



NEWSLETTER



IDAHO BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE CERTIFIED EUTHANASIA TASK FORCE

Volume 1 Phone: (208) 332-8588 Fax: (208) 334-2170 Website: www.bovm.state.id.us October 2010

CETF Mission Statement:

Under the direction of the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine, the CETF's mission is to promote humane euthanasia of homeless, injured, sick, and unwanted animals by implementing and regulating professional standards at Certified Euthanasia Agencies.

CURRENT CETF MEMBERS & STAFF

CETF President: Rena Carlson-Lammers, DVM
CETF Members: Tami McReynolds, DVM
Jo-Anne Dixon, DVM
Brenda Steinebach, CET
Dave Schulz, DVM
(Board President)

Staff:

Executive Director: Karen Ewing
Karen.Ewing@agri.idaho.gov
Physical Address: 2270 Old Penitentiary Rd
Boise, ID 83712

Tech. Records Spec. II: Carol Youtz
Carol.Youtz@agri.idaho.gov
Mailing Address: PO Box 7249
Boise, ID 83707

The Certified Euthanasia Task Force (CETF) will periodically produce a newsletter specifically for Certified Euthanasia Technicians (CETs) employed by Certified Euthanasia Agencies (CEAs). The goal of the newsletter will be to update all CETs on current issues regarding certified euthanasia in Idaho, including but not limited to, statute and rule changes, common problems and suggested solutions, and the emotional impact of euthanasia.

Should you have topics that you would like to see addressed in the newsletter, please contact the Board office in Boise by phone at (208) 332-8588, email as above, fax at (208) 334-2170, or mail as listed above.

The CETF members and Board staff are here to help you, and your input is always appreciated. Please don't hesitate to contact the Board office with any questions.

Carbon Monoxide Euthanasia Chambers

The Board of Veterinary Medicine will present a rule change to the 2011 Idaho Legislature to remove carbon monoxide gas euthanasia chambers as an approved method of euthanasia at Idaho CEAs.

After having been contacted by Senator Tim Corder with a proposal to add a ban on carbon monoxide-induced gas euthanasia chambers in the animal cruelty laws, the Idaho Board researched the pros and cons of carbon monoxide gas chambers, discussed their use with experts in humane euthanasia, and determined that these chambers should not be a part of the Board's certified euthanasia program.

Most states that allow carbon monoxide gas euthanasia do not have statutory authority for animal shelter and animal control staff to perform euthanasia by injection. Idaho does have this authority from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

In addition, now that all Idaho CETs can legally use pre-euthanasia sedation drugs once the CET has been trained in the use of these drugs, fractious and vicious animals can be sedated prior to euthanasia to provide greater safety to personnel.

Should the rule change be successful, carbon monoxide gas euthanasia chambers may not be used after the day the 2011 Idaho legislature adjourns for the year, as this is the date the rule change will become effective.

Did You Know?

The Board currently certifies 21 CEAs and 71 CETs.

Drug Order Quantities

Based on a problem with multiple bottles of expired euthanasia solution at a CEA, the CETF met with the compliance officer for the Idaho Board of Pharmacy regarding legal disposal of outdated controlled substances.

If too large a quantity of drugs is ordered and the drugs expire before they can be used, the only way to dispose of these controlled substances in accordance with Idaho Board of Pharmacy rules and DEA regulations is to return the drugs to a reverse distributor. This can be an extremely expensive process! The CETF strongly recommends that the CET responsible for drug orders ensures that appropriate quantities are ordered so your agency is not in the position to need the services of a reverse distributor.

Controlled substances that are not expired may be transferred to another valid DEA registrant, for example, a licensed veterinarian, using DEA form 222.

Drug Ordering by Lead CET

The DEA registration for your agency should have the lead CET listed as the responsible party. Should this person leave your agency, or a new CET is designated as the lead CET in charge of drugs, the DEA must be notified of the name change. This change can be accomplished online at the DEA website at:

http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drugreg/change_requests/index.html.

