

Press Release
2 July 2008

Prosecution of Colin Crouch on charges of animal cruelty

After patiently waiting for more than two years, the Cape of Good Hope SPCA is able to announce that Mr Colin Crouch of Strandfontein was found guilty of cruelty to animals in the Mitchell's Plein Magistrates Court this morning (. He was sentenced to a fine of R4 000.00 or 4 months imprisonment suspended, ordered to pay the SPCA costs totalling R1 320.00 and declared unfit to own another dog for 1 year. Addressing the accused, the honourable Njani's said "you have been convicted of a serious offence". We thank the Magistrate for highlighting the serious nature of this crime and hope that it brings to attention the fact that neglecting an animal is a serious and prosecutable offence leaving the convicted with a life-long criminal record.

We first became aware of the plight of his dogs in June 2006 when one of our volunteers spotted his severely neglected cross Sharpei / Boerbull (Mitch) at the SPCA where his teenage son had brought the dog for re-homing. The volunteer immediately contacted the Inspectorate and Inspector Conchita Milburn responded. She took several telling photos of the dog and sought the Chief Inspector's corroborating opinion with regard to the neglected state of the dog. The dog was diagnosed to be suffering from chronic mange, had open wounds probably caused by irritation to the skin, grossly over-grown nails and a painful extended penis which if left untreated was in grave danger of becoming gangrenous. He was also starving and according to Inspector Mcluckie when he was presented with a bowl of food he almost "took off her fingers". Mitch, was in such a poor condition, that our veterinarians had no choice but to humanely euthanase him to put an immediate end to his prolonged pain and suffering.

Because there were two other dogs at home, and given Mitch's severely neglected condition and dire prognosis, the Inspectors requested permission to see them. On arrival at the Crouch residence they found an Alsatian puppy and a Papillion Cross also living in unhygienic and parasitic conditions with no sign of food or fresh drinking water and a box for a shelter. They also saw Mitch's "kennel" which consisted of an old table covered with a piece of plastic sheeting. He had to sleep on the sand.

The Inspectors also noticed that neither of the dogs had been sterilised and offered to take them in to be sterilised with a view to preventing unwanted litters and preventing further suffering and cruelty. The dog's were subsequently removed, sterilised and re-homed where they now live a pampered life as a member of the family.

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