

Animal Transportation (Basic)

This Chapter Covers:

- ◆ Vehicle Standards
- ◆ Equipment
- ◆ Loading Procedures
- ◆ Unloading Procedures

Vehicle Standards

Animal transportation involves taking the animal you have captured or seized to the impoundment facility. This is usually done in a truck that has cages on the back. Your truck is a reflection of you as an animal control officer (ACO), so both you and your truck need to be neat and clean. The public will be able to recognize you by the use of proper identification patches on your uniform and insignia on the sides of the vehicle.

Use a truck that:

- is clean (clean at least once a day or, if necessary, more often).
- has identifying signs and insignia.
- has cages large enough to hold the captured animals.
- has been properly maintained and is in good working condition.

The truck cages must:

- be clean.
- be made of strong, easily cleaned material.
Do **not** use wood because it cannot be sanitized.
- have cage doors that can be locked.
- be strong enough to hold the animals.

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- protect the animals from bad weather (excessive heat and cold, rain or other precipitation, etc.).

Equipment

Special equipment for the truck includes:

- lights, including:
 - * a spot light, and
 - * revolving yellow lights for the top of the truck,
- a two-way radio, and
- storage space for the equipment.

Loading Procedures

Someone will usually be watching you whenever you handle an animal, so make sure you do it the correct way. People will have more respect for you if you handle an animal **carefully** and **humanely**. Careful handling may also help to calm the animal.

To load an animal onto the truck, you need to:

- lead or carry the animal to your truck. **Do not drag the animal.** Have the truck as close as possible.
- keep the rope, catch pole, or leash on the animal while you are loading it.
- lift the animal with your hand and/or arm. **Do not lift the animal with just the leash, rope, or catch pole.**
- close the door carefully so you do not catch a part of the animal in the closing door.

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- separate healthy, live animals from sick or dead animals. **Do not put them in the same cage.**

If the animal is in a live trap, put the trap in the truck or in a cage. Do not remove the animal from the trap until you arrive at the shelter. Return to the shelter as soon as possible after the animal(s) have been loaded onto the truck. Keep animals on the truck for a minimal amount of time, especially on very hot or cold days. Do **not** let the animals suffer from **heat exhaustion** in hot weather or **hypothermia** (low body temperature) in cold weather. Keep the animal dry if there is precipitation. Drive **slowly** and **carefully** so that the animals do not get hurt or develop motion sickness.

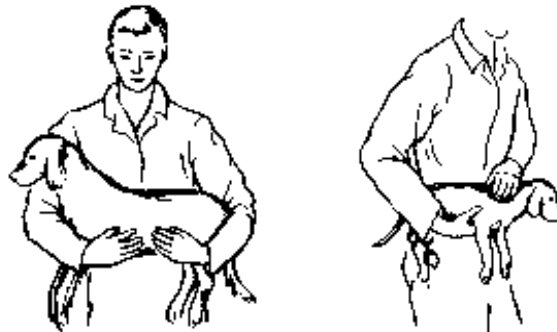
Unloading Procedures

It may be more difficult to remove the animal from the cage than it was to put it in the cage. The cage may have become the animal's home territory. It may feel safer in the cage and not want to leave it. **To unload the animal from the truck, you should:**

- have the truck as close as possible to the holding area.
- park the truck in an enclosed or fenced area before unloading the animal in case the animal escapes from you.
- open the door carefully.
- put a rope, catch pole, or leash on the animal while you are unloading it.
- lift the animal with your hand and/or arm.
- lead or carry the animal to the holding area.

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Be careful when loading or unloading animals to avoid back injuries. Try to lift by bending your knees while keeping your back straight. This puts the stress on your legs rather than on your back. Lift a medium- or large-sized dog by wrapping one arm below its rump and the other arm around its chest, as in the figure on the left shown below. If the dog shows signs of biting, apply a temporary muzzle before lifting it.

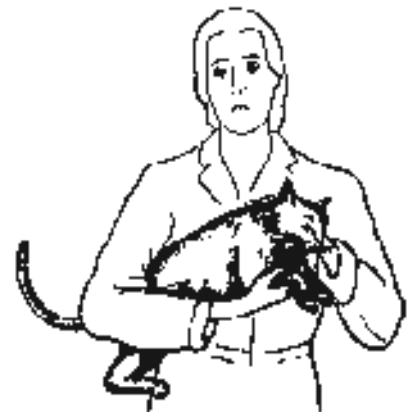


from *Restraint of Animals*, by Leahy and Barrow

Lift a small dog by placing your hand under its body (pass your index finger between the dog's front legs). Hold the dog's chest with your fingers. Lift the dog so that it rests on your hip. Place your other hand on the dog's shoulders to steady its neck, as in the figure on the right shown above.

To lift a cat, place your hand under it. Hold the cat's skin at the back of its neck firmly with your other hand and lift it. Press its body between your arm and hip, as shown in the figure to the right.

from *Restraint of Animals*, by Leahy and Barrow



References:

Leahy, John R., and Barrow, Pat. *Restraint of Animals*, 2nd ed. New York: Cornell Campus Store, Inc., 1953.