



Guide to Resolving Animal Nuisance Problems in your Neighborhood

July 1, 2007

Neighborhood Animal Issues

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1. General Steps to Resolving Animal Problems

1. Visit Multnomah County Animal Services online at www.MultCoPets.org to obtain a copy of our [Guide to Resolving Animal Nuisance Problems in your Neighborhood](#). The Guide walks you through the steps to successfully resolve animal problems. The Guide can also be obtained by calling Animal Services at 503-988-7387, and we will gladly mail you one.
2. Talk to the pet owner about the issue. Explain the problem and offer solutions. Sometimes pet owners are not aware of that the barking is disturbing the neighbors.
3. Provide the pet owner and neighbors with information about the pet owner laws in the community, and pet owner responsibilities. Information and resources to barking dogs are available online (see information about Barking Dog Disturbances below).

To view the current Multnomah County Ordinance related to animals, click on [ordinances](#)

4. Contact Neighborhood Mediation services for assistance. Neighborhood mediation programs help neighbors and families in Portland resolve conflicts in a positive and personal way, outside of the legal system. We offer no/low cost, confidential, and effective solutions to many common neighborhood disputes:

Neighborhood Mediation Services in Multnomah County

Portland residents, call:

Resolutions Northwest Neighborhood Mediation Program

Phone number: **503-595-4890** On the web at <http://www.resolutionsnorthwest.org/pg31.cfm>

Residents in Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village & East Multnomah County, call:

East Metro Mediation at **503-618-3247**

On the web at <http://www.ci.gresham.or.us/departments/ocm/mediation/>

5. If the problem continues and previous steps have been unsuccessful to resolve the issue, you may pursue a formal complaint. To file a formal complaint, complete an [Animal Nuisance Complaint Form](#) (available online at MultCoPets.org or available at the shelter. A complete complaint form requires:
 - details about the unresolved violation,
 - dates and times of the violation
 - nature of the violation
 - pet owner name and address, and

- description of the animal(s)
6. Completed Complaint forms may be mailed to **Multnomah County Animal Services, P.O. Box 698 Troutdale, OR 97060 Attention: Legal Aide Officer**. An officer will review the information and contact you on possible legal actions.

2. Barking Dog Disturbance

THE LAW

It is unlawful to permit any animal to unreasonably make a disturbance, such as repeated episodes of continuous noise lasting 10 minutes or episodes of intermittent noise lasting 30 minutes, providing someone did not intentionally provoke the animal other than the owner.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. Try talking to the dog owner about the activities of their pet and what steps can be taken to resolve the problem. Sometimes pet owners are not aware of their pet's actions, especially when the owners are not at home. Or, they might not be aware of a special sleeping schedule you have that is being disturbed by their pet.
2. You may download our [barking dog letter](#) to send it to the dog owner. The letter is designed to help your neighbor understand the problem, and offers some ideas about correcting the barking dog problem.
3. Contact [Neighborhood Mediation](#) for assistance.
4. If Neighborhood Mediation is unsuccessful or unavailable and the problem persists, you may download the [Animal Nuisance Complaint Form](#). After you have completed the petition and had it signed by two other neighbors, you can bring it to Multnomah County Animal Services at 1700 W. Columbia River Highway in Troutdale. We will have Legal Aide Officer available at the shelter on Thursdays between 1pm and 3pm to go over your petition and help you file it. Or you may mail the petition to Multnomah County Animal Services, P.O. Box 698, Troutdale, OR 97060, Attention: Legal Aide Officer.
5. When the petition is received by Animal Services, our Legal Aide Officer will issue a Notice of Infraction to the dog owner. The Notice of Infraction fine is \$100.
6. If the dog owner chooses to pay the fine, no further action is taken.
7. If the dog owner chooses to appeal the fine, the case is then scheduled to be heard by a Multnomah Bar Association Hearings Officer. The Hearings Officer will either affirm or deny the complaint.

3. An Animal Trespasses on your property or Animals permitted to be at Large

THE LAW

It is unlawful for any person to permit an animal to trespass upon property of another. It is unlawful for any person to permit an animal to be at large. At large means that the animal is not physically restrained on the owners or keeper's premises including motorized vehicles in such a manner that physically prevents the animal from leaving the premises or reaching any public areas; or, is not physically restrained when on public property, or any public area, by leash, tether or other physical control device not to exceed eight feet in length and under physical control of a capable person.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. Contact the animal's owner on a personal neighbor to neighbor basis to let him/her know about the problem.

2. **Problems involving Dogs** - You can document the trespass by printing out the [Animal Nuisance Complaint Form](#). It is necessary to have evidence of the problems to support your case. The petition form must be signed by at least two other neighbors (Three people total) or evidence that can support your case that include videotape and/or photographs. The other option is to bring the dog to the shelter in Troutdale during open shelter hours.
3. **Dogs and cats** - You can pick up the animal and transport it to the Animal Shelter in Troutdale during shelter open hours.
4. **Livestock** - If the owners are home, have them confine the livestock. Confine the animal, if you can do so without endangering yourself or the animal. If you don't know who the animal belongs to, or are unable to contact the owner, call the Multnomah County Animal Services at 503-988-7387 and press option 1 for an emergency and be prepared to give the following information or answers:
 - Complete description of the animal.
 - Location of the animal at the time of the call.
 - Direction of travel (i.e., northbound on N.E. 15th), if applicable.
 - Does anyone know where the animal is usually pastured?
 - Is there a known owner?
 - Can you tie up or confine the animal?

