

WINTER 2022

# THE HUMANITARIAN

SASKATCHEWAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS



**SASK  
SPCA**

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## Updates to the Board of Directors

At the SaskSPCA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September, we said goodbye to retiring board members Jack MacKay and Chris Brueckner. We thank Jack and Chris for their many years of service to the SaskSPCA and animal welfare in Saskatchewan.

Elected back to the board are Dr. Sandra Neumann and Carol Thomson. Welcome back, Sandra and Carol! Board members continuing with the remainder of their terms include Calvin Nickel, Marianne Possberg, Les Trayhorne, and McKenzie Parks.

Calvin Nickel will continue to serve as president, while Marianne Possberg assumes the role of vice president. Carol Thomson is the treasurer and Les Trayhorne serves as secretary.

You can learn more about our board members by clicking on Team Directory at [saskspca.ca](http://saskspca.ca).

# Reporting Animal Cruelty

If you suspect an animal is being neglected or abused, report it to the proper authorities immediately.

## DOGS, CATS, AND OTHER PETS:

### In Saskatoon:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 306.975.8478

### In Regina:

Regina Humane Society: 306.543.6363

### Elsewhere in Saskatchewan:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002

## LIVESTOCK IN ALL PARTS OF SASKATCHEWAN:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002

Remember: If you see something, say something!



## SaskSPCA Welcomes Social Work Intern

On September 1st, Mikayla Pennington joined the SaskSPCA team as a Social Work Intern. Mikayla will be with us until mid-December. During her time with the Society, she will be working under the guidance of the Family Ties Coordinator to acquire knowledge in animal welfare as it pertains to social work and other human service professions.

Mikayla is in the final year of her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree at the University of Regina. However, when she is not working toward her BSW, she holds a casual position at Hope Restored Canada. This non-profit organization provides holistic restoration to women who have experienced sexual exploitation and trafficking. Mikayla also spends her time volunteering at St. Marguerite Elementary School with the before and after school program whenever she can.

On a personal note, Mikayla enjoys going on road trips, hosting game nights, and spending time with her partner Nick, friends, family, and companion animals.

After completing her degree, Mikayla hopes to incorporate the knowledge she gains from the SaskSPCA with her passion for the wellbeing of women, children, and animals in her future professional endeavours.

Welcome, Mikayla!

## Need a Gift Idea? How About a Holiday (Licence) Plate!

Are you looking for a unique gift idea? We recommend a SaskSPCA licence plate! Give that special someone in your life a gift that helps them show their support for animal welfare in Saskatchewan.

Visit your local SGI motor licence issuer to order your plate today!

**Proceeds from the sale of SaskSPCA licence plates support the SaskSPCA Pet Food Bank.**





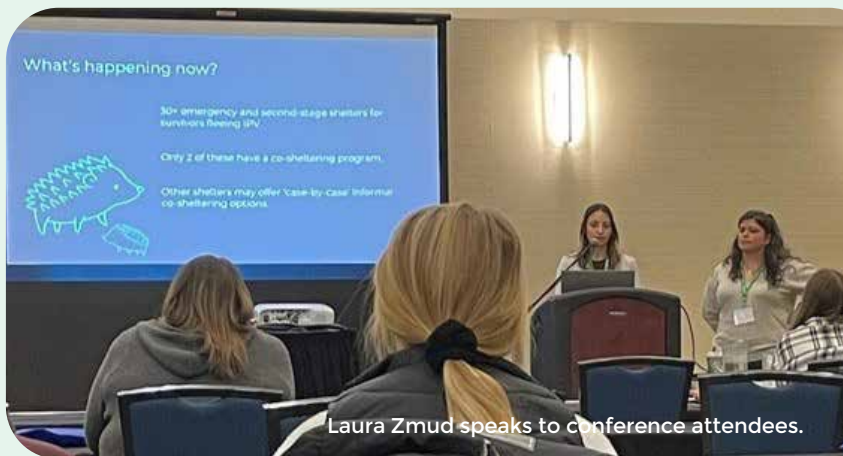
Mikayla Pennington (L) and Kenzie Makowsky (R) at the SAVT Conference Tradeshow.



Volunteers Vivian & Don Fraser greet visitors at our Vetavision booth.



Sandra Archibald (L) and Laura Zmud (R) prepare to present to the SAVT attendees.



Laura Zmud speaks to conference attendees.

## SaskSPCA Out and About

The fall season provided a couple of opportunities for the SaskSPCA to get out to community events.

In September, we ventured out to Vetavision at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) on the University of Saskatchewan campus. The two-day event is a WCVM open house run by students. The College opens its doors to the public to showcase the many important roles that veterinarians play in the world of animal health, welfare, and more.

SaskSPCA staff and volunteers staffed our Vetavision booth sharing important animal welfare information with attendees.

The Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists (SAVT) Conference took place in early November. The SaskSPCA's Laura Zmud and Sandra Archibald from New Hope Dog Rescue (NHDR) presented on the topic of animal safekeeping and the importance of safekeeping programs. Laura and Sandra also discussed current safekeeping options available in Saskatchewan and shared more information on NHDR's ASK and Hospital Care Programs.

The SaskSPCA's Sandra Anderson, Kenzie Makowsky, and Mikayla Pennington also represented the Society at our display booth. It was a great opportunity to discuss animal welfare concerns with the province's veterinary technologists.

We extend a sincere thanks to the WCVM and SAVT for inviting us to attend their amazing events!



Vetavision attendees learned about the contents of a Pet Care Kit.



## COLD WEATHER CARE FOR CATS & DOGS

Winter in Saskatchewan is known for its shortened days, cold temperatures, and the occasional blizzard. The change in seasons also brings some additional risks for the cats and dogs in our lives. Follow the tips below to ensure your furry family members stay safe and healthy this winter.

### THE BASICS

#### Food

If your pets spend a significant amount of time outside in cold weather, they will need additional calories to maintain their body temperature. You may need to increase their food intake by 20 to 30%.

#### Water

Ice and snow are NOT adequate sources of water. Ensure your pet has access to fresh water by refilling frozen water bowls as needed, or by supplying water in a heated water bowl.

#### Shelter

The *Animal Protection Act* requires that animals be provided with adequate shelter. Cats as well as young, old, and infirm pets should be housed indoors. Outdoor dogs require access to shelter, which for most is at least an insulated doghouse; however, the needs of each individual dog can vary. **(For complete instructions on building an insulated doghouse, see the [Ideal Doghouse for Outdoor Use in Saskatchewan Factsheet at saskspca.ca.](#))**

### WINTER HAZARDS

While not meant to be an exhaustive list, the following are some hazards to watch for during the winter months:

#### Antifreeze

Antifreeze (ethylene glycol) is toxic to cats and dogs. Less than a teaspoon of antifreeze can be fatal to a cat. Exposure to antifreeze is a medical emergency requiring immediate medical treatment. The initial signs of antifreeze poisoning include the following: a drunken appearance, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, a rapid heart rate, seizures, convulsions, depression, weakness, fainting, and/or coma.

#### De-icing Products

Some de-icers are toxic to pets and can be ingested when your pets lick their paws. Additionally, rock salt and other de-icing products can be irritating to your pet's paws. Be sure to wipe your pet's paws after a walk to remove these potentially toxic agents.

#### Frostbite

Frostbite is the result of freezing of the skin. When your pet gets cold, blood flow to the extremities is reduced. The ears, tail, and feet are at the greatest risk of becoming frostbitten. Symptoms of frostbite may take several days to appear. Contact your veterinarian if you notice any of the following symptoms: pale gray or blue-ish discoloration of the skin, areas of blackened or dead skin, pain when you touch the affected area, and/or coldness or brittleness of the area when touched.

#### Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when your pet's body temperature falls below normal; it can be mild, moderate, or severe. Symptoms include shivering, depression, lethargy, weakness, low heart rate, difficulty breathing, and/or coma. Your veterinarian will treat hypothermia by applying warming blankets and possibly warm intravenous fluids, depending on the severity of the hypothermia.

Get more pet care tips at [saskspca.ca](https://www.saskspca.ca)

# Learning About Zoonoses and One Health

The complex relationship between animal diseases and public health was the focus of a recent series of webinars hosted by the One Health Education Committee.

The Zoonoses Webinar Series featured presentations from Dr. Erica Sims from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. J. Scott Weese from the University of Guelph, Dr. John Campbell from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, and Dr. Colleen Anne Dell from the University of Saskatchewan.

Each presenter discussed zoonoses from the perspective of One Health, described by the World Health Organization as, “an integrated, unifying approach to balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and the environment.”

Presentation topics included zoonoses in domestic dogs and cats, the potential implications related to the importation of companion animals, and livestock diseases that could lead to disease in humans. Zoeyia – the idea that pets can be good for human health – was also a featured topic.



**ZOONOSSES**  
WEBINAR SERIES

WEBINAR RECORDINGS  
AVAILABLE ON



[youtube.com/@saskspca](https://youtube.com/@saskspca)

This series is part of the commitment made by the One Health Education Committee to improve the quality of life for animals and humans by providing educational opportunities for professionals in the animal welfare and human service sectors.



## The SaskSPCA HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Are you having trouble finding the perfect gift for that special someone in your life? Fret no more! **The SaskSPCA's Holiday Gift Guide**, enclosed with this newsletter, provides three heartwarming gift ideas.

Select a gift from the Guide – keeping animals fed through the SaskSPCA Pet Food Bank, or purchasing supplies for interpersonal violence shelter pet care kits, or a general donation in support of the SaskSPCA – and we'll send a holiday card to your loved one letting them know you've made a gift in their honour.

