



Breed Specific Legislation

A National Overview

Dangerous dogs are making headlines across the country again. A string of serious dog attacks this past summer is leading many provincial and municipal governments to consider banning or restricting the ownership of pit bulls and other breeds.

In October, Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant presented legislation to ban the ownership of pit bulls. The announcement came a few months after Mr. Bryant met with dog bite victims and with members of the animal community (including the Ontario SPCA and representatives from the National Companion Animal Coalition, of which the CFHS is a member).

The province of New Brunswick is also currently considering a Bill that proposes strict restrictions for

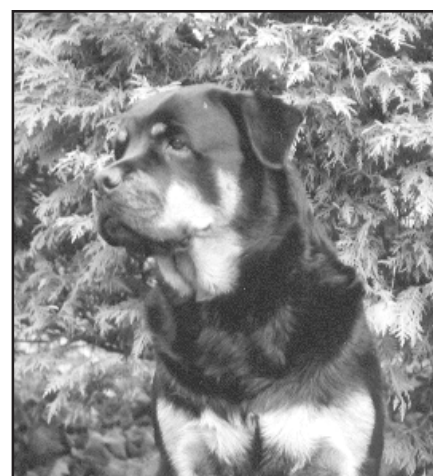


all Staffordshire Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers, Rottweilers and Akitas. If passed, the Bill will require owners of these dogs to obtain a special license. Owners will also need to show proof of liability insurance for no less than \$1 million. In addition, dogs of these breeds will have to be muzzled and on a leash measuring less than two meters when off the owner's property; and, when on the owner's property, kept indoors, outdoors in a safe enclosure, or outdoors, chained and muzzled.

The Numbers

Unfortunately, very little statistical information exists in Canada regarding dog bites and animal control legislation. There is no national reporting of dog bite incidents in the country. Animal control bylaws fall under municipal jurisdiction, which means the legislation and its enforcement varies widely from coast to coast.

A 1999 Coroner's study in the province of Quebec found that 117,000 individuals reported being bitten by dogs between 1997 and 1998. Most of these attacks were on children under 10 years old, and by the victim's own dogs. The Canada Safety Council estimates that, by extrapolating this data, there could be approximately



460,000 dog bites in Canada annually. No proven numbers are available, however. There is also no information on the breeds, spay/neuter status, ownership or history of the dogs that are involved in attacks.

The City of Kitchener-Waterloo, which banned pit bulls in 1997, has no specific data comparing dog bites before and after the implementation of its bylaw.

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Animal



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President
David Buffett

Chief Executive Officer
Bob Van Tongerloo

Editor
Tanya O'Callaghan

Contributors this Issue
Nadine Gourkow
Tanya O'Callaghan
Geoff Urton

Layout & Design
Tanya O'Callaghan

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Canadian Federation of Humane Societies

102 - 30 Concourse Gate
Ottawa, Ontario K2E 7V7
(613) 224-8072

Fax: (613) 723-0252
Toll Free 1-888-678-CFHS
e-mail: info@cfhs.ca

www.cfhs.ca

Charitable Reg. #: 11883 0884 RR0001

Canadian Animals are SMARTER than JACK



New Zealand publisher Avocado Press has finally brought its hit series, *SMARTER than JACK*, to Canada! With 91 true stories submitted from Canadians coast to coast, this book is sure to strike a chord with all animal lovers! The stories promise to entertain and delight readers, and probably more than a few readers will find themselves laughing out loud.



Take, for example, the story of the mother raccoon that knocks on a door to get help for her babies after they got in trouble. Or, the dog that asked his/her owners to turn on the air conditioner on a hot summer night. *Canadian animals are SMARTER than JACK* is full of stories of dogs, cats, birds, horses and a handful of wildlife that will just amaze you with their problem solving skills and their intelligence.

Perhaps the smartest story of all, however, is that the clever animals featured in this book are helping other animals across Canada. Sales from *SMARTER than JACK* books sold in Canada will be shared with the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies and participating member societies. In Australia and New Zealand, *SMARTER than JACK* books have raised some CAN\$ 130,000 for animal welfare organizations.

Series creator Jenny Campbell says she's thrilled with the response to the books so far. "These books were created for two reasons. I wanted to enlighten the public about how smart animals really

are, as well as raise money for animal welfare charities."

