

**RULES FOR THE HUMANE EUTHANASIA OF ANIMALS
IN REGISTERED ANIMAL SHELTERS**

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. "Certified Euthanasia Technician" (CET) means a person employed by a registered animal shelter who is instructed in:
1. the proper method of humanely euthanizing animals by injecting solutions approved for euthanasia,
 2. proper security precautions;
 3. proper record keeping; and
 4. who has been certified by the Commissioner.
- B. "Chemical Restraint Drugs" means drugs that are administered prior to a lethal drug to reduce aggressiveness and/or mobility of the subject animal.
- C. "Commissioner" means Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Markets.
- D. "Direct Supervision" means responsibility for the training of the prospective CET and being physically present during euthanasia when performed by the prospective CET.
- E. "Drug Enforcement Agency" (DEA) means the Federal agency responsible for enforcement of narcotic laws.
- F. "Euthanasia Board for Animals" (EBA) means a board appointed by the commissioner to:
1. provide training programs for certified euthanasia technicians;
 2. recommend individuals for certification as euthanasia technicians;
 3. inspect registered animal shelters for compliance with these or any other rules promulgated under 20 V.S.A. Section 3913 & 13 V.S.A. Section 371;
 4. recommend registered animal shelters for approval to purchase, possess and use solutions approved for euthanasia; and
 5. make such other recommendations to the commissioner as are appropriate to insure humane and safe euthanasia of animals.

- G. "Euthanasia Solution" means a solution used for the humane death of an animal accomplished by a method that produces rapid unconsciousness and subsequent death without evidence of pain or distress, or a method that utilizes anesthesia produced by an agent that causes painless loss of consciousness and subsequent death.
- H. "Lethal Drug" means drugs that, when administered to an animal, cause humane death.
- I. "Registered Animal Shelters" (RAS) means animal shelters registered with the Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets under 20 V.S.A. Section 3903.
- J. "Veterinarian of Record" means a Vermont licensed veterinarian who is the primary veterinary consultant to the registered animal shelter for the euthanasia procedures used in the registered animal shelter.

II. EUTHANASIA BOARD FOR ANIMALS:

A. COMPOSITION:

The EBA shall consist of seven (7) members; three (3) veterinarians recommended by the Vermont Veterinary Medical Association; three (3) representatives of registered animal shelters recommended by the Vermont Humane Federation; and the State Veterinarian or another veterinarian representative of the commissioner.

1. Each member with the exception of the Commissioner's representative shall be appointed for three years except that the initial appointments for each group will serve terms as follows: one member will serve for one year, one will serve for two years and the third will serve for three years.
2. Each member except the commissioner's representative may be reappointed to a second term. No member except for the commissioner's representative, shall serve more than two full three year terms.

B. DUTIES:

Duties of the members of the Euthanasia Board for Animals include but are not limited to:

1. Coordinating and providing euthanasia training classes no less than once every two years.
2. Evaluating candidates for certification and recommending certification to the commissioner.

3. Evaluating candidates for re-certification and recommending re-certification to the commissioner.
4. Reviewing the records, performance, methods, procedures and inspecting the facilities of registered animal shelters used for euthanasia and recommending approval of registered animal shelters for purchasing, possessing or using euthanasia solutions.
5. Recommending suspension or revocation of (a) certification of technicians or (b) approval of registered animal shelters for cause.
6. Recommending additions or deletions to the list of approved euthanasia solutions and chemical restraint drugs for use in a registered animal shelter.

C. EUTHANASIA TRAINING:

The Euthanasia Board for Animals shall develop and/or recommend training sessions and materials which may include, but are not limited to the following topics:

1. The theory of euthanasia methods;
2. Proper animal handling to ease trauma and stress;
3. Dosages, record keeping and documentation of usage of euthanasia solutions and chemical restraint drugs;
4. Proper injection techniques.

