

Stray canines on campus could be costly for owners

By Janet Lliteras

Canines on campus may soon be contained and their owners fined \$50 if UNL approves a proposed city animal retrieval policy.

Dennis Grams, assistant chief of the new city Environmental Health Division, said state property is usually exempt from city statutes, but if the university approves, the newly organized Animal Control Center will assign someone to go to the campus and pick up stray dogs.

Stray dogs could cost their masters as much as \$50 in pound and citation fees if the dog is picked up for creating a nuisance and does not have a license.

The center began operating Jan. 1. It handles licensing of dogs and cats and picks up stray animals. Any dog kept in Lincoln more than 30 days, including those owned by UNL students, must be licensed with the city, Grams said.

He said the center operates 10 hours a day, seven days a week. Any stray, licensed dog is returned to the owner for a \$5 delivery fee, he explained. Unlicensed dogs are taken to the Humane Society where they are held for 72 hours.

If they are not claimed by that time, Grams said, the animals are either put up for adoption or disposed of.

Besides paying pound fees ranging from \$10 to \$25 to release his dog the owner also can be issued a citation for allowing

his dog to run loose. The maximum fine is \$25.

"No one was really issuing tickets," Grams said, "but now we have a specific program to take care of that."

He said police wrote a few citations in the past but "their priority was protecting the public from criminals."

"We would just as soon not issue citations," Gram said. Repeat offenders will be the main concern, he added.

Del Weed, environmentalist in the UNL Environmental Health Dept. said UNL does not have written policies concerning dogs on campus other than those used by the city. If a serious problem developed, he said rules would be written.

"People usually don't react unless there is a crisis," he said. He said he didn't believe there was any problem with dogs running loose on campus.

"We don't want to become bureaucratic above and beyond what we are," he said. "We don't make rules unless we have to."

Weed said UNL did not have an "enforceable policy" restricting dogs from classrooms, but he recommended that dogs not go into buildings because of the custodial problems they might leave behind.

Dogs are restricted from food service production areas and from where food is served, such as residence halls and the Nebraska Union, he added.



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This dog and other canine campus visitors soon may have to be on the run from Animal Control Center officers if UNL approves a city animal retrieval proposal.

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