

May 27, 2013

Dear Milw. Common Council,

My husband and myself would like to thank you for taking the position on toughening the laws on animal abuse, we have always thought the laws should be tougher, not only fines, but jail time.

A few years back, there was a case in Milw. Of a young man who loved to kill cats, he went to court, and got a slap on the hand, We were so furious, I wrote to democratic Senator, I can't remember his name, he sent me information on some laws that were on the books, and one was that anyone who abuses an animal, to the point of death, is subject to a very large fine and time in prison, and it was a class B felony, think about it, an innocent, ignorant animal being abused for fun or money,

Sincerely,

Don and Nancy Engelbert

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So. Milw., Wi. 53172

# Common Council tightens animal measures

## New laws address cruelty and violence

By **DON WALKER**  
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The Common Council on Tuesday voted to significantly toughen laws on dangerous animals and cruelty to animals.

Perhaps the most notable change involves a situation when an animal is deemed

dangerous. Under the new ordinance, the Department of Neighborhood Services or a humane officer can order the owner of the animal to go to a domestic animal control commission for the insertion of a microchip for identification purposes.

In other changes, the measure:

- Adds the word "neglect" to the list of actions deemed as constituting cruelty to ani-

mals.

- Prohibits the keeping of any animal or bird in any garage, shed or vacant structure.

- Clarifies that any person — not just the owner or caretaker of an animal — can be responsible for instigating animal fighting.

- Prohibits any person from intentionally being a spectator of animal fighting.

- Creates enhanced penalties for second and subsequent

violations of the dog- and cat-licensing requirement, the animal-cruelty prohibition and the animal fighting prohibition.

As expected, the council also approved a charter ordinance that changes the way the city contributes to the combined fund of the Employees' Retirement System. The move is intended to "smooth out" the contributions, which can sometimes be in the tens of

millions of dollars. That, in turn, has caused problems for the city budget.

The new ordinance requires the city to pay an amount that is the product of the actuarial contribution rate applied to the sum of covered compensation. The actuarial contribution rate is defined as the percentage of covered compensation that determines the annual contribution from the city and city agencies to the fund.

Under the new ordinance, the actuarial contribution rate will be applicable for five years and would be reset every five years. It also requires annual employer contributions regardless of whether the combined fund reaches 100% funding status.

The city's pension fund was recently ranked the top pension fund among 61 cities in terms of its assets vs. liabilities.