D. ON-SITE INSPECTION TEAM:

1. Composition: The inspection team shall include at a minimum, a veterinarian, a humane society representative and the State Veterinarian or his/her designee.
2. Duties:
 - (a) To inspect registered animal shelters for approval to use euthanasia solutions.
 - (b) To examine candidates for certification as euthanasia technicians.

E. INSPECTION DEFICIENCIES REQUIRING IMMEDIATE CORRECTION:

If there are deficiencies with either a CET or a RAS facility, the member of the EBA shall document areas for correction on the inspection form. The RAS and CET shall make corrections within 90 days and the EBA member will reinspect or re-examine the CET or RAS facility within 90 days. If the deficiencies have not been corrected the EBA member or EBA board may recommend that the commissioner:

1. not issue the certification or approval,
2. revoke the certification of the CET and the approval of the RAS as may be applicable.

III. WHO MAY ADMINISTER EUTHANASIA SOLUTIONS:

A. GENERAL:

No person shall administer euthanasia drugs to an animal in a registered animal shelter in Vermont unless that person is a certified euthanasia technician or a Vermont licensed veterinarian.

B. EXCEPTION:

A person in training as a CET who is employed by a registered animal shelter, may administer a lethal drug or chemical restraint drug under the direct supervision of a certified euthanasia technician or Vermont licensed veterinarian.

IV. CERTIFIED EUTHANASIA TECHNICIANS:

A. INITIAL CERTIFICATION OF TECHNICIANS:

1. Application: Applicants for initial certification as euthanasia technicians must provide the euthanasia board for animals with the following:
 - a. Satisfactory completion of an approved euthanasia training course.
 - b. Satisfactory completion of a supervised training period of not less than two months within the past twelve months.
 - c. Satisfactory completion of an oral and practical examination by the on-site inspection team.

- d. Proof of employment at an approved registered animal shelter;
 - e. A sworn statement that he or she does not have any drug-related convictions, and which discloses any pending drug-related criminal charges.
- 2. Procedure: The euthanasia board for animals will review the request for initial certification at its next meeting and submit its recommendations to the commissioner. All recommendations shall be supported by factual findings.
 - 3. Certified euthanasia technicians will receive a certificate which will expire on January 1 of each year. The certificate will be displayed on the wall of the euthanasia room of the registered animal shelter.

B. RECERTIFICATION OF EUTHANASIA TECHNICIANS:

- 1. Certified Euthanasia Technicians must submit on or before January 1 of each year an application for recertification to the commissioner with the following information:
 - a. Proof of satisfactory completion of an approved euthanasia refresher course within the previous three years.
 - b. Proof of employment at an approved registered animal shelter.
 - c. A sworn statement that he or she does not have any drug-related convictions, and which discloses any pending drug-related criminal charges.
- 2. Re-certification recommendations for, or the denial of re-certification shall be supported by factual findings.

C. CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR TECHNICIANS:

- 1. The certified euthanasia technician administering euthanasia solutions or supervising others in training is fully responsible for all actions that take place in the euthanasia area.
- 2. Each animal shall be held with the least amount of restraint necessary but human safety shall always be the primary concern. The use of chemical restraint is the option of the certified euthanasia technician.

