



Ottawa Humane Society

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Ottawa Humane Society removes 24 dogs from West-Carleton area suspected puppy mill**

**OTTAWA, Ont. (08 December 2003)** – The Ottawa Humane Society removed 24 dogs today from a property in the West-Carleton area, following several months of investigation and the owners' failure to provide adequate care.

Approximately two weeks ago, the Ottawa Humane Society issued an Ontario SPCA Act order requiring the dogs' owners to take immediate action to improve shelter conditions for the animals, who were being housed in inadequate outdoor kennels. By last Friday, the owners had failed to comply with the order, so the OHS obtained a search warrant to enter the property and remove the dogs.

"With the arrival of the colder weather," said Miriam Smith, the Ottawa Humane Society's Inspector, "the dogs' shelter was grossly inadequate. The owners received specific instruction on how to improve the shelter conditions for the animals but failed to comply with these requirements." Ms. Smith notes that while none of the dogs, Golden Retrievers of all ages, seem to be suffering from immediate, life-threatening medical problems, many appear to have chronic health conditions, including serious eye infections.

Charges against the dogs' owners are pending as the investigation continues. "We are currently assessing whether to lay charges under the animal cruelty section of the *Criminal Code* or under the new puppy mill provisions of the Ontario SPCA Act," says Bruce Roney, OHS Executive Director.

The dogs were brought immediately to the Ottawa Humane Society, where they are all being examined and treated by veterinarians and OHS staff. The dogs will remain in the Society's care until the case is resolved. "That will easily be several months," says Mr. Roney. He notes that the OHS has not removed this many dogs from one property since 1997, when over 100 dogs were removed from a puppy mill on Laporte Street.

"Caring for these dogs will place a huge financial strain on the Ottawa Humane Society's resources," says Mr. Roney. "These dogs are not available for adoption because of the ongoing investigation. The best way the public can help us at this time is to make a donation to help the Society meet the costs associated with caring for these animals." Donations may be made by calling 725-3166, ext. 252.

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