### Questions?

Check out the Holiday Gift Guide or call 1-877-382-7722 for more information. ●



# SOCIAL WORK ROLE IN ANIMAL WELFARE: HARM REDUCTION

By Mikayla Pennington, Social Work Intern

Social workers have the ability to work in a variety of settings, one of which being animal welfare. The unique perspective of animal welfare from a social work lens allows a typically human profession to consider the wellbeing of animals alongside their traditional clients. The intersection of social work and animal welfare has been regarded as a “niche” area of social work reserved for the “animal lovers”. There is also the misconception that the role of animals in social work practice is solely reserved for therapy animals. Although this may be one of the countless ways animals are incorporated into social work practice, the use of animals in a therapeutic setting is just scratching the surface.

Social work and animal welfare intersect in a variety of ways whether it is in the area of affordable and accessible veterinary services, food insecurity in homes with pets, experiencing homelessness with a pet, the Violence Link between human and animal abuse, or harm reduction as well as many more. Harm reduction is especially interesting from the perspective of social work and animal welfare because, typically, when thinking of harm reduction, people’s minds do not always go to animals. The more well-known types of harm reduction seem to be clean needle exchange programs and other substance use-related methods such as methadone.

**Interactions with an animal such as a dog or cat have been shown to be methods of harm reduction.** To appreciate this method of harm reduction, social workers must recognize the importance of the Human-Animal Bond (HAB) to better serve their clients. The HAB is important because it promotes positive outcomes for both the human and animal. This bond can be seen between people and their pets, therapy animals, service animals, and emotional support animals. The HAB aids in human wellbeing by contributing to positive behavioural changes and can also be incorporated into a client’s treatment plan in various ways according to “Recognizing Animals as an Important Part of Helping: A Survey Exploring Knowledge and

Practice Among Canadian Social Workers” (Chalmers et al., 2020). A social worker who has a client with an animal must consider the benefits of animal companionship as a method of harm reduction. It is easy to say that animals may cause barriers to housing or affordable living but when considering the benefits of animal companionship to human wellbeing, it is important to assist the client with all areas of their life.

**Animal companionship improves physical fitness, decreases loneliness and depression, and can also slow the development of chronic diseases.** Cortisol levels have been shown to decrease when spending time with a companion animal and simply petting an animal has been shown to decrease blood pressure according to “Pets’ Impact on Your Patients’ Health: Leveraging Benefits and Mitigating Risks” (Hodgson et al., 2015). Animal companions are also seen as nonjudgmental supports for their people which is especially important for individuals with mental health concerns and those facing isolation or barriers to services.

The role of the HAB does not simply stop or start at harm reduction. It is just one of the many benefits of the intersection of social work and animal welfare.

## Happy Holidays!

The Board and Staff of the SaskSPCA wish you and yours a very merry Christmas and a Happy 2023!





# OBESITY IN PETS

## What is obesity?

**Obesity is an accumulation of excessive amounts of body fat to a point where your pet's body-weight exceeds the optimum for his or her body size by at least 15%.** Obese pets do not live as long as their non-obese counter-parts and are at increased risk of a number of health conditions, including: diabetes mellitus, orthopaedic problems, cardio-respiratory disease, heat intolerance, and some cancers.

## Why do pets become obese?

Obesity results when your dog or cat consumes more calories than they expend. Certain breeds of dogs and cats have a recognized genetic propensity for becoming obese. Also, there is evidence that spaying or neutering your pet increases their risk of becoming obese. Following alteration, your pet's energy expenditure may be reduced by as much as a third. As a result, obesity occurs from failing to adjust your pet's feeding regimen accordingly.

## How do I know whether my pet is obese?

The first step in treating your pet for obesity is recognizing that there is a problem in the first place. Unfortunately, the media is rife with images of cats and dogs that are overweight or obese, making it difficult to determine what a healthy weight looks like. Methods for identifying obesity in pets include weighing and body condition scoring (BCS). BCS involves appraising your pet visually and by

palpation and subjectively ranking your pet on a scale from one to nine, where one is very thin and nine is very obese.

## How can I treat my pet's obesity?

**Targets for weight reduction are generally in the neighbourhood of 1% to 2% of body weight per week.** The primary treatment for obesity in companion animals is dietary modification. Experts recommend feeding a diet specifically formulated for weight loss. These diets are designed to reduce caloric intake and promote satiety. Combining dietary restriction with an exercise regime further promotes fat loss, while maintaining lean tissue mass. Additionally, lifestyle changes such as not feeding table scraps, feeding fewer treats, and not making energy-dense, highly palatable foods available free-choice can play a vital role in your pet's successful weight-loss program.

Your veterinarian can help you devise a weight-loss program for your pet and will help you to monitor the program to ensure that your pet stays on track. It is also important to continue to weigh your pet regularly once his/her ideal weight has been achieved to ensure that the weight that was lost is not regained.