Drug Sources

Based on a 2009 rule change, all approved drugs must be obtained from a drug wholesaler. CETs may no longer purchase approved drugs from a licensed veterinarian. This change was made due to the tremendous difficulties encountered with obtaining drug information from licensed veterinarians during the CEA inspection process.

Did You Know?

When approved drugs are transported in a vehicle, the temporary storage cabinet shall be securely bolted to the vehicle. The cabinet shall be constructed of any strong material and shall be securely locked when not in use.

New Remote Chemical Capture Course

Dr. Jeff Rosenthal, the executive director of the Idaho Humane Society, is preparing a new 2011 remote chemical capture course for CETs who work for law enforcement agencies and are categorized as law enforcement personnel. In the past, the Board had used Dr. Mark Drew's wildlife capture course at the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Upon Board and CETF consideration of this training, it was determined that a remote chemical capture course geared toward domestic animals will be more appropriate for CETs.

The Board of Veterinary Medicine will review a draft of Dr. Rosenthal's new course at its January 24, 2011 meeting. The course and its manual should be ready by spring or early summer in 2011. The cost of the new course is still to be determined.

A rule change for 2011 will require all law enforcement CETs that use remote chemical capture to recertify every third year in remote chemical capture, in addition to their every third year euthanasia recertification training. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game requires all its officers to recertify in remote chemical capture every other year, so the Board and CETF feels every third year for law enforcement CETs is an appropriate compromise.

Pre-Euthanasia Sedation Training

A rule change effective March 29, 2010 now allows all CETs to use pre-euthanasia sedation drugs, if desired. However, the CET must have been trained in the use of these drugs.

The new CET training course that was offered for the first time at the 2010 Boise and Pocatello classes, does include training in the use of pre-euthanasia sedation. Those CETs who have attended pre-euthanasia training are provided with a new license card that confirms the CET may use these drugs.

The remaining CETs at each agency will be trained in pre-euthanasia sedation during the Fall 2010 CEA inspections. If you have not been trained in pre-euthanasia sedation, please make every effort to attend the special training during your agency's Fall 2010 CEA inspection. If you are not able to attend the training, you may not perform pre-euthanasia sedation.

Euthanasia "The Good Death"

Brenda Steinebach, CET

Animal Control Officers and shelter workers deal with many challenges besides euthanasia: cruelty, ignorance, and carelessness towards animals; hostility from the public; and disrespect for their skill, commitment, and love of animals. Of all these stressors, however, euthanasia is the most heart wrenching and unique to animal workers. There is NO other profession that asks people to end lives of those they deeply care about and want to help.

Euthanasia impacts both job satisfaction and personal well being of animal care professionals, even those who do not directly participate in the euthanasia of the animal. If you work in a shelter, whether you are at the front desk, are responsible for the decisions about which animals will be euthanized, or as a volunteer, euthanasia affects you.

Even people who work in "no kill" shelters know what will happen when they cannot accept an animal. A "no kill" shelter operates by non-acceptance of aggressive dogs that have bitten. Some also will not accept geriatric dogs with health issues.

There is no simple or "right" way to cope with euthanasia. Research in the field and information shared at Burnout workshops around the country reveals many different approaches that can help reduce the stress.

Shelters have adopted a variety of policies and procedures to support their staff. Decision making about which animals will be euthanized and when that will occur may affect the impact. Who makes the decision, what criteria are used, and whether staff or volunteers are notified in advance are issues to consider in crafting effective policies for your setting, as well as the following:

- * Allowing requests for more time for specific animals;
- * Working in pairs when euthanizing is a requirement and for good reason. Safety as well as emotional support is essential.
- * A Euthanasia Journal to write heartfelt thoughts.
- * A way to vent to others in the field and share the good and bad of sheltering.

