

Press release

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Guy Fawkes 2010 causes havoc for city animals.

The Cape of Good Hope (CoGH) SPCA reports that the use of fireworks across Cape Town on Friday 5 November 2010 (Guy Fawkes and Diwali) has had a terrifying effect on dozens of animals.

“The number of calls received was extremely high in comparison to a normal weekend”, said CoGH SPCA Chief Inspector Andries Venter. “Where we would normally expect to receive an average of 54 calls between Friday night and Sunday, and rescue around 14 animals in the same period, this Guy Fawkes weekend we have been flooded with call outs”, he said.

SPCA Inspectors started responding to calls (in Southern, Central and Northern suburbs) from 5:30pm on Friday and worked through the night until 1am on Saturday morning. A total of 50 calls were made to the SPCA’s a/h emergency number (20 more than in 2009) on Friday night. On Saturday a further 80 calls were received and 26 on Sunday. From the total 156 calls received, 55 stray dogs were rescued. Some of the animals reported in were not able to be confined for safe collection by SPCA Inspectors because they were running scared.

“We received one report of a dog that got stuck between two shacks while trying to flee the sound of firecrackers. It unfortunately suffered major internal injuries and died on site”, said Venter. “In another incident a terrified Staffie was surrendered by its owner who couldn’t handle the dog after it reacted so badly to the noise of fireworks”, he said.

The CoGH SPCA Inspectorate also responded to three animals which were involved in motor vehicle accidents and they were called out to help a stray horse in Philippi area, after it started having fits. According to the SPCA, its Inspectors had to eventually euthanize the horse because of the severe pain and distress it was in. Venter believes that the cause of the fits was due to fireworks.

The SPCA’s Lost and Found department also had a very busy weekend and was on duty through Friday night. They reported that over the weekend they received 45 calls from owners reporting their dogs missing. Seventeen stray dogs were brought into the SPCA and four have been reunited with their owners. The SPCA hopes that the owners of the other dogs will come forward soonest to claim them.

Said Venter: “This year has been far worse than last, despite our efforts to raise awareness of the terrifying effects of fireworks on animals. Six SPCA Inspectors raced

across the peninsular attending to animals in distress on Friday night and our Lost and Found department is now under increased pressure to deal with the many strays brought in over the weekend - and they expect to receive more throughout the week. This is why the SPCA is so vehemently opposed to fireworks and calls on them to be banned”.

Ends

Issued by the Cape of Good Hope SPCA. For more information contact Lamees Martin on 021 700 4141 or Sarah Scarth on 021 700 4154 or email comms@spca-ct.co.za