3. Injection techniques for euthanasia solutions and chemical restraint drugs:
 - (a) Intravenous injections: The certified euthanasia technician shall be able to perform intravenous injections humanely. Intravenous injections shall be in the cephalic vein in all dogs over the age of 3 months and any other large animals unless the animal's physical condition or size makes this type of injection impossible or the animal's behavior could make this type of injection a serious danger to the CET or the handler. Intravenous injections on cats are not required but if performed shall meet the standards for dogs.
 - (b) Intraperitoneal injections: The certified euthanasia technician shall be able to efficiently insert the needle into the proper injection sites. After the injection the animal shall be placed in an appropriate enclosure separated from other animals. The front of the appropriate enclosure shall be covered with cloth or other material that can keep the cage isolated from the normal activities in the euthanasia area. The animal shall be observed regularly until death occurs.
 - (c) Intracardiac injections are not required. At no time shall intracardiac injections be used on conscious animals.
 - (d) No other injection procedure for euthanasia solution is permitted in any type of animal.
 - (e) Chemical restraint drugs administered prior to euthanasia solutions may be given subcutaneously, intramuscularly or orally.
4. The CET must understand the concern for individual animal needs:
 - (a) Injected animals shall be lowered to the surface on which they are being held after they have collapsed. Injected animals shall not be permitted to drop or otherwise collapse without human support except when the animal is restrained by a mechanical restraint device.
 - (b) All animals shall be handled with minimum stress while maximizing personal safety. Animals that cannot be handled with a limited amount of physical restraint shall be given a chemical restraint drug. Under these circumstances if the shelter has insufficient chemical restraint drugs available, it should consult a veterinarian. Handling includes all aspects of moving an animal from one area to another.

- (c) Animals shall not be placed in cages or kennels with other breeds or species that are incompatible with the animal in question. The animals shall not be overcrowded in any cage or kennel.
5. The CET must demonstrate:
- (a) The ability to verify death: Each animal shall be checked to verify death. The verification is the responsibility of the certified euthanasia technician and shall be made by physical examination of the individual animal. One or more of the following three indicators of death shall be met:
 - 1. Complete lack of palpebral, corneal and pupillary reflexes, complete lack of heartbeat determined by use of a stethoscope and complete lack of respiration; or
 - 2. Cardiac standstill as indicated by a complete lack of movement of a needle inserted directly into the heart; or
 - 3. Rigormortis.
 - (b) The ability to handle difficult situations if they arise during the euthanasia process.
 - (c) The ability to communicate with handlers during the euthanasia process.
6. Use of Assistants:
- (a) To assure safe and humane euthanasia technique a minimum of two persons shall be required for any intravenous injection. One person shall be a CET and one or more persons shall be a handler. The handler(s) do not have to be CETs but the handler(s) should be trained in human safety and in animal handling techniques.
 - (b) Intraperitoneal injection and intracardiac injections may be administered by a certified euthanasia technician without a handler to unconscious animals.
7. Chemical restraint drug: Ketamine, xylazine, acetylpromazine and other chemical restraint drugs shall be used according to their label instructions. The storage requirements for controlled substances and non-controlled substances shall apply to chemical restraint drugs according to their classification.

8. Proper Record Keeping:

- (a) A record of all euthanasia solution received and used by shelters shall be kept in a consecutively numbered bound book. The record for controlled substances shall meet the requirements of the DEA. The records shall contain at least the following information:
 - 1. The species and weight of each animal on which the drug is used.
 - 2. The amount of the drug that was used and the total amount of drug left after use.
 - 3. The name or initials of the person who administered the drug.
- (b) All records shall be filed in chronological order and labeled with the name of the RAS.
- (c) Outdated Drugs: Outdated drugs shall be labeled as such and properly disposed of. Outdated drugs shall not be injected into living animals.
- (d) All records shall be kept for a period of three years from the purchase date of the drug.

V. CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED ANIMAL SHELTERS TO BE APPROVED TO PERFORM EUTHANASIA:

A. STANDARDS FOR INITIAL APPROVAL OF RAS:

- 1. An approved RAS should employ a CET. A CET shall be responsible for the security and use of euthanasia solutions and chemical restraint drugs; the verification of animals for euthanasia; and the euthanasia procedures used by the RAS. Any change in employment status by a CET must be reported in writing to the commissioner within 2 working days.
- 2. A RAS must demonstrate that the shelter has a veterinarian of record. Any change in the veterinarian of record must be reported to the commissioner in writing within 2 working days.
- 3. A RAS must pass a facility inspection by an inspection team appointed by the EBA. This inspection will include but not be limited to:

