

Pets Overexposure to Heat a Continuing Concern

Fort Myers, Florida, 8/5/09—Lee County Domestic Animal Services (LCDAS) has seen a recent increase in pets suffering from overexposure to heat. Some of the occurrences have been unintentional involving owners in need of education regarding the dangers of heat exhaustion. Others appear to be deliberate, such as the recent case of eight kittens found inside a plastic storage container with the lid closed.

By the time the finder was able to get them to the shelter most of the kittens were already suffering seizures and irreversible effects of overexposure to heat. LCDAS staff was able to save three of the kittens which are doing well now.

LCDAS wants everyone to be aware of these hazards, even individuals who do not own pets. The agency frequently sees stray pets transported to the shelter in the trunks of cars; pets riding in the back of open pick up trucks where they could fall or jump out in addition to suffering exposure from the heat; pets left in yards without proper water and shelter; and of course, pets left inside parked cars.

Anyone who sees an animal without proper food, water, and shelter or subject to other types of neglect and abuse should contact Lee County Domestic Animal Services at 239-533-7387. According to Lee County Ordinance 09-20 and Florida State Statute it is unlawful for any owner to fail to provide adequate, food, water, shelter, veterinary care, or otherwise neglect an animal. Failure to do so is punishable by a maximum fine of \$500 for a civil infraction and a maximum of \$5,000, jail time, or both for a misdemeanor conviction. Felony cruelty involving intentional acts may be punishable by up to \$10,000, jail time, or both.

For more information about local and state laws regarding animals call Lee County Domestic Animal Services at 239-533-7387 (LEE-PETS). Lee County Ordinance 09-20 may be viewed online at www.LeeLostPets.com. To inquire about adopting the three kittens saved from overexposure to heat, call 533-7387 and ask about Oscar (ID# 451214), Grover (ID# 451215), and Elmo (ID# 451216). The kittens along with other pets for adoption may also be viewed online. The website updates every hour.