"I found the stories in this first North American edition in the *Smarter than Jack* series amazing. We are delighted to be part of it and are looking forward to sharing this collection of humorous

and heart warming stories with Canadians. We believe that the book will be a success by showing just how intelligent animals can be and by raising funds for humane societies across the country," says Robert Van Tongerloo, CEO of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies.

SMARTER than JACK makes a great gift! Order your copy today using the form at the back of this newsletter.

My friends had a large collie and had just moved into a new home with deep carpet in the living room. The family were all gathered in the living room one evening watching TV.

The dog was lying on the floor in the kitchen, as he was not allowed to enter the living room. Every time he stepped into the room, the father said 'No!' The dog backed out.

After several tries, the dog turned around and backed into the room, leaving his front paws on the kitchen floor. Father thought, 'This dog is smart enough to know he is not to put his front paws on the carpet, so I will let him stay.'

Kathy Wells, Sillikers, NB
Canadian Animals are SMARTER than JACK, p.67

Finding the Perfect Match

Dog assessments identify personalities and lead to better matching

By Nadine Gourkow
BC SPCA

(Reprinted from *AnimalSense Magazine*, Spring/Summer 2004)

If Harley were a person you might have described him as a bully. He was pushy, forceful and assertive in every situation. Perceived by his former guardians as dangerously aggressive around children, this 120-pound, one-year-old Great Pyrenees/Retriever cross was surrendered to the BC SPCA last year. "He wants to mouth people's hands, arms and legs all the time," reported his guardians. "We keep him outside because he's too unmanageable for the house." The future looked bleak for Harley. Could he be safely re-homed? Would he attack people? Would he be dangerous to children? Would his behaviour be different in a different situation?

In a quest to answer these types of questions about dogs in their shelters, the BC SPCA invested in the development of a test that measures temperament traits. The BC SPCA engaged Dr. Rebecca Ledger, an animal behaviourist with a lifetime of experience working with dogs – particularly shelter dogs – to develop a predictable way to evaluate a dog's temperament. "If you know a dog's temperament, essentially the dog's 'personality', then you can be more certain of how the dog will react over a range of situations, such as cats running past the dog, children riding bikes, the dog being left alone, or the dog being challenged by another dog in a park," explains Ledger.

The key to a reliable temperament test is whether it is predictive of how dogs will behave in the home environment – this is called validation. To validate her test, Ledger followed hundreds of tested dogs and recorded their behaviour in home environments, at the veterinarian, and many other situations. At the end of eight years of refining her tests, which include

situations such as staring in the dog's eyes, tug of war, and many others, Ledger developed a test that could be done in the shelter that was predictive.

The canine temperament test is similar to personality tests for people. Everyone has a different personality and that governs how we react under certain conditions. Airline pilots, for example, undergo rigorous personality tests to ensure they remain calm when faced with highly stressful situations. Dogs also have fairly consistent traits that predict how they will act throughout their lives. A puppy that is very fearful, for example, will become an adult dog prone to fearfulness. "From around six months of age, personalities don't change very much, however, the behaviour problems associated with the personality type can be avoided," says Ledger.

According to dog behaviourists, dogs have five basic components that make up their personalities: 1) playfulness, 2) anxiousness, 3) excitableness, 4) aggressiveness, and 5) fearfulness. These traits are present with a variable degree of strength of expression from low to high. A dog that scores moderate to high in fearfulness and excitableness is highly likely to suffer from separation anxiety, a common behaviour issue in which a dog becomes distressed when left alone. While separation anxiety can be managed with techniques that allow the dog to cope over time, the dog will remain prone to this specific problem. What traits would dominate Harley's personality?

Harley scored low to moderate for aggressiveness and moderate to high for excitableness. These results explained why Harley might have been interpreted as aggressive towards children. Dogs with a moderate expression of these two traits get excited easily and play rough. They tend to mouth or 'play bite'; make excessive demands on their guardian for attention; be distracted and seem disobedient and may chase animals or small children. This was actually



BC Animal Welfare Coordinator Barry McKnight conducts an assessment.

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Finding the Perfect Match (cont' from p.3)

good news for Harley – his behaviour was not meant to hurt people, rather he needed to learn how to play appropriately and to be in an environment that would not cause him to become excited.

