
2004 Ohio Survey

Of

Animal Care and Control Agencies

including

County Dog Warden Agencies

Humane Societies

Municipal Animal Control Agencies

Funded by the Kenneth A. Scott

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Conducted by

The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine

in collaboration with

Ohio County Dog Wardens Association

Ohio Federated Humane Societies

2004 Ohio Survey of Animal Care and Control Agencies

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Preface

This report would not have been possible without the support of the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust. Their support provided the necessary funding to allow for a comprehensive survey and analysis of Ohio animal agencies to take place.

Many groups have worked diligently in their collaborative efforts to make this report a reality. In particular, the authors would like to thank John Silva and Terry Conant from the Ohio County Dog Wardens Association and Jodi Buckman, Sharon Harvey and Dori Villalon from the Ohio Federated Humane Societies. The commitment and support of these individuals have made this research possible.

Perhaps most importantly, the authors would like to thank the participants in this survey. You have given us the necessary information to create this report in the hope of improving the understanding of your vital services to Ohio communities.

Please direct any questions or comments about this study to the authors at The Ohio State University, College of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, 1900 Coffey Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1092, (614) 292-1206.

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Chapter 1

Executive Summary

In 1996 The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine collaborated with the Ohio County Dog Wardens Association and Ohio Federated Humane Societies to conduct a comprehensive statewide survey of animal care and control agencies. This effort was supported by the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust. The result was the original 1996 Ohio Survey Report as well as publication of the findings in *The Journal of the Veterinary Medical Association*.

In collaboration with these same organizations and with continued funding from the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust, the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine has again conducted a comprehensive survey of Ohio animal care and control agencies for 2004. The goals of the 2004 survey were to again collect comprehensive information for use by the agencies surveyed as well as to look at broad trends for the state. These results have been published in *The Journal of the Veterinary Medical Association* and are highlighted below.

The attached table presents a summary of animal intake and disposition for 2004 and 1996 at all animal care and control agencies in Ohio. Total intake of dogs decreased by 16.6% from 1996 to 2004 which represented a decrease from 19.14 to 15.59 dogs per 1,000 people. The number of dogs euthanatized decreased by 39.0%, which represented a decrease from 11.50 to 6.85 per 1,000 people. Total number of cats taken in by these agencies increased by 19.7%, representing an increase from 10.27 to 11.26 cats per 1,000 people. The number of cats euthanatized increased by 13.9%, which represented an increase from 7.23 to 8.04 cats per 1,000 people.

Estimated total expenses for all animal care and control agencies in Ohio during 2004 were \$57.7 million, which was a 69% increase compared with estimated total expenses during 1996, after adjustment for inflation. Estimated total amount of money allocated by county and city governments in Ohio for use by animal care and control agencies during 2004 was \$25.8 million, which was a 39% increase compared with estimated total amount allocated during 1996, after adjustment for inflation.

Overall, 20% of the 164 animal care and control agencies that responded reported that they did not have any full-time employees during 2004, and 13% reported that they did not have any full- or part-time employees. 49% of agencies indicated that they spent money on employee training during 2004. 51% of agencies employed volunteers during 2004, compared with 40% of agencies that employed volunteers during 1996. Thirty six (31%) of 115 agencies reporting having built a new facility or completed a substantial addition since 1996.

Adoption fees for a dog or puppy ranged from \$5 to \$150 (median, \$55), and adoption fees for a cat or kitten ranged from \$0 to \$80 (median, \$55). By contrast, median adoption fees during 1996, after adjustment for inflation, were \$25 for a dog or puppy and \$41 for a cat or kitten. Of the 121 agencies that listed the adoption services they provided, (68%) included the cost of spaying or neutering in the adoption fees, compared with 46% of agencies that did during 1996.

The number of agencies with a spay/neuter policy increased from 56% in 1996 to 71% in 2004. The number of agencies that had an association with a veterinarian increased from 39% in 1996 to 80% in 2004. The number of agencies that vaccinated animals increased from 43% to 70% and the number that dewormed animals increased from 45% to 64%.

Overall, 49% of agencies had a foster program, and 35% of humane societies had a trap-neuter-return program for feral cats. Only 60% indicated that they scanned animals for a microchip when they received the animals compared with 48% in 1996, and 8% reported that they implanted microchips in animals that were adopted compared with 4% in 1996.

