

## **Animals Subcommittee Decontamination Working Group**

### **Meeting #1**

Monday, February 27, 2017

1:30p-3:00p

Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter  
9500 Sweet Valley Drive  
Valley View, OH 44125

### **Notes**

#### **1. Attendance**

- Debbie Conway, Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter
- Ayse Dunlap, Cleveland Animal Protective League
- Adam Griffith, Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management
- Ed Jamison, Cleveland Animal Care and Control
- Sharon Nicastro, COAD
- Serena Steele, Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management

#### **2. Background**

- Fire departments and hazmat teams do not decontaminate animals.
- Disaster Animal Response Teams only clean animals caught in oil spills.
- Owners should not decontaminate animals.
- Cuyahoga County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has no solution.
- Ohio EMA has no solution.
- ASPCA has no solution but favors owner decontamination.
- Ohio Veterinary Medical Association has no solution.
- OSU Extension did not reply.
- There was a brief discussion on the types of incidents that we can expect. The most likely scenarios would be train derailments or truck accidents that released hazardous chemicals. There is also the possibility of chemical releases from storage or manufacturing facilities and terrorist incidents. While the risk is relatively high for these types of incidents in Cuyahoga County, there is no historical knowledge of a need for mass decontamination of humans or animals.

#### **3. Decontamination Process**

- The Working Group reviewed PowerPoint presentations from Iowa State University and Texas A&M to get an idea of the steps that would be involved in decontaminating animals.

- Domesticated animals only will be decontaminated. We will need to determine if we will decontaminate commercial animals. We will also need to check with the Cleveland Zoo about their animals. The Cleveland Zoo should have its own group because handling zoo animals would be a specialty. We would need to have veterinarians or others who know how to handle exotic pets.
- The group will need to determine our obligations in reporting illegal pets.
- Two people per animal will be needed – one for restraint and the other for decontaminating.
- A veterinarian will be needed to handle animals that have breathing difficulty, are vomiting, or display any other medical problems.

#### **4. Administration**

- We decided against starting a new organization or using an existing organization as the basis for the Animal Decontamination Group (ADG). The ADG will be a joint effort of the Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter, Cleveland Animal Care and Control, and Cleveland Animal Protective League. These organizations work well together on a daily basis, have memoranda of understanding with each other, and are willing to take on the task. Debbie Conway of the County Animal Shelter and Ed Jamison of Cleveland Animal Care and Control will supervise the ADG.
- Ayse Dunlap asked about sheltering the animals after they are decontaminated. Animal sheltering requires different training, so we might need to start a second group if sheltering is required.
- If decontamination is required the first call would go to the County Animal Shelter

#### **5. Staff**

- The ADG will be comprised of paid and volunteer staff from the three organizations. Each organization can probably provide about 20 volunteers and varying numbers of paid staff. The total should be more than adequate.
- A question arose as to whether volunteers from outside the three organizations would be accepted. All three groups decided that it would be difficult to integrate outside volunteers, but interested individuals could become active volunteers for one of the organizations.
- We would need veterinarians as technical advisers, to assess animals prior to decontamination, and to care for ill or injured animals at the scene. It will require a concerted effort to recruit veterinarians.

#### **6. Training**

- We will need to determine the level of hazmat training that will be required. Ed, Ayse, and Debbie agreed that the paid staff should have the highest level of training, and the volunteers should have the next highest level of training.
- Serena Steele will check with Texas A&M Extension Service (TEEX) to see if they can offer training in animal decontamination.
- We can also check to see if there is a local hazmat trainer who would be willing to donate services.

**7. Equipment and Supplies**

- Sharon Nicastro was able to locate only one vendor that had an animal decontamination system, but it is no longer available. The Working Group determined that we could do without a system as long as we had a way of containing waste water. We assume that a containment system that is used for people could also be used for pets. We will need to determine how we will handle decontamination in cold weather if we do not have a decontamination system.
- We discussed the need for raised surfaces for smaller pets and concluded that a standard table would be adequate.
- We will need to determine the type of cleaning supplies that will be needed (eye, wash, Dawn detergent, etc.) and the type of personal protective equipment that will be needed.

**8. Space (Base of Operations)**

- All three organizations have or will have a facility for meetings, trainings, storage, and administration.

**9. Funding**

- The biggest cost would be for training. Until we determine exactly the training that will be required, we will not be able to estimate cost, but it is expected to be in the thousands of dollars.
- We will also need funding for a containment system, personal protective equipment, and cleaning supplies.
- There are some non-profit organizations, such as the ASPCA and HSUS, that provide small grants, but we do not know if they have given grants for animal decontamination purposes.
- Serena Steele will check with the County grants department to see if they can find a grant to cover ADG expenses.

**10. Next Steps**

- Determine levels of training, provider, and cost.
- Determine the type and cost of a containment system.
- Determine type and cost of equipment, PPE, and other supplies.
- Determine a funding source.
- Recruit veterinarians.
- Consider a separate sheltering group.

**11. Next Meeting**

- Monday, April 10, 2017
- 1:30p-3:00p
- County Animal Shelter