

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the Positive Side

By James Chavez / For the Sun-News

Posted: 03/28/2010 12:00:00 AM MDT

Animals offer affection, love and help us to cope with stress. Having a pet is a blessing. However, it is up to people to take into consideration many factors when choosing the right pet according to their lifestyles. If not, that blessing can turn completely opposite for you and for your pet.

It should be normal to think that pets exist to be loved and cared for, not to amuse us. Once you understand this, it shouldn't be a problem choosing the right pet that you and your family will cherish and care for. Las Cruces Animal Control Officers feel strongly about this. We do this job because we love and care for animals.

State health departments around the country use Animal Control to help protect the public from exposure to rabies disease. Las Cruces Animal Control would like to remind people their cats and dogs must remain current on rabies vaccinations. In fact, a lot of animal control agencies operate under the Health Department for that reason. The city of Las Cruces Animal Control operates under the Las Cruces Police Department.

All dogs and cats must have a City Pet License. Cats and dogs are required to be confined appropriately to the pet owner's property unless while off property, they are properly caged or crated or controlled by a leash or lead that is no longer than eight feet. This includes dogs and cats. For more information on these or any other city animal ordinances, please go to the city of Las Cruces Web site: <http://www.las-cruces.org/resources/pets/>

The city of Las Cruces Animal Control wants to have a positive influence for pets, pet owners and the community, and our mission is to ensure the well being of both animal and residents of our community by delivering high quality, responsive and cost-effective animal control service. This mission is accomplished by enforcing animal control laws while providing compassionate service to animals and their owners.

Animal Control is more than just enforcement. It is a tool that is used by officers to help educate pet owners on how to be responsible. Many pet owners don't take the time to understand local ordinances when it comes to pets.

This is why Las Cruces Animal Control has developed an educational series. These presentations cover issues that Animal Control officers face every day and how we deal with them. Topics include animal bite prevention, care and maintenance of your pet, animal cruelty, animal fighting, animal hoarding and how to deal with your barking dog, among others.

Our Animal Control educational series has been used in our local schools. We have used the presentations at the Annual Governors' Conference on Domestic Violence and to help cross train with other governmental agencies within our area communities.

Las Cruces Animal Control offers these presentations to any group or organization interested in learning about these issues. The presentations are informal and interactive.

Please call Las Cruces Animal Control at (575) 528-4100/4521 or come by our office at 1085 Med Park here in Las Cruces for more information or to schedule a presentation time.

James Chavez is an animal control officer with the city of Las Cruces.