

Dozens of dogs seized in Hidalgo County animal cruelty case

Lauren E. Toney For the Sun-News

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LAS CRUCES - Doña Ana County Sheriff's investigators seized 47 dogs and one cat from a residence in Hidalgo County on Saturday and are now seeking rescue groups and foster families for the animals.

Investigators with the Doña Ana County and Hidalgo County sheriff's departments reported the owner, whose name was not released, appeared to be hoarding the animals.

This is the first animal cruelty case in Hidalgo County, said Sgt. Andrew Arrendondo of the county's Sheriff's Department.

"They're sweet animals that need a little care," said Robyn Gojkovich, Doña Ana County Sheriff's investigator.

The condition of the animals did not indicate that dog fighting was involved, she said.

"These animals were starving to death and emaciated," Gojkovich said. "Most were on chains that had become embedded in their necks."

Due to the poor living conditions, Gojkovich said, "One dog was in such bad shape - unable to stand - that it had to be euthanized at the scene."

Gojkovich on Sunday delivered six dogs to rescue organizations in Silver City and 10 to Albuquerque.

"We're continuing to look for individuals and rescue groups for the remaining animals," she said.

Hidalgo County Sheriff's investigators continue to investigate the incident, according to Arrendondo.

"The completion of the medical aspect of this investigation" will help investigators determine what charges are involved in the case, he said. "At this point, it appears to be a case of extreme cruelty to animals."

It's the first animal cruelty case Hidalgo County has experienced in recent memory, Arrendondo said. "I've never seen anything like it."

He added, "Without the help of the Do-a Ana County Sheriff's Department, we could have never accomplished what we did (Saturday) night. We greatly appreciate the outstanding work from Do-a Ana County."

Anyone interested in providing shelter for these animals is asked to contact Gojkovich at (575) 639-6506.

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