The top 5 needs reported by responding agencies, as determined on the basis of weighted-mean scores, were capital-facility improvement, increased funding, additional paid staff, veterinary services, and improved legislation. Similarly, during 1996, the top 5 needs were capital-facility improvement, increased funding, improved legislation, improved education, and veterinary services. Agencies listed the most important animal welfare issues in their community as feral and stray cats (30%), overpopulation (not species specific) (16%), cruelty and neglect (13%), abandoned and stray dogs (13%), and lack of spay/neuter services (10%).

Estimated total numbers of animals handled by animal care and control agencies in Ohio during 1996 and 2004.

Category	Dogs		Cats		Other animals		Total	
	1996	2004	1996	2004	1996	2004	1996	2004
Animal intake								
Stray	141,791 (66.2)	118,153 (66.2)	57,186 (49.8)	95,208 (73.8)	8,960 (88.0)	6,720 (84.5)	207,937 (61.3)	220,081 (69.8)
Owner surrendered	68,983 (32.2)	56,386 (31.6)	56,196 (48.9)	31,483 (24.4)	383 (3.7)	1,095 (13.8)	125,562 (37.0)	88,964 (28.1)
Cruelty-neglect-other	3,369 (1.6)	4,055 (2.2)	1,495 (1.3)	2,286 (1.8)	844 (8.3)	134 (1.7)	5,708 (1.7)	6,475 (2.1)
Total	214,143 (100)	178,593 (100)	114,877 (100)	128,977 (100)	10,187 (100)	7,949 (100)	339,207 (100)	315,519 (100)
Animal disposition								
Adopted	51,662 (24.4)	63,783 (37.5)	29,477 (26.3)	39,828 (29.7)	329 (3.5)	948 (12.3)	81,468 (24.5)	104,559 (33.6)
Reclaimed	29,302 (13.9)	26,919 (15.9)	1,004 (0.9)	1,240 (0.9)	58 (0.6)	20 (0.3)	30,364 (9.1)	28,179 (9.0)
Euthanatized	128,637 (60.9)	78,470 (46.2)	80,922 (72.2)	92,168 (68.7)	7,872 (82.9)	6,458 (84.1)	217,431 (65.3)	177,096 (56.8)
Other-died-lost	1,745 (0.8)	691 (0.4)	627 (0.6)	846 (0.6)	1,237 (13.0)	251 (3.3)	3,609 (1.1)	1,788 (0.6)
Total	211,346 (100)	169,863 (100)	112,030 (100)	134,082 (100)	9,496 (100)	7,677 (100)	332,872 (100)	311,622 (100)

Estimated total numbers of animals taken in and euthanatized by animal care and control agencies in Ohio during 1996 and 2004 as a proportion of state human and animal population.

Variable	Dogs		Cats		Total	
	1996	2004	1996	2004	1996	2004
Animal Intake						
Per 1,000 People	19.14	15.59	10.27	11.26	29.41	26.84
As percentage of animals in Ohio	9.50	7.17	4.44	4.55	6.80	5.78
Animals euthanatized						
Per 1,000 People	11.50	6.85	7.23	8.04	18.73	14.89
As percentage of animals in Ohio	5.71	3.15	3.13	3.25	4.33	3.21

Chapter 2

State of Ohio Results

Response Rate

A total of 222 agencies were surveyed in Ohio with 165 agencies responding (74% response rate).

Statistics Used

In places where averages are reported, a median is used instead of a mean. The median number is the middle number in a group of numbers. The mean is the average for a group of numbers. When the data is skewed, the median is a better indicator of central tendency than the mean. The following is a group of numbers with the median and the mean to show the difference:

Numbers:	2, 3, 6, 7, 25, 94, 101
Mean:	34
Median:	7

In this case, the median is a better representation of what is most common to the group of numbers.

Shelter/Building Information

Number of agencies that house animals:	128	(78%)
Median number of days per week open to public:	6	(range 0 to 7)
Median number of hours per week open to public:	38	(range 0 to 84)
Median total capacity for animals housed:	50	(range 5 to 575)
Median capacity for dogs:	32	(range 2 to 450)
Median capacity for cats:	40	(range 0 to 375)
Median square footage:	3,000	(range 30 to 32,000)
Median building age in years:	20	(range 0.25 to 150)
Number of new buildings since 1996 survey:	36	

Expenditures

Total expenditures for 2004 were estimated by group type for the agencies that did not respond or give an expense figure (see Appendix for more detail).

Total expenditures:	\$57,668,933
Per Capita expense:	\$5.03

Staffing and Volunteer Profile

The following are staffing category questions that were asked of all agencies. The following abbreviations are used: Full-time (FT) and part-time (PT).