- (a) A DEA approved record system for controlled and non-controlled substances.
 - (b) A DEA approved storage system for controlled and non-controlled substances.
 - (c) An approved euthanasia area.
 - (d) Sufficient supplies and equipment to perform euthanasia humanely.
- 4. The RAS must provide the inspection team with forms and information pamphlets used by the RAS for animal surrender, animal adoption, euthanasia services and other pertinent activities of the RAS.
 - 5. The RAS must demonstrate to the inspection team proper animal identification procedures to insure euthanasia of the proper animal.
 - 6. The EBA's recommendations for approval or non-approval must be supported by factual findings.

B. Procedure for Initial Approval of RAS:

- 1. The Euthanasia Board for Animals will review the request for initial approval of the RAS at its next meeting and submit its recommendations to the commissioner.
- 2. Approved registered animal shelters will receive a certificate which will expire on January 1 of each year. The certificate will be displayed on the wall of the euthanasia room of the registered animal shelter.

C. STANDARDS FOR THE EUTHANASIA AREA:

- 1. Each shelter shall have a specific area designated for euthanasia. That area:
 - (a) shall be a separate room; or
 - (b) an area that is physically separated from the rest of the shelter by a wall, barrier or other divider; or
 - (c) an area that is not used for any other purpose while animals are being euthanized.

- (d) shall provide a separate entrance to the euthanasia area for injured or contagious animals.
 - (e) shall provide a safe quiet environment in which to perform euthanasia.
 - (f) shall provide adequate space for two persons to perform euthanasia.
2. The following information shall be posted in the euthanasia area of a RAS:
- (a) a dosage chart for each euthanasia solution or chemical restraint drug maintained at the facility.
 - (b) response protocols for accidental exposure of humans to euthanasia solutions or chemical restraint drugs maintained at the registered animal shelter.
3. The euthanasia area shall meet the following minimum standards:
- (a) Lighting shall be adequate and even to provide sufficient illumination to aid in maintaining good housekeeping practices, adequate inspection of animals, and safe working conditions for personnel.
 - (b) The air temperature shall be within reasonable comfortable range for both personnel and animals. A minimum of 64 degrees and a maximum of 84 degrees Fahrenheit is recommended.
 - (c) The area shall have adequate ventilation that prevents accumulation of odors. At least one exhaust fan vented directly to the outside is recommended.
 - (d) The area shall have holding cages available to hold an animal while waiting for the drug to take effect. These cages shall be clean and sanitized.
 - (e) The floor of the area shall provide dry non-slip footing to prevent accidents.
 - (f) Drains should be capped and sealed or able to be flushed and disinfected.

4. The euthanasia area shall have the following equipment:
 - (a) A table or other work area where animals can be handled when euthanasia is performed. The surface shall have a non-slip texture that provides a comfortable footing for the animal.
 - (b) A cabinet, table, or work bench where the drug, needle, syringe and clippers can be placed. This surface shall be separate from the area where the animals are being handled.
 - (c) A sink or faucet shall be available within 25 feet of the euthanasia area for emergency cleanup.
 - (d) All equipment shall be in good working order.
 - (e) All equipment shall be stored so that it does not create a safety hazard for the personnel.
5. The following equipment shall be kept in the euthanasia area or shall be brought to the area each time euthanasia is performed:
 - (a) A first aid kit which meets VOSHA standards.
 - (b) One or more tourniquets.
 - (c) Standard electric clippers with a number 40 Oster blade or an equivalent blade.
 - (d) Appropriate restraint devices for dogs and cats when euthanasia is performed.
 - (e) Stethoscope.
 - (f) Towels, sponges and disinfectant.
6. All drugs and other chemical agents used in the euthanasia area shall be clearly labeled.

