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Process owner	SWMD

## Policy 05-14      Dead Animal Collection Procedures

### I. Purpose

This document describes the policies and procedures used by the Solid Waste Management Department (SWMD) to respond to dead animal collection requests.

Dead animals pose a potential health hazard to the public and can create unsafe road conditions. SWMD will collect dead animals generated at customer's residences, on City streets, and on public rights-of-way at no charge. For a fee, SWMD will also collect dead animals from a veterinarian's office.

### II. Policy Application

- ☒ Current full-time employees (classified and unclassified)
- ☒ Current part-time employees
- ☒ Current temporary employees
- ☐ Current paid and unpaid interns
- ☐ Current volunteers
- ☐ Current grant-funded employees

### III. Collection Procedures

- A. Drivers are required to have a valid Class C Texas driver's license in their possession at all times while operating a City vehicle.
- B. Drivers have assigned work zones. Depending on need and staffing availability, Drivers may be assigned to a different zone either temporarily or permanently. Driver must remain in zone until 2:30 pm. Everything that comes in by 2:30 pm must be picked up.
- C. When feasible, dead animal collectors (Truck Drivers) shall attempt to remove identification tags from the animal and make those tags available to the owner. Additionally, all dogs and cats shall be scanned for a microchip. The tags and chip data shall be provided to Animal Care Services (ACS) on a weekly basis. ACS shall be the repository for tags and microchip data and shall be the primary point of contact for families that might be looking for a lost pet.
- D. Prior to loading a dead companion animal, such as a dog or cat, into the truck for transport and disposal, the Truck Driver shall visually inspect the animal for an identification tag. If a tag is visible, the Truck Driver shall determine if it can be removed in a sanitary and respectful manner. Each driver shall be provided wire and cable cutters that can be used to remove the tag from the collar. If the

contact information on the tag is worn and not legible, or the tag does not contain adequate contact information, or the tag cannot be removed in a safe, sanitary and respectful manner, then the tag does not need to be removed. If a functional tag can be removed, then the Truck Driver shall remove the tag and place it in a zip lock bag. After the tag is removed, the dead animal may then be lifted into the truck. Prior to leaving the scene, the Truck Driver shall immediately contact the SWMD customer service with the contact information on the tag.

- E. Truck Drivers shall scan all dogs and cats for a microchip number. If a microchip number is detected, the Truck Driver shall write that number onto the work order and provide that information to the Supervisor. The Supervisor shall outline on a spreadsheet the microchip number, general location and date of collection. If any tags are retrieved, information such as name and phone number shall be collected on this spreadsheet.

This spreadsheet shall be emailed by the Supervisor or designee to ACS, SWMD Customer Service Supervisor and the SWMD Division Manager. SWMD shall keep the collected dog or cat tags for a minimum of two weeks from receipt, or until retrieved by ACS or the family. After two weeks, SWMD may dispose of the tags.

- F. Drivers are equipped with laptops to retrieve work orders. Every morning, collectors log-in to receive their work-order for the day. They should also log-in several times during the day. All work orders should be closed immediately upon completion of work order before leaving location. If the animal was not found, the work order should still be closed, but the comments section should indicate the animal was not found.
- G. On days that either the system is down, or the lap-top is not working, 311 will contact supervisor or shift leader to give calls for the day. Then continue to give calls, through the city's email system, throughout the day. Supervisor will then forward service calls to drivers via city phone, until SAP system or laptop is restored. Drivers have a gate code to allow them entry to use the TDS disposal when it is closed. Drivers should place dead animals in the pre-designated spot. Depending on the location, it may be necessary to spread lime as well.
- H. For calls with gated entries, drivers must utilize gate code list, or call customer if number is listed on work order. If still unable to gain access to gate community, driver must contact supervisor prior to closing call for no access.
- I. When servicing on TXDOT Highways, Driver must contact SAPD or Co-worker to assist with Traffic control for driver safety while servicing TXDOT Hwy. If SAPD or Co-worker is not available, Driver must contact immediate supervisor for assistance with traffic control.

- J. Prior to closing calls for "NO SERVICE, TXDOT, or County", Driver must contact supervisor to verify service through CPS Database.
- K. All Drivers should take a 30 min lunch break
- L. Drivers must wash the tail bed at the end of each work day to avoid sanitation problems. Vehicle should also be washed, cleaned once a week and refueled daily.
- M. Drivers are not required to clean any remaining residues from the point of collection.
- N. Drivers must ensure that they safely pull over or parked prior to utilizing laptop or onboard GPS unit in vehicle. GPS unit must be programmed for next location prior to placing vehicle in operation.
- O. When servicing a call in a high traffic area where it is unsafe to pull over, driver must contact supervisor.
- P. Drivers complete a pre-trip and post-trip inspection form daily. This must be done, even on days that a supervisor is not present, such as Sunday.
- Q. All equipment i.e....laptops, microchip readers, inverters, and spray bottles must be properly secured in assigned lockers by the end of each day. Drivers should ensure building and gate are closed and locked before leaving the premises.

