



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ringworm Cause of Disease Outbreak at Santa Maria Animal Center

Preliminary test results have been received for the fungal disease outbreak that is affecting dogs and people at the Santa Maria Animal Center. Laboratory cultures for some of the affected animals have tested positive for *microsporium canis* which is commonly known as ringworm.

The personal well-being of our staff and volunteers remains as our highest priority, along with the well-being of the animals in our care. All affected people have been advised to see their physician for appropriate treatment. Fungal infections are easily treated when diagnosed.

Outreach actions to notify possibly affected people and animals have included calls to adopters and animal rescue organizations to advise of the outbreak, telephone notifications to veterinarians in the Santa Maria and Lompoc areas, email outreach to Santa Barbara County Animal Services volunteers and staff, meetings with staff, phone calls to Animal Services customers, notices at the animal shelter, press releases and media interviews.

At the Santa Maria Animal Center, multiple actions based on veterinary advice are occurring to contain the outbreak and treat affected animals:

- The dog kennels are quarantined and only specified staff and volunteers are entering, with appropriate protective clothing
- Affected animals have been placed in designated kennel rooms
- Dogs that have visible lesions are on antifungal treatment
- All dogs housed at the Santa Maria Animal Center are receiving antifungal dip treatment twice weekly
- Our public spay and neuter and vaccination clinics have been temporarily suspended
- Extensive cleaning and sanitization procedures are being followed
- Consultation with a veterinary dermatologist is ongoing to help manage the outbreak and treatment.

Local veterinarians have reported an increase in treating skin conditions in their private practice clinics. Animal Services will continue to treat affected animals at the Santa Maria Animal Center and update the public on the status of this resolving the outbreak.

Animal Services reminds owners to ensure their pet is wearing a license and proper identification so that lost pets can quickly be returned to the owner and avoid unnecessary exposure to the shelter during this time.

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