D. HANDLING OF EUTHANASIA SOLUTIONS AND CHEMICAL RESTRAINT DRUGS:

1. List of approved drugs.

(a) The EBA will recommend specific chemical restraint drugs and lethal drugs for use as euthanasia solutions to the commissioner for approval. Consideration will be made for the pharmacological action of the drugs; the ease of humane administration of the drugs; the animal species for which the drug can be used to perform euthanasia; and human safety issues relative to use of the drug.

(b) The list of approved euthanasia solutions will be provided to approved registered animal shelters and updated as required. This list will:

1. include the generic and the trade name of the drug.
2. indicate for record keeping purposes whether the drug is a controlled or non-controlled substance.
3. indicate the species for which the drug is approved and the approved route of administration.

2. Storage of Euthanasia Solutions:

(a) The CET shall be responsible for compliance with storage requirements for euthanasia solutions at registered animal shelters. Any violation of storage requirements should be immediately reported to the commissioner.

(b) Controlled substances shall be stored in accordance with current DEA regulations and any DEA or state regulations promulgated in the future.

1. Inventories of controlled substances will be stored in a locked safe attached to a wall to the building in a room other than the euthanasia room. Only controlled substances will be in the safe.

3. Safes:

(a) The safe shall be securely attached to the building in which it is housed.

- (b) If a controlled substance is stored in a safe that can be opened by employees other than the CET, the controlled substance shall be kept in a separate locked metal container within the safe. Access to this container shall be available only to the CET and the veterinarian of record.
 - (c) The environment temperature of the storage cabinet shall be adequate to ensure the proper keeping of the drugs.
- 4. Controlled substances for day use may be stored in a locked cabinet in the euthanasia room with non-controlled substances, syringes, the daily log and the record book. The controlled substance must be returned to the safe at the end of the business day or whenever the CET is not on duty. The key to the cabinet shall be available only to the CET or veterinarian on duty.
- 5. Non-controlled substances may be stored in a locked cabinet in the euthanasia room or secured under lock in another room at the registered animal shelter. Non-controlled substances may be kept with syringes, inventory records and daily logs.
- 6. Sodium pentobarbital in powder form shall be reconstituted according to the manufacturer's instructions. Each container of sodium pentobarbital shall be labeled with the name and strength, the date the drug was received and prepared, a drug warning label and the name and address of the RAS owning the drug.
- 7. Record keeping requirements are in IV.C.8. of these rules.

E. STANDARDS FOR NEEDLES AND SYRINGES:

- 1. Needles - four (4) different needle sizes are required; 18, 20, 22 and 25 gauge. A RAS may have other needle sizes according to its needs. Needles shall be of medical quality and shall not be used more than once.
- 2. Syringes - three (3) different syringe sizes are required; 3, 6 and 12 cc. A RAS may have other syringe sizes according to its needs. Syringes shall be of medical quality and may be reused only for euthanasia after proper cleaning.
- 3. The temporary storage cabinet shall be used to store all needles and syringes when not in use.

4. Following use, needles and syringes shall be disposed of in a manner that makes their reuse impossible.

F. CARCASS DISPOSAL

1. All carcasses shall be disposed of in a manner according to law and the facility procedures.
2. Until the carcass can be disposed of it should be kept in a freezer used only for this purpose.

G. REAPPROVAL OF REGISTERED ANIMAL SHELTERS:

1. A RAS may submit a request for reapproval to the commissioner on or before January 1 of each year with the following information:
 - a. A list of CETs employed by the RAS, their employment status (including part time, full time, hours on duty) and indicate which CET is responsible for all aspects of euthanasia at the RAS.
 - b. The name and address of the veterinarian of record and an indication of the veterinarian's consent to serve the RAS as the veterinarian of record.
2. There may be an inspection prior to reapproval.
3. The Board may recommend that the Commissioner revoke or suspend approval based upon investigation of complaints, an inspection revealing deficiencies that are not corrected, or any other violations of these rules.
4. The RAS's recommendations for approval or non-approval must be supported by factual findings.