

If the owner refuses to remedy the problem

You may be forced to notify the authorities and accept the outcome of your decision. Animals can still be saved by having pre-approved placement for as many animals as possible, or finding someone willing to take on that responsibility before involving the authorities.

Alerting the authorities will not always be a permanent solution. If the animals are seized, there usually will be nothing to prohibit that owner from obtaining more animals in the future. The situation will repeat itself and place even more animals at risk. Even if there is an order within the county that prohibits that person from owning more animals, they can simply move their operation to a different location. However, once the animals are seized they probably will not get a second chance and you have lost the opportunity to educate their owner.



Be pro-active in your community; assess the situation, identify the problem, and be part of the solution.

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Alternative Solutions

When faced with situations such as animals running at large, poor animal husbandry, or lack of proper care, what should we, as concerned citizens, do?

Our first impulse is to notify the authorities. However, contacting the authorities is not always in the best interest of the animals, nor is it always the best alternative. Once the authorities become involved, we may find that instead of saving the animals, we have signed their death warrants instead.



Most animal control agencies will not adopt out wolfdogs to the general public. Wolfdogs are usually euthanized unless a licensed rescue or sanctuary steps forward to take them. With the ever growing problem of irresponsible owners and abandonment, more and more animals are destroyed each day. Wolfdogs are no exception; there are more wolfdogs in rescue than there are homes to take them. The sanctuaries are full and there simply is nowhere else to go.

If the intent is to save the animals, we must be creative and come up with an alternative action.

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Determine if there is a problem

Be sure there really is a problem before you do anything. Before turning someone in to the authorities, remember that it is easy to start the process but hard to stop it.

No facility should be judged on a single visit. There is a chance that the owner might have had a family emergency or been sick prior to your visit and unable to maintain the facility to its usual standards. There can be a million reasons why things appear to be one way on any given day, yet be completely different at almost all other times. Make sure the problem is continuous and not a single incident. If you are unable to assess the situation for yourself, be sure the information given to you is factual and unbiased.

Determine if your grievance is with the owner or with the way the animals are being kept. Do not let personal feelings about another individual dictate your decision. Nor should your feelings concerning a particular breed of dog be considered as a determining factor.



Identify the problem

Once it is established that a problem truly exists, assess the situation and determine exactly what is needed to correct it. (i.e. dogs constantly escaping their pens, dogs being allowed to run at-large, dogs not being properly feed, too many litters being bred, etc.)

Check the laws for the State, county, and municipality where the animals are located. This can be done by contacting each entity and asking them for a copy of the local animal ordinances. This can be done without explaining the reason you want the information. State, City and County Ordinances are a matter of public record and you should be furnished a copy of them upon request

Talk to the owner. You may find that things are not always as they seem. Try to voice your concerns in a reasonable manner and see if you can find a middle ground that will satisfy everyone concerned. If you know that you are not the best person to talk to the owner, enlist the help of someone that they are more likely to listen to with an open mind. You may find that the owner realizes there is a problem and wants to correct it, but cannot because of financial difficulties or they might be physically unable to rectify the situation on their own.



Be part of the Solution by turning a bad owner into a good owner

If physical labor is needed to remove debris or correct containment, you might be able to assist in making the changes. If there is more than you can do on your own, turn the endeavor into a community project by enlisting help from neighbors, or contact a local high school group such as the FFA, an animal rescue group, church group, or the Boy Scouts.

If the problem requires financial assistance to pay for fencing, you might be able to find people in the community willing to have a garage sale. It would give everyone a chance to get rid of a few things they no longer need and raise the needed funds. Others might be willing to bake a pie or cake and sell those as well. Talk to building supply companies and see if they might be willing to donate or give discounted prices on materials. If there is a prison in the area, see if they might be willing to donate old fencing (chain link is replaced every few years).

Teach the owners how to be a responsible owner by offering educational materials and showing them how to maintain their animals properly.



Research low cost spay and neuter facilities in your area. Some rescue groups might be willing to furnish free or low cost spay and neuter for the animals.

If the owner is willing, help with placement of excess animals.