

Distressed Wildlife

From the Office of the First Selectman

In this article, we hope to answer basic questions about what to do when a concerned citizen sees a distressed animal on the side of the road. While many feel compelled to pull over and help these animals, we suggest they take precaution. Most roadside animals are likely to be wild and reactions have unforeseen negative consequences if handled incorrectly.

Following are some common questions and answers provided by our Redding Animal Control Officer, Mike Deluca and the CT Department of Transportation. Links are also provided from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) website and Wildlife In Crisis (WIC).

1) **Whom should an average citizen call when an animal is found injured on the side of the road?**

Answer: CALL POLICE DISPATCH---203-938-3400. A police officer will go to the scene and assess what to do, in a timely manner. Officer Deluca stressed that human emergencies take precedence over animal calls. But the police will make every attempt to get there in a timely manner to evaluate the scene. The officer(s) will determine if: the animal is wild and/or in distress. If so, he/she will have to euthanize the animal on site. Visit the CT DEEP website to review protocol:

http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=326228&deepNav_GID=1655.

However, if the animal appears healthy and young—and is a small animal or bird--Wildlife in Crisis (WIC) might be contacted. Note that WIC does not pick up animals. The animal would have to be dropped off at the shelter's Weston location and access, time of day, etc. would determine the delivery of the animal. Visit to learn more: <http://www.wildlifeincrisis.com/>

2) **What if a domestic animal is found at the side of the road?**

Answer: CALL POLICE DISPATCH—203-938-3400. They will assess the situation. The police will bring the animal to a veterinarian hospital. Meanwhile, every attempt will be made to reach the owner. Hopefully the animal will be tagged and have identification. If the owner does not attempt to find their animal (in the case of an untagged animal and/or unreachable owner), if after 5 days at the hospital, the animal will be released to an animal shelter or euthanized if it is beyond recovery.

3) **Road kill on a local or state road: what to do?**

Answer: CALL POLICE DISPATCH—203-938-3400 for Redding Local Roads. They will contact the Redding Highway Dept. which will pick up the roadside animals during business hours (no weekends or holidays) which change twice a year. The Highway hours: from April through November, Monday through Thursday are from 6:30 am to 5 pm; December through March are open Monday through Friday are from 7 am to 3:30 pm.

CALL the CT Department of Transportation (DT DOT) –800-695-0444—for state roads (Rt. 58, Rt. 107, Rt. 53, Rt. 7). The CT DOT offers 24 hour answering service. The actual pick-up of the animal will take

place during their highway service hours, M-F 8 am to 4 pm. No weekends or holidays. The animal will be picked up between 1-3 days.

4) Are there other organizations to turn to?

Wildlife in Crisis is in nearby Weston, CT. It is a non-profit foundation that relies on private funding to function. Note that it is within their charter to discern what they allow on their property and to what degree they will take on a new patient.

The WIC website supplies a list of guidelines to abide by when dealing with wildlife. Please review the site. Visit: www.wildlifeincrisis.org.

CT DEEP also has a very detailed website that provides “Common Wildlife Problems” with lists and suggestions. Visit the CT DEEP website. [www/ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov), look for the “Natural Resources” tab, click, and it will provide a “Wildlife” page. On that page you will find another link called “Nuisance/Distressed Wildlife” (http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325720&deepNav_GID=1655)

If you are so inclined...

Become a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) so you can be a resource in your community or just for your own peace of mind. Visit this website learn more about how to become a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO):

http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=471494&deepNav_GID=1655

Or you can become a Ct Wildlife Rehabilitator. Visit:

<http://www.cwrawildlife.org/distressedwildlife.html> to learn more.