

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canine Parvo-Virus on the Rise in Lee County

Fort Myers, Florida, 1/27/12 – Lee County Domestic Animal Services (LCDAS) is urging all pet owners to vaccinate their dogs for parvo-virus. The shelter has seen a rise in parvo cases among stray dogs and puppies in the community. “The parvo-virus is highly contagious, expensive to treat, and often fatal despite treatment,” warns LCDAS veterinarian, Suzanne Vazzana.

Whitney Whitford, D.V.M. of Animal Medical Center of Lehigh and president of the Calusa Veterinary Medical Society urges owners with new puppies to see their veterinarian for vaccinations beginning at six to eight weeks of age with boosters given every three weeks until puppies are 16 weeks old. Owners should continue to follow their veterinarian’s recommended schedule for vaccines to ensure protection against this deadly virus and limit their pet’s exposure to questionable areas.

Parvo-virus is spread from dog to dog by direct or indirect contact with their feces. It can be especially severe in puppies that are not protected by maternal antibodies or vaccination. The common signs are severe vomiting and diarrhea. The virus can live in organic matter, such as soil, for over a year. Victims of this virus die of dehydration as the virus attacks the intestinal lining.

It is extremely important to animal shelters that the public vaccinate their pets, as these are the same pets that might end up at the shelter if they get lost. LCDAS has taken a proactive role in the community and, as always, vaccinates all dogs entering the shelter against the parvo-virus. More information about proper pet care and a list of local veterinary, emergency, and low-cost clinics, is available at <http://www.leelostpets.com>.

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