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National Animal Control Association Policy Statement

Extended Animal Control Concerns - Dangerous/Vicious Animals

POLICY STATEMENT

Dangerous and/or vicious animals should be labeled as such as a result of their actions or behavior and not because of their breed.

BASIS FOR POLICY

Any animal may exhibit aggressive behavior regard-less of breed. Accurately identifying a specific animal's lineage for prosecution purposes may be extremely difficult. Additionally, breed specific legislation may create an undue burden to owners who otherwise have demonstrated proper pet management and responsibility.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Agencies should encourage enactment and stringent enforcement of dangerous/vicious dog laws. When applicable, agencies should not hesitate to prosecute owners for murder, manslaughter, or similar violations resulting from their animal's actions, and their owner lack of responsibility. Laws should clearly define "dangerous" or "vicious", and provide for established penalties. Penalties may include fines, imprisonment, and/or the relinquishing of total privileges to pet ownership. If a dangerous/vicious animal is allowed to be kept, laws should specify methods of secure confinement and control. A dangerous/vicious animal when kept outside should be confined in an escape-proof enclosure which is locked and secured on all six sides. Signs should be posted at property entrances and be visible from the nearest sidewalk or street. The licensing record could include a notation which will immediately identify an animal which has been deemed dangerous or vicious.

Reviewed/Revised by the NACA Corporate Office - 09/17/02