The BC Certified Assessor recommended that Harley undergo in-shelter rehabilitation before adoption. Harley had to learn that calm and obedient behaviour would get him pats, treats and walks, while pushy, demanding and excited behaviour would cause his trainer to turn away and ignore him. During his two weeks of rehabilitation, Harley showed great progress. He learned quickly that getting a human to do what you want is easy, just sit and behave and they give you the world. He was recommended for adoption following a positive evaluation of his progress.

“Understanding a dog’s temperament is fundamental to re-homing success. Once we understand the dog’s temperament, we can provide the right type of training or rehabilitation, match the dog with a suitable guardian and help the new guardian understand and manage the temperament related behaviour issues,” says Ledger.

In general, dogs showing low to moderate strength of a trait can be re-homed with minor intervention and adequate information to the adopter, since they are the least likely to develop behaviour problems. Dogs with moderate to high strength of a trait require rehabilitation before adoption to reduce or prevent behaviour problems developing later.

The certified dog temperament assessor recommended that Harley be adopted with a consistent and calm person. He should go into a home with children old enough to follow direction and understand how to help Harley remain calm. The guardian would also have to be experienced and willing to continue Harley’s obedience training, and have realistic expectations about the time and effort required to teach Harley toilet training and good manners in the house.



Measuring dog personality is becoming a well-recognized field of study by not just animal behaviourists but also psychologists interested in studying the relationships between people and their pets. “Dog guardians have always known that dogs have different personalities,” says Dr. Samuel Gosling, Department of Psychology at the University of Texas. “What science is doing is developing ways to measure temperament traits that can be measured as reliably as human personality traits.” When that is combined with a sophisticated matching program, both the dogs and people benefit. “The knowledge from

temperament testing will lead to more informed selection of pets, more harmonious and enjoyable relationships with our pets, and fewer dogs being returned to shelters or otherwise suffering,” says Amanda Jones, a PhD student in personality and social psychology at the University of Texas.

The key to Harley’s happiness was in the match between his own temperament and the personality, lifestyle, experience, and living

environment of Harley’s prospective guardians. Many people fell in love with this beautiful, big dog. But the potential for Harley to develop problems such as chasing animals and getting excited during play to the point of biting required careful matching. One family was selected from several possibilities.

Harley now lives in a house surrounded by 80 acres of land. His new guardians, a semi-retired couple and their twenty-four year old daughter are all confident and experienced dog guardians. Harley’s manners still need some work but he is making great progress. He loves his daily walks on the dyke and eagerly runs to the end of the driveway to greet his “dad” coming home from work each evening.

The BC SPCA is currently scheduled to implement the Dog Temperament Test and Guardian Matching System in four of its 36 shelters. “The cost of implementation is preventing us from getting the system up and running in all our shelters as quickly as we would like,” says Craig Daniell, BC SPCA CEO. “Our goal is to train our staff in the new procedures and implement thoroughly in each facility.”

Breed Specific Legislation (cont' from p.1)

The City of Edmonton has analyzed its data and that of other major Canadian cities that were able to provide some dog bite information. See the adjacent tables for a sample of their results.

To date, not enough is known about dog bites in Canada to support breed bans. The CFHS and the other members of the National Companion Animal Coalition (NCAC) also oppose breed bans for the following reasons: there is no objective method of establishing lineage of cross bred dogs or unregistered dogs; dangerous dogs can exist in any breed of dog; dangerous temperament and behaviour can be a product of factors other than just breed; bans can result in the exclusion of dangerous dogs and the inclusion of non-dangerous dogs.

| | # pit bull incidents | % licensed pit bulls involved in bite incidents |
|----------|----------------------|---|
| Edmonton | 7 | 3.61% |
| Calgary | 81 | 12.22% |
| Hamilton | 31 | 16.67% |
| Toronto | 133 | 4.40% |

*based on 2001 data

| Within the City of Edmonton (2001-2002 data) | | |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| | No. of incidents annual average | % of bites per breed |
| Pit Bull | 5.5 | 2.84% |
| Rottweiler | 30.5 | 1.60% |
| Akita | 5 | 1.52% |
| Mastiff | 1.5 | 1.47% |
| Dalmatian | 6 | 1.40% |

Data compiled and provided by the City of Edmonton Animal Control division.

