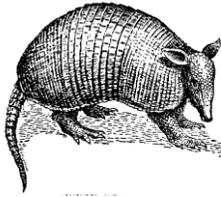


July 2019

PINELLAS COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES  
THE DO'S AND DON'TS REGARDING DOMESTIC, WILD, AND FERAL ANIMALS



In light of the fact that there have been many questions concerning domestic and wild animals in our community, Pinellas County Animal Services was invited to our regular meeting of July 11<sup>th</sup> to supply answers. Officer Lindsey Martin provided a brief overview regarding domestic, wild, and feral animals; how to report issues and what not to do. Per Pinellas County Code, all dogs/cats must be leashed when outside the confines of their home. If they are unleashed on the owner's property, they must be under voice control. Cats whose ears have been "tipped" are the exception to the code, as tipping signifies they have been spayed or neutered and vaccinated by Animal Services. Feral cats will be picked up; however, Animal Services no longer provides cages. It is illegal to tether a dog outside and it is illegal to feed wild animals; however, bird feeders are acceptable and protected animals cannot be trapped and released. A dog is declared dangerous if it kills or injures two domestic animals or if a human sustains a bite requiring medical attention. The owner must muzzle the aggressive dog, post dangerous dog signs on owner's property, padlock gates, and the dog must be spayed or neutered, and micro chipped. If the owner does not comply, a \$400 fine will be imposed along with jail time. PCSO may be called in an emergency situation; however, they will only respond as a police presence and they will call Animal Services. If dogs are barking incessantly, Officer Martin suggested recording it. She also suggested, if possible, taking pictures or videos of any animal complaint requiring Animal Services' response. In closing she indicated that prosecution of reported animal complaints is a long process with the final decision ultimately up to the judge. If your presence is required in court (for the judge to hear the facts from the complainant), it is necessary to attend; otherwise, the case will be dismissed. For more detailed information, please log onto Pinellas County's website, select "*Departments*" and scroll down to *Animal Services*, or call 727-582-2600.