



## **P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Animal Services Addressing Disease Outbreak at Santa Maria Animal Center**

Over the past week, a number of dogs at the center began displaying signs of a skin condition that is not yet diagnosed. A number of staff and volunteers at the shelter have also reported skin changes including an itchy rash. The personal well-being of our staff and volunteers is of utmost importance to the County, as is the well-being of the animals in our care.

Aggressive actions are being taken by the staff and veterinary consultants to determine the cause of the skin condition, ensure appropriate treatment, and to prevent the spread of this condition to additional animals or people.

The following actions are being taken:

- People who have displayed skin changes or conditions are being referred to their primary healthcare providers for follow-up.
- A treatment plan for shelter animals and adopted dogs which may have been exposed has been developed.
- Animals have been seen by veterinary staff and veterinary experts have been consulted. No definitive diagnosis has been determined yet.
- Fungal testing has been initiated on specimens from the dogs that first displayed symptoms. Results are pending.
- All dogs at the Santa Maria Animal Center are being kept in their kennels; there is no entry or exit at this time by visitors or anyone other than key staff and volunteers. This is to protect other animals and people.
- Consultation with a veterinary dermatologist has been initiated to aid in diagnosis and treatment.

Veterinary staff report that this may be a fungal infection. Fungal infections are easily treated when diagnosed. Once a diagnosis has been confirmed we will communicate that broadly to our staff and our volunteers. We are following the veterinary advice we receive, treating affected animals and implementing a plan of containment for the Santa Maria Animal Center.

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