

**WILDLIFE PROBLEMS**

In Effect: 10/17/2011

Review Date: 10/14/2011 @ 2345

**CH 83A  
WILDLIFE PROBLEMS**

GENERAL ORDER: 83A-001	DATE OF ISSUE: 010/14/2011	EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/17/2011
SUBJECT: WILDLIFE PROBLEMS		NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REVISE <input type="checkbox"/> RESCIND <input type="checkbox"/>
REFERENCES:	PAGE 1 OF 2	DISTRIBUTION: ALL COMMAND OFFICERS

<b>GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildlife is protected from harm and unauthorized removal by unlicensed persons except under specific circumstances.</li> <li>• The use of deadly force to euthanize an animal must comply with General Order GO 1U, (Use of Force). This authorizes the use of deadly force when the animal represents a threat to public safety or the animal is seriously injured if the officer reasonably believes that deadly force can be used without harm to the officer or others.</li> <li>• Uses of deadly force to euthanize animals must be reported in accordance with General Order GO 1U, (Use of Force Reporting).</li> </ul>
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<b>EUTHANASIA OF ANIMALS</b>	<p><b>Euthanasia of animals is usually required in three circumstances.</b> Animals are endangering the public through aggressive actions, they are severely ill or injured or they are rabid and possibly a health threat.</p> <p>In general, the most rapid and humane method of euthanasia of an animal will be by use of the department issued firearm or shotgun loaded with either #00 buckshot or (for larger animals) rifled slug ammunition. The use of the Patrol Rifle to euthanize animals should be avoided due to the penetrating power of the ammunition.</p> <p>In all cases where rabies is suspected the animal should not be shot in the head.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Animals which are endangering the public through aggressive actions may be euthanized by a police officer.</li> <li>2. Animals which are ill or injured so severely that humanitarian concerns dictate they be euthanized to end their suffering may be euthanized by a police officer.</li> <li>3. The Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife allows any police officer to immediately kill raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes or woodchucks that display behavior that causes the officer to reasonably conclude such animal is rabid. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health lists such behavior as including attacks on persons or other animals for no reason, lack of fear of people or acting unnaturally friendly. At other times animals may behave strangely. Not all rabid animals will act in these ways. Note that the presence of normally nocturnal animals in the daytime IS NOT sufficient evidence of rabies. Normally nocturnal animals may be active during the daytime for many reasons. In these</li> </ol>
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cases the brain must be left intact to allow for testing for evidence of the rabies virus. The Board of Health Animal Inspector will be notified to arrange for the removal and testing and/or destruction of the remains.

**ILL OR  
INJURED  
ANIMALS**

The services of a licensed wildlife rehabilitator are required for the placement of sick, injured or orphaned wild animals. In general, the best advice is to leave the animal alone and let nature take its course. **Animal Control Officers are authorized to remove these animals to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.** A list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators may be obtained by contacting the City of Melrose Health Department Office.

**NUISANCE  
ANIMALS**

**Police officers are specifically NOT AUTHORIZED to destroy animals simply because they are causing property damage. Removal of animals causing property damage is the responsibility of the property owner.**  
If the homeowner does not have the knowledge, expertise or ability to resolve their problem, they may engage the services of a Problem Animal Control Agent. The property owner should be advised that PAC agents are private individuals, not government employees. They charge for their services. The property owner should be informed that the relocation of wildlife is prohibited by Massachusetts state law.  
A list of Problem Animal Control Agents may be obtained by contacting the City of Melrose Health Department Office.

APPROVED BY  
**CHIEF MICHAEL L. LYLE**

DATE  
**10/017/2011**