	<u>Median</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u># with None</u>
Total Employees - FT:	2	0 - 53	32
Total Employees - PT:	1	0 - 21	77
Certified Euthanasia Techs - FT:	1	0 - 25	73
Certified Euthanasia Techs - PT:	0	0 - 5	141
Number employ certified veterinary technician:		17	(11%)

Volunteers

Number of agencies that used volunteers:	83	(51%)
For agencies that use volunteers:		
Median number of yearly volunteer hours:	1,900	(range 1 to 220,000)
Median number of weekly volunteers:	9	(range 1 to 500)

Training

Number of agencies provided training:	78
Median dollars spent on training:	\$950 (range \$30 to \$10,000)

Animal Numbers

The summary for the state for both animal intake and animal disposition are given below. Animals that were transferred between agencies are not included here to avoid counting the same animal more than once.

For nonrespondents, estimates for animal intake and disposition were made based on the median numbers for agencies of the same type. See the Appendix for more detail.

Some agencies only reported totals for either animal intake or animal disposition without a breakdown by category. These unclassified animals have been assigned to categories based on the percentages of known animals in each category.

Animal Numbers Per Capita (average per 1000 people)

Dogs	15.59
Cats	11.26

Animal Intake**Totals By Intake Category and Species**

<u>Intake</u>	<u>Dogs</u>		<u>Cats</u>		<u>Wildlife</u>		<u>Other</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strays	118,153	66%	95,208	74%	6,425	100%	295	19%	220,081	70%
Owner Surrendered	56,386	32%	31,483	24%	1	0%	1,094	72%	88,964	28%
Cruelty/ Neglect	4,055	2%	2,286	2%	2	0%	132	9%	6,475	2%
Total Intake	178,593	100%	128,977	100%	6,428	100%	1521	100%	315,519	100%
Dead on Arrival	577		328		886		8			

Animal Disposition**Totals by Disposition Category and Species**

<u>Disposition</u>	<u>Dogs</u>		<u>Cats</u>		<u>Wildlife</u>		<u>Other</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Adopted	63,783	38%	39,828	30%	9	0%	939	69%	104,559	34%
Reclaimed by Owner	26,919	16%	1,240	1%	2	0%	18	1%	28,179	9%
Euthanized	78,470	46%	92,168	69%	6059	96%	399	29%	177,096	57%
Other/Died in Care	691	0%	846	0%	243	4%	8	1%	1,788	0%
Total Disposition	169,863	100%	134,082	100%	6,313	100%	1,364	100%	311,622	100%

Animal Euthanasia Per Capita (average per 1000 people)

Dogs 6.85
Cats 8.04

Law Enforcement and Regulations

Animal Citations

Only dog warden agencies and municipal animal control agencies were asked for animal citation information. Totals are given below for these two groups.

Total Citations:	26,303 (92% of Ohio reporting)
Median Citations:	92 (range 0 to 3,899)

Total Citations by Category

Stray/dog running at large:	9,071 (34% of total)
Failure to license:	12,432 (47% of total)
Vicious/dangerous dog:	2,504 (10% of total)
Other:	2,296 (9% of total)

Median Citations by Category

Stray/dog running at large:	39 (range 0 to 858)
Failure to license:	25 (range 0 to 3,080)
Vicious/dangerous dog:	3 (range 0 to 584)
Other:	0 (range 0 to 530)

Cruelty and Neglect Investigations

Agencies that handle cruelty/neglect investigations: 35%

For agencies that handled cruelty and neglect investigations:

Total number of complaints:	20,008
Median number of complaints:	141 (range 5 to 3,416)
Total number of charges filed:	556 (2.8% of total complaints)
Median number of charges filed:	3 (range 0 to 172)
Total number of guilty verdicts:	438 (79% of charges filed)
Median number of guilty verdicts:	2.5 (range 0 to 172)

Pit Bull/Pit Bull Mixes & Dog Fighting

Total number of pit bull/pit bull mixes received:	8,834 (41% agencies reporting)
Median number of pit bull/pit bull mixes received:	23 (range 0 to 2,033)
Total number of pit bull/pit bull mixes redeemed:	1,306
Total number of pit bull/pit bull mixes adopted:	119

Record Keeping

Animal Records

Track puppies/kittens separately from dogs/cats:	34	(23%)
Method of keeping animal records:		
Manual:	75	(50%)
Computer:	26	(17%)
Both:	50	(33%)