The Legislation

Nearly a dozen jurisdictions in Canada have implemented, or are considering implementing, breed bans or restrictions. Below are some examples of these bylaws and bills:

British Columbia:

- *Coquitlam*: designates all pit bulls and bull terriers as vicious animals

Alberta

- *Edmonton*: has restrictions on pit bulls and other dogs deemed dangerous. Bylaws specifically exclude Staffordshire Bull Terrier or American Staffordshire Terrier registered with the Canadian Kennel Club.

Manitoba:

- *Winnipeg*: became the first city in Canada to ban pit bulls in 1990.
- *Macdonald*: has banned pit bulls

Ontario:

- Government recently tabled legislation banning the ownership of pit bulls across the province. Transition period will allow current owners to keep their dogs, but with strict restrictions that will include the spaying and neutering of all existing dogs; muzzling of all pit bulls while off their owners' property; increased penalties for pit bull owners who do not respect the restrictions.
- *Kitchener-Waterloo*: banned pit bulls in 1997. The ban specifically excludes Staffordshire Bull Terriers and American Staffordshire Terriers registered with the Canadian Kennel Club or the American Kennel Club.
- *Lakeshore*: has banned "any dog of the Presa

Canario, Pit Bull, Staffordshire, Bull Terrier, American Pit Bull, or American Staffordshire Terrier" or any crossbreed.

- *Windsor*: has recently restricted Pit Bull Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers and American Pit Bulls, and all mixes of these dogs.

Quebec:

- *Sherbrooke*: has banned pit bulls, and has controls on Rottweilers and Mastiffs.
- *Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu*: has banned pit bulls
- *Lachine*: has banned pit bulls
- *Kirkland*: has banned pit bulls
- *Outremont*: has banned pit bulls
- *Sainte-Geneviève*: has banned pit bulls

New Brunswick:

- Province is reviewing province-wide restrictions on all Staffordshire Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers, Rottweilers and Akitas.

Nova Scotia:

- **Clark's Harbour**: banned pit bulls in May 1998 even though there were no pit bulls in the community.
- **Guysborough**: banned pit bulls and Rottweilers

In addition, numerous cities across the country have legislation restricting vicious or dangerous dogs – often defined as dogs that have attacked or acted aggressively toward another person or animal.

In Brief

A small victory for humane hunting

In August 2004, the Government of Ontario, with support from animal welfare organizations, presented a proposal to become the eighth Canadian province to ban penned hunts. Previous legislation already banned the penned hunting of endangered or native species in Ontario, but allowed the practice to continue for the hunting of "exotic" species such as wild boar.

Five penned hunt operations remain in Ontario. Latest reports showed that four of these were recently charged for violations of Ontario wildlife and land-use regulations. The Ontario Government says most hunters who visited the operations were not Ontarians.

Penned hunts, as the name suggests, involve trapping animals of certain species and releasing them into a fenced enclosure, where they are hunted down and killed with virtually no chance of escape. Penned hunts are considered highly unethical because they practically guarantee a kill. They can also be vastly more inhumane than regular hunts since they often attract the most unskilled and inexperienced hunters, thus increasing the odds of a painful death. According to the International Fund for Animal Welfare, the enclosures can lead to the spread of diseases, and the

high fences used for the pens impact native wildlife migration routes and deny wildlife access to local habitat.

The Government of Ontario plans to eliminate penned hunts as early as 2005. It recently concluded a period of consultation with members of the public and other interest groups.

Quebec and Saskatchewan only provinces to allow penned hunts

Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Mark Wartman has announced that his NDP-led government has no problems with penned hunting, and that they will not follow in Ontario's footsteps. He argued that penned hunting is no different than other types of slaughter of farm animals for food.

"It's really recognized as a portion of agriculture," the Minister was quoted as saying in the Saskatoon StarPhoenix. "The animals are basically seen as domestic farm animals and for our game farms there are clear rules about how they need to operate and in terms of harvesting through hunt or however they harvest their animals, we want to make sure it's done in a very humane way."

Improved protection from exotic animal diseases

North American outbreaks of exotic diseases like SARS, monkey pox, the avian flu and West Nile virus have convinced the government that regulating the importation of exotic animals is important for the health of Canadians.

