

Woman faces animal cruelty charges after 22 German shepherds seized from Alexandria barn

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Woman charged with animal cruelty after 22 dogs found in extreme cold
by WMUR US
ALEXANDRIA, N.H. —

A woman is facing animal cruelty charges after 22 German shepherds were found in an Alexandria barn with no heat or fresh water.

“The dogs were all in wire pens with no roof over them, so no ability to keep their heat in,” Alexandria Police Chief Donald Sullivan said.

Jennifer Choate is charged with 22 counts of animal cruelty, one for each dog found living in the extreme cold.

“You couldn't even kick the shavings around in the pens. It was just a big frozen mass of stuff on the bottom of each pen,” Sullivan said.

Alexandria police said it was 11 degrees below zero in the barn on Tuesday and that the dogs' water bowls had been frozen for hours.

“We actually gave them some water this morning. That froze within an hour,” Sullivan said.

Choate was previously charged after 36 dogs died in a pair of fires at her property in Bristol. The majority of the dogs killed were just weeks-old puppies.

Alexandria police assisted with the investigation in Bristol. They said they've known that Choate was keeping dogs in town.

The dogs were taken to the New Hampshire SPCA in Stratham, where they joined nine other German shepherds seized from Choate's Bristol property in December

Police said the dogs taken in Alexandria seemed to be in good spirits but will be evaluated and cared for at the SPCA.

Neighbors -- who are dog owners themselves -- said they recently complained to police as the temperatures started to go dangerously low.

“(I’m) furious. I’ve been very concerned. April Nguyen said. “Been able to count at least five different barks, but I had no idea how many animals were in there,” April Nguyen said.

Police said no one lives on the property on Burns Hill Road and that Choate has been open to letting them inspect it.

Officials said two horses owned by someone else are housed there and are being properly cared for.

Choate is due in court for the Bristol charges on Jan. 22 and for the Alexandria charges on Feb. 12.