If the livestock cannot be confined on the owners property the animal will be impounded by Animal Services. If you wish to file a formal complaint you can call 503-988-7387 during phone hours and make a report. An Officer can contact you (on a non-emergency basis). You can sign a Notice of Infraction. You may have to appear at an appeal hearing if the Infraction is appealed by the owner.
5. **Wildlife** – Wildlife is the responsibility of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Please call Oregon Fish and Wildlife or the Portland Audubon Society for assistance.
 - **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife** them at 503-657-2000.
 - **Portland Audubon Society Wildlife Care Center** at 503-292-0304.

4. You have found a stray dog or cat

THE LAW

Any person who finds and harbors a dog or cat without knowing the owner's identity shall notify Multnomah County Animal Services at 503-988-7387 during telephone hours and furnish a description of the animal and/or complete a found report via the website at www.multcopets.org.

The finder may bring the animal to the shelter in Troutdale during open shelter hours.

If the finder chooses to retain possession of the animal, the finder shall, within 15 days, cause to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county a notice of the finding once each week for two consecutive weeks. Each notice shall list a description of the animal.

If no person appears and claims ownership of the animal prior to the expiration of 180 days after the date of the notice to Animal Services, the finder shall be declared the owner of the animal.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. You may bring the dog or cat to the shelter in Troutdale during open shelter hours.
2. You may care for the animal at your home, but must notify Animal Services that you have the animal and provide a description. If you care for the animal at your home, you must place a classified ad with a description of the animal within 14 days. This must be done for two consecutive weeks. If no one comes forward to claim the animal within 180 days, you will become the owner of the animal.

Publications and websites to place found reports:

 - *The Oregonian* at 503-221-8000
 - *The Nickel Ads* at 503-255-3780
 - *The Gresham Outlook* 503-667-6633
 - **Dove Lewis Emergency Animal Hospital**. On the web at <http://www.dovelewis.org>.
 - **Craig's List**. On the web at <http://portland.craigslist.org/>
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5. Dead Animals

GUIDELINES

Disposition of a dead animal's remains varies according to the type of animal and ownership.

1. You may take your dead pet to the Multnomah County Animal Services facility in Troutdale or to the Oregon Humane Society for cremation. A fee is charged. You may bury your dead pet on your own property. Please check with your local Zoning officials.
2. If you do not know who the owner is, report the animal to Multnomah County Animal Services at 503-988-7387. Animal Services will remove dead stray animals and dead wildlife on public property Monday through Friday. Our goal is to respond within 72 working hours of the call being received by our staff.
3. If the dead animal is on private property, please move the animal to the street or curb before calling in a request to be picked up.

6. Animal deposits waste in public area (scoop law)

THE LAW

Any person in physical possession and control of any animal in a public place shall remove excrement or other solid waste deposited by the animal in any public area not designed to receive those wastes, including but not limited to streets, sidewalks, parking strips and public parks. (NOTE: this law does not cover private property).

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. Contact the animal's owner on a personal neighbor-to-neighbor basis and let him/her know about the problem.
2. [Neighborhood Mediation](#) is another possible avenue for resolution.

7. Dog or Cat bites a human and the bite breaks the skin

THE LAW

This law is detailed and is covered by our Potentially Dangerous Dog regulations.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. **Dog Bites** - If the dog is confined, call the call non-emergency line at 503-988-7387 during regular telephone hours to report the bite. If the dog is loose and aggressive, call 503-988-7387, press option 1 to report an emergency. An Animal Services Officer will be dispatched immediately. The officer will contact you and explain the potentially dangerous dog laws.
2. **Cat - Bites** - If you know the owner of the cat you can call Animal Services to report the bite. Make sure you give a complete description of the cat and provide the address of where the cat lives. An Animal Services Officer will be contacting the owner regarding the quarantine procedures. If the cat is a stray and/or feral cat call Animal Services during regular phone hours to report the bite. Please provide a description of the cat. If you have contained the stray or feral cat you can bring the animal to the shelter in Troutdale during open hours for quarantine.
3. Please consult your doctor for all medical questions.

8. Animal Abuse or Animal Neglect

THE LAW

It is unlawful for any person to physically mistreat any animal either by deliberate abuse or neglect to furnish adequate care, including medical attention.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. If the animal is in distress, immediately call Animal Services 503-988-7387, press option 1 to report an emergency. An officer will respond immediately. Be prepared to provide the address or specific location of the animal, a description of the animal, and a description of the conditions or incident.
2. If the animal is not in distress, call the non-emergency line at 503-988-7387 during telephone hours to report your complaint. An Animal Services Officer will investigate it. You may remain anonymous on these complaints.
3. If someone is treating an animal cruelly, we need a witness to their actions.

