

ACTION ALERT

Contact your legislators today!

Animal Protection Voters has two important issues on our 2003 legislative agenda. ***But we can't strengthen our laws to protect animals without your help.*** Please get in touch with your state Senator and Representative TODAY.

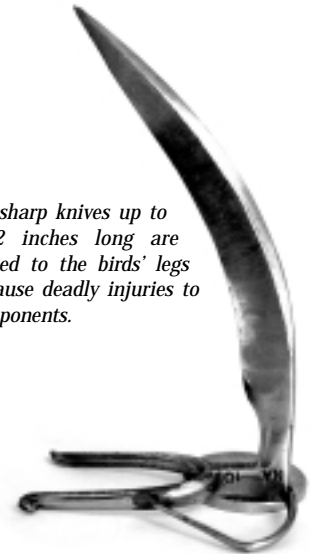
Make a Call or Write a Letter – Urge your legislators to support a ban on cockfighting and to support legislation addressing companion animal hoarding. Ask them how they plan to vote. If they will not cast a vote for the animals, ask them why and what might change their mind. To see a draft of both bills, visit APV's website at www.apvnm.org.

Let us know your legislators' positions—call us at 954-4262, or email Danielle Bays at danielle@apvnm.org.

TALKING POINTS ON COCKFIGHTING

- ▶ Cockfighting perpetuates violence in our communities. There is an undeniable link between cruelty to animals and violence toward humans.
- ▶ Cockfighting is bad for New Mexico's image. The blood sport is banned in every other state aside from Louisiana. Let's not be last on this list too.
- ▶ Intentional cruelty to animals and dog fighting are felonies in New Mexico. Cockfighting is just as cruel and should be a felony as well.
- ▶ Illegal gambling is a cornerstone of cockfighting. These ill-gotten profits won't bolster our economy.

Razor-sharp knives up to 3 1/2 inches long are strapped to the birds' legs and cause deadly injuries to the opponents.



TALKING POINTS ON COMPANION ANIMAL HOARDING

- ▶ Companion animal hoarding is a big problem in the state, with suspected hoarders living in nearly every community.
- ▶ Although companion animal hoarding is usually associated with large numbers of animals (50, 100, 150), it is about how the animals are cared for. The typical situation involves malnourished, sick animals living in filthy, cramped conditions, which, in some cases, require the premises to be condemned.
- ▶ In the past, our community shelters have spent large amounts of money and other resources impounding alleged hoarders' animals. This takes away from the services the community depends on them to provide. We need better solutions, like those offered in the bill.
- ▶ Companion animal hoarding is a psychological problem. And the living conditions are not just bad for the animals – they are bad for the people too. Hoarders need help.



Animals kept in hoarding situations often live their entire lives in crowded, miserable conditions. Photo courtesy of the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society.

WHO ARE MY LEGISLATORS? HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM?

We each have one state senator and one state representative. To find out who they are, check your voter registration card for the senate and house district numbers. You can look up their contact information on the New Mexico State Legislature website, www.legis.state.nm.us, or by contacting your county clerk's office. The number will be listed in the county government section of your phone book. Your county clerk can tell you who your senator and representative are if you can't find your voter registration card or if you have not yet registered to vote in New Mexico.



Before the Legislature convenes, you can find your legislators in your home district. After January 21st, they will be in Santa Fe. Make sure that if you are trying to contact them once the session begins, you direct calls and letters to Santa Fe.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO HELP?

Attend Hearings – Once you join Animal Protection Voters, we will keep you informed of hearing dates for the bills. Please plan to take a day to come to Santa Fe and show your support. We suspect the cockfighters will be out in full force and don't want them to outnumber us.

Spread the Word – Talk to others about these issues. Don't limit your discussions to your animal-loving friends—raise awareness with as many people as you can. And get them to contact their legislators as well.

Build a Stronger Coalition – If you belong to a community organization or professional association, get that group to endorse these pro-animal bills. Local businesses are also good allies. Contact us for endorsement forms.

Write to the Newspapers – Whenever you see an article related to cockfighting or companion animal hoarding, send a letter to the editor voicing your support for these bills. If you notice an absence of articles, get out your pen and send in a letter. Let us know if you need help with what to say.

Join Animal Protection Voters – Your membership contribution and other support is crucial to our ability to pass strong animal protection laws. Please join APV today.



Photo courtesy of the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society.