have declined and the shelter’s population of animals has started to increase. Despite these circumstances, shelter staff is continuing to work with rescue groups to promote animal health and welfare and encourage adoption.

The City remains deeply committed to all animals in its care and will continue to pursue sheltering improvement as part of that commitment.