

**Press Release
18 August 2010**

Animal charities prepares for Athlone Cooling Towers implosion

With the demolition of the Athlone Cooling Towers (Saturday, 22 August, 12h00) just a few days away, the Cape of Good Hope (CoGH) SPCA is preparing to receive a flood of lost and stray pets, terrified by the negative effects of the loud sound emitted by the blast.

“We’re concerned that many animals will become injured in their attempts to escape the loud bang”, said CoGH SPCA Chief Inspector Andries Venter. “Animals are able to hear a wider range of sounds than humans can, with the result that the sound from the explosion will probably be around seven times louder to them than it is to us. Their natural response is to try and escape the sound with sometimes tragic consequences if they are hit by a car or caught in a fence”, he said.

The CoGH SPCA together with City Council Pound Officers will be patrolling the affected areas from 7am on Saturday to collect stray animals and protect them from the potential negative effects of the explosion.

In addition a team of SPCA inspectors along with four Animal Anti-Cruelty League (AACL) inspectors and a veterinarian of the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) will be on hand to attend to any animal emergencies.

A temporary holding facility manned by SPCA volunteers has been established at the Langa Sports Complex, enabling the animal rescue team to keep animals safe until their owners reclaim them. Animals not claimed will be taken to the SPCA in Grassy Park.

“Besides dogs and cats fleeing their homes, we’re also concerned about frightened dogs attacking people, horses bolting from their stables and the effects of the dust on exotic birds in aviaries and fish in ponds”, said Venter.

The SPCA advises residents living in surrounding areas to adopt the following guidelines to help protect their pets:-

- Ensure all animals have identification i.e. a micro-chip or at least a dog tag;
- If possible, stay at home with them and help keep them calm;
- If you can’t be at home, keep your pets inside and preferably in a room that is safe and secure;
- Keep all doors, windows and gates secured;
- Temporarily cover fish ponds with plastic sheeting;
- Try and mask any noise by drawing the curtains and playing calming music;
- Put familiar and comforting things around them;
- Give them something to chew on – a chewy bone or catnip toys for cats;
- If you have a nervous pet and suspect it will react badly to the noise, then seek professional advice from your veterinarian, who may prescribe a sedative to help them cope. There are also effective homeopathic remedies available that may be bought across the counter at vet shops to help keep your pet calm.

Concerned members of the public are asked to please report any lost, injured or stray animals to the SPCA 24 hr control centre - 700 4140 /59 or a/h to 083 326 1604. Alternatively people can contact their local law enforcement office.

Please contact the SPCA on 021 700 4140 to report a lost pet.

Ends

Notes to the Editor

The comparative hearing ranges of dogs, cats and humans are as follows:-

Humans:	20Hz – 23Hz
Dogs:	45Hz – 60Hz
Cats:	45Hz – 64Hz

Cats and dogs can hear sounds at least two octaves higher than humans.