



GLOSSARY OF ANIMAL CRUELTY TERMS

Animal cruelty: Animal cruelty generally falls into one of three categories: neglect, intentional cruelty or sexual abuse. Examples include starvation, dehydration, confinement without adequate light or ventilation, failure to seek veterinary care when an animal is in need of medical attention, inadequate shelter, dog fighting, illegal slaughterhouses and puppy mills.

Neglect: Neglect is the failure to provide adequate water, food, shelter or necessary care. Examples of neglect include: starvations; dehydrations; inadequate shelter; parasite infestations; failure to seek veterinary care when an animals is in need of medical attention; allowing a collar to grow into an animal's skin; confinement without adequate light, ventilation, space or in unsanitary conditions; and failure to trim hooves or nails resulting in excessive growth (e.g. hooves curling upwards). In some cases neglect is simply a result of the owner's ignorance, and can be rectified by law enforcement authorities, like the Ontario SPCA, educating the owner and issuing orders to improve the animal's living conditions. In more severe cases, circumstances may require the Ontario SPCA, or other law enforcement authorities, removing the animals immediately to provide urgent medical care..

Animal hoarding: Animal hoarding or collecting is an obsessive/compulsive disorder in which an individual amasses a large number of animals (sometimes more than a 100); fails to provide for the animals' most basic physical and social needs, including food, water, shelter, veterinary care, and sanitary living conditions; and is usually in extreme denial about the abysmal living conditions of their animals, and dwelling. Often this neglect results in the animals' starvation, illness and death. Hoarding, technically, can be considered a crime, as it is a form of neglect.

Feral cats: The offspring of strays or abandoned domestic cats who have reverted to a wild state; the offspring of feral cats who have lived in a wild state for some generations; or domestic cats that have been abandoned or run off and gone wild. Feral cats live in family groups called colonies.

Puppy mills: A commercial dog breeding facility that is operated with an emphasis on profit above animal care, resulting in substandard conditions for the animals, often dogs, in their care. Puppy mills are generally overcrowded, unsanitary facilities, without adequate veterinary care, food, water, exercise or socialization. Animals raised in puppy mills often suffer from serious medical, temperament and behavioural issues. Animals from puppy mills can often be found in pet stores, flea markets and online marketplaces like Kijiji and Craigslist.

Backyard breeder: An owner whose pet may have an unplanned litter by accident, or who breeds on purpose. Common reasons cited include: making extra money, mistakenly believing every dog should have a litter, letting the children witness "the miracle of birth," or because they think their dog would make cute puppies. The animals involved are generally not tested for health or genetic problems, and typically there is no thought to where the puppies will go. They are the single greatest cause of pet over-population. Many are sold locally through newspaper ads.



Intentional cruelty: Cruelty involving physical harm or injury inflicted on an animal. In cases where animals survive, veterinarians often recommend euthanasia due to the extent of the animal's injuries or the extreme suffering involved. Animal abuse is often a precursor to human-directed violence and an indicator of family crisis.

Cock fighting: An illegal blood sport in which two roosters, trained to severely injure and/or kill one another, are placed beak to beak in a small ring and encouraged to fight to the death. Usually wagers are made on the outcome of the match with the surviving bird being declared the winner.

Dog fighting: An illegal blood sport that pits dogs against one another for spectator entertainment, and often betting. The sport was popular in England in the 1700s, and many modern breeds were developed from these fighting dogs' lines. Fighting dogs are trained, and genetically predisposed, to fight to the death, rather than to display normal submissive signals that would allow two dogs to resolve a disagreement quickly and safely.

Ear cropping: The cropping of a purebred dog's ears to conform to a breed standard. While ear cropping surgery is usually performed by veterinarians, it is frequently done by untrained individuals in unsterile environments and without anaesthesia. Today, a number of countries consider cropping to be cruel and ban it entirely.

Leg-hold trap: The steel-jaw leg-hold trap is most often used to trap wild animals that are killed for their fur, such as bobcat, lynx, wolf, coyote, fox, beaver, muskrat, mink and otter. Trapped animals usually do not die instantly, and are left to suffer intense pain, exposure to severe weather and predators, psychological trauma, dehydration and starvation. Leg-hold traps are indiscriminate - capturing any animals that trigger them including threatened and endangered species, raptors (such as eagles and hawks), and domestic dogs and cats.

Illegal slaughterhouses: Illegal, unlicensed slaughterhouses kill animals without any care or concern as to the method used. A screwdriver, dull knives and axes are just some of the inhumane tools of the illegal slaughter business. Additionally, these underground facilities don't employ sanitation programs, thereby placing anyone eating this meat at risk of serious food poisoning. In Ontario, if you are killing an animal for consumption other than for you and your immediate family, it must be done at a licensed abattoir, in a humane fashion, and inspected by a government inspector.