License and Adoption Fees

Median adoption fee for dog/puppy:	\$55	(range \$5 to \$150)
Median adoption fee for cat:	\$55	(range \$0 to \$80)
Median adoption fee for kitten:	\$60	(range \$0 to \$100)
Services Included in Adoption Fee:		
Dog only:	16	(13%)
License Fee:	41	(34%)
Spay/Neuter Service or Certificate:	82	(68%)
Vaccinations or Deworming:	86	(70%)
Heartworm or FeLV Testing:	39	(32%)
Microchip:	13	(11%)

Euthanasia and Disposal Methods

Euthanasia (Multiple responses were allowed)

Sodium Pentobarbital:	108	(70%)
Carbon Monoxide:	34	(22%)
Other:	9	(6%)
None:	20	(13%)

Disposal

Incineration:	30	(19%)
Landfill:	93	(60%)
Common Burial:	19	(12%)
Other:	13	(8%)

Medical Care

Veterinary Services

Agencies using veterinary services:	115	(80%)
Have full-time veterinarian on staff	7	(6%)
Have part-time veterinarian on staff	6	(5%)
Use contract veterinarian:	88	(77%)
Use volunteer veterinarian:	32	(28%)

Spay/Neuter

Agencies with spay/neuter policy:	101	(71%)
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Type of spay/neuter policy (for those agencies that have a policy; can have more than 1):

Spay/neuter all animals before leaving facility:	42	(42%)
Spay/neuter some animals before leaving facility:	29	(29%)
Spay/neuter certificate used with veterinarians:	41	(41%)
Spay/neuter performed after adoption at facility:	9	(9%)
Other policy:	5	(5%)

Vaccinations & Testing

Vaccinate for:

Kennel Cough:	60	(45%)
Distemper/parvo (DHPP):	93	(70%)
Feline URI/distemper (FVRCP):	64	(85%)
Medication used for intestinal worming:	90	(64%)

Test for:

Heartworm disease (dogs):	55	(41%)
Feline leukemia (FeLV):	55	(71%)
Immunodeficiency virus (FIV):	38	(52%)

Miscellaneous

Utilize a foster program:	77	(49%)
Have a feline trap/neuter/return program:	24	(15%)
Scan animals for microchip ID:	93	(60%)
Implant microchips in animals for ID:	13	(8%)
Official role in emergency and disaster planning in area:	59	(37%)

Needs Assessment

Most Important Needs

Agencies were asked to write in their three most pressing needs. Needs were assigned a weighted median score depending on their ranking as follows:

- A need ranked first received 3 points
- A need ranked second received 2 points
- A need ranked third received 1 point

The most pressing needs in order of importance and their weighted scores were:

<u>Need</u>	<u>Weighted Score</u>	<u># Agencies Ranked # 1</u>
Capital/Facility Improvements	188	40
Increased Funding	164	39
Additional Staff	115	16
Veterinary Services	83	12
Improved Legislation for Animal Laws	53	12

Areas of Need

Agencies were asked to rank each of the areas of need listed below for which outside assistance would be helpful. Scores were ranked using a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 indicating not important and 5 indicating very important. The (n=) number after the area indicates how many agencies responded to the question.

	Category Ranking				
	1	2	3	4	5
Capital/Facility Improvements (n=149)	14%	9%	14%	17%	46%
Additional Paid Staff (n=151)	12%	14%	21%	13%	40%
Personnel Relations (Team Building) (n=145)	17%	11%	34%	14%	23%
Board Development & Recruitment (n=144)	34%	14%	17%	14%	21%
Staff Training (n=150)	12%	8%	23%	27%	29%
Improved Legislation for Animal Laws (n=152)	1%	7%	16%	11%	64%
Volunteer Training & Recruitment (n=151)	24%	11%	26%	16%	23%
Community/Public Relations (n=152)	4%	9%	19%	26%	42%
Fund Raising (n=148)	18%	5%	15%	15%	47%
Veterinary Services (n=150)	9%	10%	27%	17%	37%
Veterinary Community Relations (n=150)	10%	9%	31%	16%	34%
Computers (n=149)	13%	11%	25%	23%	28%
Other Office/Medical Equipment (n=149)	13%	18%	30%	15%	24%

Animal Welfare Issue

Agencies were asked to name the most important animal welfare issue in their community.

The top issues listed were:

Stray/Feral Cats	40	(30%)
Overpopulation	21	(16%)
Cruelty/Neglect	18	(13%)
Abandoned/Stray Dogs	18	(13%)
Last Spay/Neuter Services	13	(10%)
Other	24	(18%)