

the
LOUISIANA BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
Quarterly Report

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Spring, 1995

**ANNUAL LICENSE
RENEWAL TIME**

The forms for annual renewal of licensure to practice veterinary medicine in Louisiana will be mailed to all active and inactive license holders during the last week of June 1995. If you have moved since last year's renewal, you need to notify us of your new address now.

Please let us know if you do not receive your renewal form by mid-July.

PLEASE NOTE! The Board does not accept partial or incomplete renewal submissions. Instructions for returning a complete form will be included with the renewal mailing.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS MUST
BE COMPLETED BY JUNE 30, 1995**

All continuing education hours for the upcoming renewal year must be completed by June 30, 1995. Proof of attendance for 16 hours must be attached to the renewal form. Hours taken after June 30 may be submitted with a \$25.00 disciplinary fine for failure to complete hours subsequent to the renewal year as required by Rules 403 and 413.

All license holders, active or inactive, must take CE. Only those persons who have completed an affidavit of retirement or disability are eligible for a waiver of CE hours.

**BOARD ATTEMPTING TO FORMULATE POLICY ON GRAY WOLF
HYBRIDS AND OTHER POSSIBLY ILLEGAL-TO-OWN ANIMALS**

A recent surge in ownership of gray wolf hybrids has caused a number of veterinarians to contact the Board office to determine the regulations regarding these animals. The two questions raised when a client brings this or any other "illegal" animal (animals requiring a permit) to a clinic are: (1) is it legal to treat the animal? and (2) are you, the DVM, required to report the owner(s) to some regulatory agency (and to whom do you report it)? These questions do not have easy answers. A number of other agencies appear to have some say but, as far as we can tell at present, no single agency has a comprehensive policy. The regulations that currently exist are fragmented which often makes it difficult to make sense of them.

The Board plans to collect information from every known source (AVMA, Center for Disease Control, FDA, DHH, Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, and others) to determine what the regulations taken all together require. If you know of an agency or organization that we should contact, please let the Board office know. The March 1995, LVMA newsletter carried an excellent article that may help you decide what to do until this Board is able to formulate a policy statement. It is our hope that we will be able to publish a policy in our next newsletter.

PLEASE REFER TO YOUR PRACTICE ACT . . . Last summer the Board printed and mailed a copy of the Louisiana Veterinary Practice Act to every person holding a Louisiana license. On numerous occasions since then, the office staff has received calls for advice on information contained in that Act. When staff asks if the caller has referenced the Act, they are frequently told that the caller never received the Practice Act. Often this is a clinic staff person who discovers later that the Practice Act booklet is in the office but did not know what it was.

If you haven't already done so, we urge you to locate the loose-leaf pages we mailed out and put them in a handy spot for you and your staff to reference. The booklet is 56 pages long, came with a gray cover and index tabs, and contains both a table of contents and an index. It is printed on 3-hole punched paper to make it easy to insert in a standard ring binder.

If you did not receive a booklet, can't locate the one you received, or just need a second copy, we can mail you another one at COST (about \$6.00) instead of the normal price-per-page rate of about \$15.00. Please let us know if you need another copy.

STATE BOARD EXAMINATION TO BE PHASED OUT

In April 1996, the last state board examination containing medical questions will be administered to applicants for Louisiana licensure. After that date, the state board examination will only cover the statutes and rules of the Veterinary Practice Act and other laws and regulations that the Board finds to be pertinent to the practice of veterinary medicine. This test is currently known as the RPC component of the state board examination. In conjunction with that test, applicants will be required to complete a post-graduation internship. The preceptorship

program will no longer exist. All applicants will still be required to take and pass the National Board Examination (NBE) and the Clinical Competency Test (CCT.)

A number of questions result from this decision. To address these questions, each Board member plans to attend local association meetings around the state and discuss this decision. We also hope to have sessions at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and the LVMA summer conference. At each of these meetings, a time line of the changes planned will be available. Input is being sought on definitions for the internship program as well as the questions this raises. For example, questions already have been asked about the impact of these changes on reciprocity, on how long the time period of the internship would be, on what kind of license the intern would be issued, etc. By holding the meetings around the state, the Board members hope to ensure that all persons with an interest have a chance to express the concerns of their particular field of veterinary medicine. If you are unable to attend one of these meetings and would like copies of the handouts, please call the Board office for more information.

ABANDONED ANIMALS LAW

The abandoned animals law found on page 48 of the Veterinary Practice Act is a copy of the Louisiana law regarding abandoned animals. This law is not part of the Veterinary Practice Act. However, we receive so many calls on this subject and find that there is so much mis-information about it, that the Board has asked its attorney to prepare some suggested language that you can adapt to your needs to address this issue.

This is only suggested wording that would help you avoid the very long waiting periods required by the abandoned animals law. Please ask your own attorney for detailed advice on using such an agreement form.

“I, ___(client name) ___, agree that, if I fail to pick up my animal, ___(patient name) ___, within ___ days after veterinary services are completed, or by ___(date) ___, I relinquish all of my right, title and ownership of my animal. I therefore authorize ___(DVM name) ___ to dispose of my animal at my expense at his discretion. I hereby waive any rights and notice I may have under the Louisiana Abandoned Animals Act (La.R.S. 3_2451, et seq.) and agree that this Agreement shall supersede the provisions of said Act.

witness: _____ owner: _____
date signed: _____ date signed: _____”

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Case No: 94-0428 DVM was found to have violated Rule 1023, Degree of Treatment because patient was sent home with symptoms indicating possible urethral blockage after cursory examination, no lab work, minimal treatment and instructions to return in 48 hours for surgery. Client went to an emergency clinic later that day where lab results were obtained, the urethral blockage was confirmed, and emergency surgery was performed. The initial treating doctor agreed to sign a Consent Order to accept a letter of reprimand and attend a one-day refresher session at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine.

Seven cases resulting in a finding of NO GROUNDS FOR COMPLAINT have been reviewed since the last newsletter. In addition, the Board has heard six drug review cases and heard two cases of persons practicing without a license.

Quarterly Questions:

Question: Is it correct to say that a staff person in a clinic can verify patient status at another clinic for the purpose of providing heartworm or other prescription drugs to a non-client IF the clinics are “local” (same city or locale)?

Answer: No. The new rule that allows a DVM to legally dispense to a non-client specifically requires Doctor to Doctor consultation. There are no exceptions provided.

Question: What is the Board’s position on the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture requirement to implant in horses microchips which FDA does not approve?

Answer: By unanimous resolution, the Board adopted the following policy at the February 22, 1995 meeting: “Due to the conflict between FDA and the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture over the issue of microchip implantation, the Louisiana Board of Veterinary Medicine will not discipline a licensee for either implanting or not implanting such chips until the two agencies involved resolve their differences.”

Louisiana Board of Veterinary Medicine

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

