**ANIMAL CRUELTY AS AN**

**INDICATOR AND PREDICTOR CRIME**

“The topic of animal cruelty may seem unimportant in the face of events like the Boston bombing, school shootings, and other recent tragedies, but we know there’s a history of animal cruelty in the backgrounds of many perpetrators of violent acts…Understanding this link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence is critical to the Department.”

- ***U.S. Department of Justice****, Apr. 30, 2013*

**ANIMAL ABUSE AND… DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**Adding a question about whether the batterer threatened or hurt pets to the Nashville, Tenn. Domestic violence crisis line helped decrease domestic violence homicides by 80%.**

**71% of women in domestic violence shelters reported their batterer abused or killed their animals.**

**A history of animal abuse is one of the four most significant risk factors of who is most likely to become a domestic violence batterer.**

**Batterers who also abuse pets use more controlling and violent behaviors and are more dangerous than batterers who do not also attack animals.**

**25 states allow courts to specifically include pets in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders.**

**Acts of animal cruelty committed with the intention of intimidating, controlling or coercing a spouse or partner are defined as domestic violence in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, and Tennessee.**

**ANIMAL ABUSE AND… JUVENILES**

**43% of school shooters have concurrent histories of animal cruelty.**

**As many as 31% of youths in Chicago have attended a dog fight.**

**ANIMAL ABUSE AND… CHILD ABUSE**

**Animal abuse was found in 88% of homes under investigation for physical child abuse.**

**ANIMAL ABUSE AND… CRIME IN GENERAL**

**70% of Massachusetts animal abusers were found to have histories of other crimes**

**21.6% of human fatalities from dog bites between 2000-2009 involved dogs that had been abused.**

**Animal cruelty is now a felony crime in all 50 states, with South Dakota enacting such a law in 2014.**

**Participating in, attending, or hosting a dog fight became a federal felony in 2014.**

**Trained veterinary forensics experts are now widely available to assist law enforcement officers and prosecutors investigating animal cruelty cases.**

**More than 60% of animal cruelty offenders in Chicago also had arrests on felony charges, multiple prior arrests, narcotics charges, battery-related and violent offense charges, and alleged gang connections.**

**35% of search warrants executed in Chicago for animal abuse or dog fighting investigations resulted in seizures of illegal drugs and/or weapons.**

**A history of animal abuse is a better predictor of sexual assault than prior convictions for homicide, arson or firearms offenses. 99% of animal cruelty offenders have committed other crimes, averaging 4 different offenses.**

* **Offender profiling for homicide, sexual assault, arson, stalking, and child abuse cases would benefit from law enforcement having knowledge of animal cruelty cases.**

**Responding to the increase in animal cruelty cases and the public’s demand for more effective action, enforcement and prosecutors in over fifty major cities have established specialized animal crime units.**

“Over the last decade, social scientists and law enforcement agencies have begun to examine cruelty to animals as a serious *human* problem closely linked to domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent crimes…[These efforts] cannot undo generations of abuse, but they can be an effective means of breaking the cycle of family violence from one generation to the next.”

*--* ***International Association of Chiefs of Police****, 2000*