My hope is to create a workshop where every six months to a year the animal care professional can communicate the stresses to fellow workers. Meet and just share the ups and downs of the job and then a line of communication can be started even by phone.

Individuals cope in many different ways. You may fluctuate from being deeply moved to feeling numb over a period of time, or sometimes even from one day to the next. Approaches that can help handle the stress of euthanasia include:

- * Focusing on excellent technique helps some people find satisfaction by knowing they have done as good a job as humanly possible in making the experience comfortable for the animal;
- * Taking comfort in being the last person to connect with an animal you care about;
- * Giving the animal a special walk or food;
- * Holding and talking to the animal;
- * Apologizing or offering a prayer;
- * Being emotionally detached during euthanasia;
- * Using humor.

I also believe displaying photographs to acknowledge animals that have been adopted gives a feeling of success.

Euthanasia expert Doug Fakkema recommends taking some time outside the shelter, in nature, to just be quiet after euthanasia. Other ways that people find comfort include listening to music, taking a walk, meditating, reconnecting with other people or animals, or writing about the experience.

Many years ago, I worked for a small animal veterinarian that was doing a routine ear cleaning on a cocker spaniel and the dog died on the table. I witnessed the grief that ensued. I saw him get his coat; walk out the door and in heading to his car the body language was one of despair. The veterinary profession is one of the saving of lives and to be responsible for taking the life affects their life just as it does the Animal Control officer and those responsible for the shelter population.

It can also be helpful to balance the painful feelings involved in euthanasia with the pleasurable, fulfilling feelings of other aspects of your work. You can focus on enjoying time with the animals, a person you have educated, an animal you found a home for or returned

to a loving home, or a co-worker you have supported. Maintaining a perspective that your work matters and is part of a larger effort by thousands of people who deeply care about animals can also be an important part of coping.

We know from those who work in other jobs that confront trauma (such as firefighters, police officers, and ambulance crews) that the most effective way to prevent burnout is to acknowledge the depth of emotions that arise in response to your work. An intellectual understanding of the reasons for euthanasia doesn't make you immune from having feelings about taking the lives of so many animals.

"Normal" reactions to the abnormal situation of performing euthanasia may include sadness, fear, guilt, irritability, depression, anger, helplessness, or hopelessness. If you don't express these feelings, you are at risk for destructive behavior such as substance abuse, isolation, misdirected anger, and in extreme cases, suicidal or homicidal behavior. Suppressing emotions can also lead to physical illness. Medical problems such as asthma, hypertension, headaches, and ulcers are frequently exacerbated by stress. And, recent research is showing that suppression of emotions may result in lowered immune system functioning, while expressing emotions may actually improve our immune function.

It is crucial to find people, whether co-workers, family, friends, or other support people, who can truly listen without judging when you need to talk. Animal shelter workers often feel that no one else understands. And in one sense, no one can completely understand an experience they have not had. But there are always people who are capable of empathizing and it is vitally important to connect with them.

Finally, find the time and commitment to take as good care of yourself as you do of the animals. If you are unable to do this, or if you are feeling overwhelmed on a daily basis, seek help. To continue to do the work you care so deeply about you must also care deeply about yourself.

Did You Know?

Oral administration of approved drugs is permitted for any animal that cannot be captured or restrained without serious danger to human safety.

2010 RULE CHANGES

The Board submitted rule changes for approval by the 2010 legislature. The following rule changes were approved and became effective on March 29, 2010:

Rule 201.01.b: Pre-euthanasia sedation drugs are now available to all CETs that have been trained in their use. Prior to the rule change, only CETs classified as law enforcement employees could use these drugs.

Rule 204.01.d: The absolute requirement that a CEA have eighteen (18) and twenty (20) gauge needles in stock has been removed. Instead, the rule has been revised to require needles in a range of sizes that are the appropriate gauge for the intended use.