9. Injured Animal

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. If it is your sick or injured animal, call your veterinarian without delay. Keep the animal warm and protected from wet, wind and traffic. Owners are responsible for their own animals.
2. If the injured/sick animal (cat, dog, or livestock only) is a stray:
 - Locate the owner, if possible.
 - If you cannot locate the owner and you feel the injury or sickness is LIFE THREATENING to the animal, call the Multnomah County Animal Services at 503-988-7387, press option 1 to report an emergency.
 - Be prepared to give the exact location of the animal, description and the animal's problems (illness and symptoms, bleeding, behavior, etc.) and any ID on the animal.
3. If the injury or illness is life threatening to the animal, stay near it until the Animal Services Officer can arrive. Do not try to move the animal unless it is in danger of being hit by a vehicle. The animal may be further injured or may bite you because of pain or fear.
4. If the injury or sickness does not appear to be life threatening, call Animal Services 503-988-7387 during regular telephone hours to make a report.
5. If the injured or ill animal is a stray bird, call:
Portland Audubon Society Wildlife Care Center at 503-292-0304.
6. If the injured or ill animal is wildlife, call:
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife at 503-657-2000

10. There is an exotic animal or snake in my neighborhood

THE LAW

It is unlawful to harbor and/or own an exotic or dangerous animal. (You may check the definitions for a listing of exotic and dangerous animals and reptiles).

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

1. Check with your neighbor and see if they are aware of the exotic ordinance. Call Animal Services at 503-988-7387 during telephone hours and make a report.
2. An Animal Services Officer will investigate your complaint. If the exotic animal or reptile is banned in the County, a Notice of Infraction will be issued, giving the owner 24 hours to remove the exotic animal from the county. In those cases where warnings by neighbors and by Multnomah County Animal Services Officers have been ineffective in convincing an animal owner to correct the pets disturbing behavior, it is necessary for the complaint to initiate a Notice of Infraction and be willing to testify at an appeal hearing if needed.

11. Dogs in cars under dangerous conditions

THE LAW

No animal shall be confined within or on a motor vehicle at any location under such conditions as may endanger the health or well-being of the animal, including but not limited to dangerous temperature, lack of food, water or attention or confinement with a dangerous animal.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM?

1. Locate the animal's owner if possible.
2. If unable to locate the owner or if the owner is unsympathetic to the animal's plight, and you believe the animal's life is threatened because of its current situation and needs, immediate help, call 503-988-7387, press option 1 to report an emergency.
3. If the animal isn't in immediate danger, call 503-988-7387 during regular telephone hours and make a report (which is described under the neglect/cruelty to an animal).

12. The Notice of Infraction Process

A Notice of Infraction (NOI) is the legal process used to enforce the Animal Control Ordinance. A Notice of Infraction includes a detailed account of an alleged violation of the ordinance. Specifically, the NOI lists the time, date, location, of an alleged violation; a full description of the animal involved; and, the name and address of the responsible person violating the ordinance. A citizen that witnesses a violation can cause a Notice of Infraction to be issued. Multnomah County Animal Services personnel have the authority to serve NOIs. The recipient of a NOI has the option of paying a fine, send in a letter of explanation to a Hearings Officer, or request a hearing before a Multnomah County Hearings Officer. The citizen imitating the NOI, and any witnesses, must be willing to testify at an appeal hearing, if needed.

Briefly, the Notice of Infraction process involves these steps:

1. The animal owner should receive an INFORMAL WARNING about the problem from a neighbor
2. The pet owner should have received a warning from Animal Services, either by a letter or visit from an Officer
3. Neighbors must attempt to resolve the problem with Neighborhood Mediation.
4. If the problem persists after notifying the pet owner, AND contacting Neighborhood Mediation, a Notice of Infraction may be pursued.
5. The complainant (witnessing citizen) signs the [Animal Nuisance Complaint Form](#). The form is available online, or can be obtained by calling Animal Services and requesting the form.
6. Once you have completed the Animal Nuisance Complaint Form, please mail it to Multnomah County Animal Services P.O. Box 698, Troutdale, OR 97060.
7. The pet owner may appeal the Notice of Infraction. If they appeal, a hearing date will be set and you will be notified. A hearings officer will hear testimony and then will make a decision.
8. It is wise to have as many neighbors as possible willing to testify about the problem. Helpful evidence could include:
 - Photographs, videotapes and tape recordings.
 - Logs which record date/time/place of the disturbance or incident.
 - Journal of attempts to solve the problem with an animal owner.
 - Accurate testimony of neighbor's witnesses.

To view the current Multnomah County Ordinance related to animals, click on [ordinances](#)

13. Living with Wildlife

For all wildlife questions, please contact:

- **Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center** at 503-292-0304.
- **Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife** at 503-657-2000