#### **IV. Supervisor Responsibilities**

- A. Provide drivers with personal protective equipment (PPE), such as eye protection, rubber gloves, disposable gowns, etc.
- B. Provide drivers with the necessary tools (e.g., long handle pitchforks and flat shovels) to efficiently and safely perform dead animal collections.
- C. The Supervisor shall provide the Truck Drivers with wire and cable cutters sufficient to extract most tags from a dog collar. The Supervisor shall also provide zip lock bags to the Truck Drivers for storing the tags. The District Manager and Supervisors shall ensure compliance with this policy.
- D. Coordinate with Animal Care if tags, microchips or other identifying information is found on dead animals. Supervisor will forward information to Animal Care Services on a weekly basis. A database logging microchip information will be maintained by the Supervisor.
- E. Coordinate with Code Enforcement if the location is not accessible.
- F. Coordinate abuse cases with Animal Care Services.

G. Maintain the dead animal collection database with tonnage and types of animals.

H. Coordinate with 311 when SAP system is unavailable.

## **V. LOCATIONS FOR COLLECTION**

### **Public Right-of-Way**

SWMD will collect dead animals from the City public right-of-way. Dead animals located on freeways are the responsibility of TXDOT

### **Normal Residential Collection**

Residents may request collection by calling 3-1-1. Dead animals must be bagged and placed at the curb. Dead animals will not be retrieved from underneath buildings, in attics, drainage ditches, or private property.

### **Special Residential Collection**

Collection of dead animals from any other point requires mutual approval from the Director or his designee and the property owner, tenant, or occupant. The City and its agents shall not be held liable for any damages to private property caused by collection activity. Handicap and elderly customers who are need of assistance should let city personnel know if they need assistance with their dead animal.

### **Residential - Requests from Non-Animal Owner**

Occasionally, an anonymous person calls 3-1-1 to report a dead animal on private property. If the animal is visible on a vacant lot that the Collector can safely access, he may proceed with collection. Collectors should not go into back yards, front yards, or other private property (with the exception of a vacant lot).

If a Collector suspects there is a dead animal in a back yard or other place that is not readily accessible he should contact his Supervisor. Suspicion may be caused by a bad odor or information from the neighbors. The Supervisor should attempt to make contact with the resident to verify the presence of a dead animal and ask that it be brought to the curb. If the Supervisor cannot make contact with the resident, he will call Code Enforcement and arrange a time for the Collector and a Code Officer to jointly enter the property. If an animal is found and can be safely taken away, the Collector should proceed with removal. However, if the animal's death is suspect to be caused by abuse or neglect, Animal Care Services should be contacted and the animal not removed.

### **Veterinarian Offices**

Collection from veterinary locations inside the city limits is available for a \$10.00 fee per animal. The veterinary clinic should purchase dead animal tags in advance from the Solid Waste Department's Fiscal Office. Veterinary clinic should tag the dead animal prior to pick up.

### **After Hours Emergency Service**

Occasionally, emergency responders (Fire or Police Department) will request for a dead animal to be removed from a location immediately due to sensitive situations. These calls are typically sent to the Director who will call either the District Manager or Assistant District Manager to coordinate collection.

## **VI. Identifying Dead Animals**

### **Microchip Scanning**

Collectors will use a Department provided microchip scanner on dogs and cats only. The microchip scanning wand should be passed over the entire body of the animal. Collectors should not rotate or flip the animal to look for a microchip; the scanner is powerful enough to detect the chip even if located under the body area that is being scanned.

If a microchip is found, the collector should write down the number and provide it to the supervisor at the end of the day. Alternatively, the supervisor may download the numbers from the unit by plugging it into a desktop computer.

Microchip numbers should be forwarded to Animal Care Services. Neither collectors nor supervisors are expected to call residents about their deceased pets.

### **Tag Removal**

When feasible, Collectors will attempt to remove identification tags from dogs and cats prior to loading the animal into the truck for disposal. If the tag does not contain legible contact information or if it cannot be removed in a sanitary and respectful manner, then the tag does not need to be removed and no further action is required.

If the tag is removed, the Collector shall place it in a zippered plastic bag. After the tag is removed, the dead animal may be lifted into the truck. The Collector should call Customer Service with the information on the tag who will notify the owner the same day. If the collection is made after hours or on a weekend, the call will be made the next business day. Tags shall be kept at the service center for two weeks from the date of the phone call in case the owner wishes to retrieve it.

**This Policy Approved by:**

  
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**David Newman**  
**Director, Solid Waste Management Department**

1-12-2021  
**Date**