These concerns have led the federal government to review regulations on the importation of exotic species. At the request of environment ministers from across the country, Environment Canada has recently announced the creation of the *National Wildlife Disease Strategy*. Through this initiative, the government promises to review and, where necessary, strengthen the regulations and enforcement procedures to help minimize the spread of exotic diseases.

The CFHS supports this review. Our policies outline serious animal welfare concerns about the trade in exotic animals as pets. Millions of these animals die during capture, transport or in people's homes due to inadequate care.

Animal Cruelty Bill Update

The latest version of the Bill, C-22, died on the shelf last Spring when Parliament broke for the June elections.

Recently, however, Prime Minister Paul Martin and Justice Minister Irwin Cotler have both publicly acknowledged the widespread support for this bill, and reiterated their commitment to pass the legislation.

Want to help?

Write to your Member of Parliament and to Minister Cotler. Visit www.cfhs.ca/CriminalCode/index.htm for their contact information and sample letters.

What's in a label?

With files from the BC SPCA

The BC SPCA oversees a food labelling and certification program called "SPCA Certified". Launched in 2002, the program was developed to address the intensification of livestock agriculture that has resulted in cheap food, but often compromises farm animal welfare.

Through a recognizable label on animal food products such as dairy, meat and eggs, the SPCA Certified program supports niche market farm products, and assures consumers that the animals from participating farms are raised according to BC SPCA developed standards of welfare. These standards go beyond accepted industry practices, requiring husbandry practices that meet animals' behavioural and physiological needs. This includes providing sufficient space and adequate housing that allow animals to express natural behaviours.

The SPCA Certified program is an independent third party certification system. It provides a certified assurance to consumers that food products bearing the program label comply with BC SPCA developed farm animal welfare standards.

Participating farms pay for certification by the BC SPCA that their products meet the BC SPCA's standard for the handling of farm animals. The BC SPCA standards regarding space per animal and transportation times are more stringent than the national codes of practice for farm animal husbandry published by the Canadian AGRI-Food Research Council.

The goals of the SPCA Certified Program are to:

- Facilitate and support changes to farm animal welfare standards
- Provide voluntary third party certification services to those involved in the animal agricultural industry
- Support scientific research and development in farm animal welfare

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) Fair Labelling Practices Program has recently granted approval to the BC SPCA to use the SPCA Certified logo and an accompanying statement of claim on food products certified by the BC SPCA. This is a major step for the program, and will now allow SPCA Certified products to be processed and labelled through federal processing plants.

To find out more about the "SPCA Certified" program visit:
www.sPCA.bc.ca/farm

BKAW 2004 Winners

The CFHS wishes to congratulate the winners of the *Be Kind to Animals Week 2004* contests!!! They are:

Drawing contest:
 Alex Parrott, Age 10, Clarenville, NL

Poem/Slogan contest:
 Crystal Cope, Age 14, Nobleford, AB

Photo contest:
 Best dog/puppy photo:
 Amanda Judd, Dorval, QC

Best cat/kitten:
 Jamie Sweetland, Clarenville, NL

Best people and pets:
 Alexander Butt, Nackawic, NB

Keep an eye out for the winners' artwork and more great activities during **Be Kind to Animals Week 2005, May 1 to 7, 2005!**

SPCA Certified standards

To date, the BC SPCA has developed auditable standards for dairy and beef cattle, poultry (eggs and meat) and pigs. Species Advisory Committees, comprised of veterinarians, producers, and animal scientists assist the BC SPCA in developing standards for the raising, handling, and transport of farm animals. The standards are updated and amended by the BC SPCA and Species Advisory Committees as new scientific information and improved farm animal husbandry practices are developed and proven to improve farm animal welfare.

Below are examples of what the standards require for farm animals:

Prohibited:

1. Standard barren cages for hens laying eggs
2. Gestation crates for sows
3. Tail docking of dairy cows
4. Use of pharmaceuticals for enhancing growth and/or production

Ensured:

1. Access to pasture and/or an outdoor paddock for dairy cows
2. Bedding and rooting materials for pigs
3. Shorter transportation times than current government guidelines

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Animals, Eh?

Thanks!

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102-30 Concourse Gate
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