Rule 204.04: When approved drugs are transported in a vehicle, the drugs must be kept in a temporary storage cabinet that is securely bolted to the vehicle. The temporary cabinet must be securely locked when the drugs are not in use.

Rule 204.07.d.vi: The requirement for towels and sponges in the euthanasia area has been removed.

Rule 204.07.d.vii: The current certification cards for the CEA and all CETs working at the CEA must be kept together in the euthanasia area. The CEA is strongly encouraged to keep all DEA and Idaho Board of Pharmacy registration cards together with the CEA and CET certification cards.

Rule 205.03: Since law enforcement CETs may no longer work under the indirect supervision of a licensed veterinarian, the rule requiring a verification of supervision form signed by the supervising veterinarian has been removed.

Rule 205.03.e: This rule has been modified to require that each CEA notify the Board office in writing within thirty (30) days from the date a CET's employment at that agency has been terminated.

Rule 205.03.f: This rule change clarifies the reinstatement requirements for a CET when the CET has been terminated at a CEA and is employed at another CEA.

Proposed Rule Changes for 2011 Legislature

The CETF received approval from the Board of Veterinary Medicine for the following changes to the certified euthanasia rules:

Rule 200.01: This change proposes to increase the term of service for CETF members from two (2) years to three (3) years, due to the complexity of the certified euthanasia program.

Rule 201: To provide clarity, this change proposes clear separation of the types of drugs that can be used at a CEA, **01.** Euthanasia drugs, **02.** Pre-euthanasia sedation drugs, and **03.** Remote chemical capture restraint drugs. Use of remote chemical capture drugs is limited to CEAs and CETs that are classified as law enforcement agencies or law enforcement personnel who have successfully completed a Board-approved course in remote chemical capture.

In addition, as mentioned on page 1 of the newsletter, the Board and CETF have proposed a change to Rule 201 to remove carbon monoxide-induced euthanasia chambers as an acceptable method of euthanasia at a CEA.

Rule 205: This entire rule underwent a careful review by all CETF members and several changes were approved for review by the 2011 legislature as follows:

02.a: This change proposes to require that CET trainees demonstrate efficiency in euthanasia techniques, rather than venous access, in the presence of a CETF or Board member, or a person approved by the Board.

02.a.ii: - This change moves to rule 205.02.c.i the requirement that each animal shall be handled with the least amount of restraint necessary.

02.a.iii.(1): This change proposes to remove the requirement that IV injections be used on all dogs over the age of three (3) months. This will give each CET the discretion to use his or her professional judgment regarding the best type of euthanasia for the situation.

02.a.iii.(2): This change proposes to remove the requirement that an animal injected IP be held until the animal is unconscious. It also removes the requirement that the animal be checked every five (5) minutes until death occurs.

02.a.v.(1) through (4): This section regarding injections is being removed. The CETF felt the wording regarding needle aspiration, keeping the cap on the needle, minimum manufacturer's dosages, and size and length of needles are covering areas that are appropriately addressed in each CET training course.

2.a.vii: This section is also being removed, as it requires that CETs demonstrate an understanding of carbon monoxide-induced euthanasia chambers.

02.c.i: The section regarding lowering injected animals to the surface on which they are being held at the time of injection is being removed. The CETF again feels that this aspect is covered in the CET training courses and does not need to be specifically addressed in rule.

02.d: This rule provides three (3) specific time periods in which an animal becomes unconscious for the three (3) methods of euthanasia, IV, IP, and IC. The proposed revision sets sixty (60) minutes as the time period for unconsciousness and showing of terminal signs in all euthanasia methods.

03.b: This change removes the requirement that an individual who has not passed the written exam may not serve as an assistant to a CET.

03.d: This rule change clarifies that a CET's certification immediately becomes invalid when the CET has been terminated by his or her CEA employer, and provides terms for reinstatement upon employment at another CEA.

03.f: This rule change provides that reinstatement of a terminated CET must be requested by the CEA employer, not the CET.

