

70 pets seized from Claremont home expected to survive

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The dozens of animals removed from a Sullivan Street home this week and sheltered at Monadnock Humane Society in Swanzey, N.H., should all survive, said Kathy Collinsworth, executive director of the organization.

Collinsworth said Wednesday that the 70 animals, mostly cats and kittens, were not malnourished but many are being treated for upper respiratory infections because of the home's environment.

"If it is not too late, we should be able to keep them all healthy," Collinsworth said.

Police responded to the residence on Dec. 6 after receiving complaints from neighbors. Nobody living in the single family home nor the address has been identified by authorities.

Claremont Police Chief Brent Wilmot said the complaint expressed concerns about living conditions and the potential for animal cruelty. The county's animal control officer went to the home with an officer and people with the Sullivan County and Monadnock Humane Society. Wilmot said a search warrant was obtained and executed on the home and the animals removed. As for potential charges, Wilmot said several things will be considered.

"The condition of the home as well as the health and well being of the animals will be factors in decided who may be charged and how many charges are brought," the chief said.

The humane society will provide additional information on the animals based on examinations by a veterinarian in a week, Wilmot said, adding that they are also working with the city's health inspector. Once all the information is received, Wilmot said the will confer with local and county prosecutors and decide whether to charge the occupants of the home.

Collinsworth said the animals, which included three dogs and a rabbit, were not caged inside the house.

The humane society is holding the animals under what Collinsworth called "protective custody" while the police decide whether to file animal cruelty charges.

Collinsworth said monetary donations will help with the care but the three items the need to the most are clump-free cat litter, towels and NutriSource pet food.

Because they are considered evidence in a potential criminal case, Collinsworth said they cannot put them up for adoption or foster homes at this time.