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Animal abuse and neglect legal cases: Where do you fit in? Continuing education opportunity

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Understanding, Investigating and Prosecuting Animal Abuse:

Your role in the legal system

Veterinarians and veterinary technicians today sometimes find themselves in a role they never saw coming --drawn into the legal system, identifying animal abuse that could be masking domestic abuse, and even testifying in court.

Understanding, Investigating and Prosecuting Animal Abuse, a seminar for veterinarians and veterinary technicians, will be offered in Madison *Thursday, March 26*, by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to help prepare them for that role. It will run 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza, 4402 E. Washington Ave. **Registration is due by Friday, March 13.**

The seminar topics:

Animal Cruelty and Human Violence: The Veterinarian's Role in Making the Connection will review the definition of animal abuse and neglect, emphasizing the issue of the connection between animal abuse and abuse of children, spouses, and elders. The workshop will review new tools to identify injuries that may result from animal cruelty, the veterinarian's role in recognizing and responding to deliberate animal injuries, and legal mandates to respond to animal or domestic abuse.

Animal CSI: Forensic Investigation of Animal Cruelty and Veterinary Forensics will cover the use of forensics to investigate animal abuse, including the role of a veterinarian in animal cruelty reporting, investigation and prosecution. Forensic examination of the crime scene and animals, available forensic testing, unique findings in animals, and packaging the case will be presented.

The Veterinarian as Expert Witness in Animal Cruelty Cases: What to Expect will help veterinary professionals prepare for involvement in civil or criminal court cases, adversarial proceedings that are often foreign to those employed in helping occupations. The session will provide an overview of what is expected of expert witnesses and common techniques used to strengthen or undermine expert testimony.

Instructors will be Melinda Merck, DVM, Senior Director of Veterinary Forensic Sciences with the ASPCA, and Randall Lockwood, PhD, Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Field Services with the ASPCA. More information about the instructors' credentials, as well as directions to the hotel and other information, is available at on [our website](#).

Cost for the seminar is \$60, including lunch. Continuing education credits are available. To register, contact [Gena Goldade](#), 608-224-4889, or go to our website. For more information about the content of the seminar, contact [Yvonne Bellay, DVM](#), state humane veterinarian, 608-224-4888.

Please note that we are offering two versions of this seminar on two consecutive days. Only the March 26 seminar will be targeted to veterinarians and veterinary technicians.

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