04.b: This rule change provides that CETs classified as law enforcement personnel who use remote chemical capture must recertify in remote chemical capture every third year following their original remote chemical capture certification. This will be in addition to the regular euthanasia training required every third year.

These rule changes will be published in the October 6, 2010 edition of the Idaho Administrative Bulletin, with a twenty-one (21) day public comment period that ends October 27, 2010. The Bulletin contains the exact wording of the rules. It can be viewed at the following web link starting October 6, 2010:

<http://adm.idaho.gov/adminrules/bulletin/mstrtoc.htm>

Also, if you have ideas for rule changes for 2012, or have questions or comments on the information provided in the newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact Karen Ewing at the Board office in Boise.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!
Board of Pharmacy Statute Change

Effective July 1, 2010, the Idaho Board of Pharmacy now requires criminal background checks on all new applicants for Idaho Controlled Substance Registrations. This means that all new Certified Euthanasia Technicians (CETs) must undergo a fingerprint-based criminal background check by both the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine and the Idaho Board of Pharmacy.

Unfortunately, federal confidentiality regulations do not allow our state agencies to share criminal background check information with each other. In addition, we each have separate statutes that authorize background checks, and the Idaho State Police and FBI will not perform fingerprint-based criminal background checks unless it is under each agency's specific authorizing statute.

In an attempt to make this very inconvenient situation more palatable, the Board of Veterinary Medicine has obtained the Board of Pharmacy's blank fingerprint cards. When application packets are sent to new CET trainees by the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine, fingerprint cards for both agencies will be enclosed. This will allow CET applicants to have both sets of fingerprints taken at the same time, which will save time. We also hope that law enforcement agencies taking fingerprints will not charge extra for the second set of fingerprints.

CET applicants will send their Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine fingerprint card and application to the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine. The Idaho Board of Pharmacy fingerprint card will be kept by the applicant until the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine has issued the applicant's CET certification.

Once a CET has been certified by the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine, he or she will apply to the Idaho Board of Pharmacy for his or her Idaho Controlled Substance Registration. The applicant will complete the Idaho Board of Pharmacy's Controlled Substance Registration application; send the completed application and supporting documents to the Board of Pharmacy, including the Board of Pharmacy fingerprint card, along with the payment and application documents.

The Board of Pharmacy has indicated that if they receive money for a criminal background check and the person does not pass the Idaho Board of Veterinary Medicine CET training course, the money for the background check cannot be refunded. The Board of Veterinary Medicine and Certified Euthanasia Task Force understand how tight money is at Certified Euthanasia Agencies, so we want to ensure your agency does not pay the separate \$29.25 Board of Pharmacy background check fee to the Board of Pharmacy until each CET trainee has received his or her CET certification.

Fee Discussion

The current fees for Certified Euthanasia Agencies have not been raised since the inception of the euthanasia program in 1993. The fees for Certified Euthanasia Technicians have not been raised since 1999. Licensing fees for veterinarians have not been raised since 1999, and certification fees for veterinary technicians have not been raised since the inception of the veterinary technician certification program in 2000.

The certified euthanasia program is not self-supporting, and is partially supported by fees paid by veterinarians and certified veterinary technicians. In addition, the Board has directed its staff to upgrade its licensing and certification software to allow for online renewals by 2012. This will necessitate a fee increase for all licensees and certificants to cover the software costs.

The Board will discuss this issue at its October 25, 2010 meeting to determine which fees should be increased, and how much the fees will need to rise. Another possibility to raise more funds for the certified euthanasia program is to pass along the Board's costs for the HSUS euthanasia training manual, Idaho adjunct training manual, and agency drug log books. This idea will also be discussed on October 25, 2010.

Fee increases require rules changes, which must be ratified by the Idaho Legislature. This would be done through the 2012 legislative session. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about a possible fee increase, please contact Karen Ewing at the Board office at (208) 332-8588.