



The Vector Control Program is required to enforce the Michigan Dog Law of 1919 and the Muskegon County Animal Control Ordinance. The Vector Program responds to dogs running at large and licensing complaints as well as assists law enforcement with containing potentially dangerous dogs. The program also assists the Communicable Disease Program with quarantining animals known to carry rabies that have bitten a person.

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Basis for Program

The Dog Law of 1919 (Act) allowed counties in Michigan to establish an animal control agency to enforce the provisions found in that particular Act. MCL287.289a states:

The board of county commissioners by ordinance may establish an animal control agency which shall employ at least 1 animal control officer. The board of county commissioners may assign the animal control agency to any existing county department. The animal control agency shall have jurisdiction to enforce this act in any city, village or township which does not have an animal control ordinance. The county's animal control ordinance shall provide for animal control programs, facilities, personnel and necessary expenses incurred in animal control.

Purpose of the Program

The Act requires all dogs over the age of four months to be licensed and vaccinated for rabies. Licenses may not be sold to an owner whose dog is unvaccinated. In Muskegon County, the animal control program has been designated the Vector Control Program in order to emphasize this public health aspect. A vector is an organism that transmits a pathogen from a reservoir to a host, e.g., a dog is a possible vector of rabies transmission to humans. If a dog is vaccinated against rabies, it is less likely to pass that disease on to humans if it was infected.

Animal Control Officers (ACOs) have numerous job duties. Those duties range from enforcing the Dog Law of 1919 to assisting the Communicable Disease Program at Public Health - Muskegon County with tracking down and aiding in the quarantine of animals that have bitten a person if their species is known to carry rabies.

Enforcement of the Dog Law of 1919

The Act requires all dogs to be licensed and vaccinated against rabies. It also requires dog owners to properly restrain their animals and keep them from running at large and creating a public nuisance. ACOs respond to complaints about dogs running at large off of its owner's property and licensing issues. ACOs also inspect licensed dog kennels to ensure compliance with the County's Animal Control Ordinance and make recommendations for the licensure of these facilities.

The Act sets employment standards for Animal Control Officers. MCL 287.289b (sec. 29b) states:

1. The board of county commissioners shall adopt minimum employment standards relative to the recruitment, selection and appointment of animal control officers. The minimum standards shall include:
 - a. Requirements for physical, educational, mental and moral fitness.
 - b. A minimum course of study of not less than 100 instructional hours as prescribed by the department of agriculture.
2. Subdivision (b) shall not apply if the animal control officer is a police officer or has served at least 3 years as an animal control officer.

The Michigan Dog of 1919 only allows an animal control agency constituted under MCL 287.289a to enforce those provisions specifically found in that Act, therefore, ACOs do not respond to animal cruelty or neglect cases as these violations of Michigan State Law are found under the Penal Code. They act as an ancillary agency and will help impound dogs upon police request that are believed to be abused or neglected.

Quarantine of Biting Animals

ACOs also aide the Communicable Disease Program (CD Program) in locating dogs that have bitten a human. If the dog in question is a stray and still believed to be running loose, ACOs will set live traps in an attempt to capture the animal. If they are able to successfully capture the dog, the CD Program is able to quarantine the animal and keep it under observation for 10 days from the date of the bite. If the animal is still healthy at the end of the quarantine period, the victim does not need to go through a series of rabies shots. If the dog that bit the person is unlicensed, an ACO performs the quarantine release and tickets the owner for not licensing their dog as required by law.

Community Data

2011 Dog Bites and Rabies Vaccination Status

	Not Vaccinated	Unknown if Vaccinated	Vaccinated	Total
Not Licensed	73	19	44	136
Unknown License Status	2	53	2	57
Licensed	6	2	106	114
Total	81	74	152	307

Community Value

When bite reports are received, the CD program will quarantine the dog. If the dog is unlicensed, the quarantine release for the animal is transferred to the Vector Control program. The owner of the dog is ticketed for having an unlicensed dog at the time of the release. This ensures that dogs that have bitten are properly licensed and vaccinated. When a person is bitten by a dog, they are put at ease much quicker when they learn the dog has been vaccinated against rabies and they probably do not have to go through a painful series of rabies shots.

The Vector Control Program is also able to contact an animal's owner if it is found running at large and has a license. If an ACO impounds a dog running at large and it is licensed, they call into the health department and have the clerk check on the license number and attempt to make contact with the owner. If the owner is at home, the ACO who impounded the dog brings it back to the owner. If the owner is not home, the Vector Control Program leaves a message and sends a letter to the owner's last known address informing them that a dog licensed to them was impounded and has been dropped off at Pound Buddies Rescue. By going through the procedure, owners of licensed dogs can be more quickly reunited with their family pet.

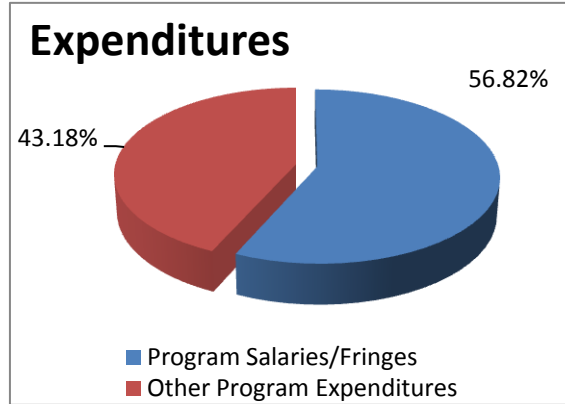
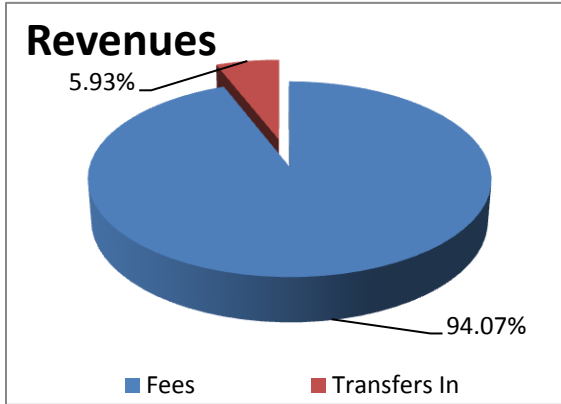
Fiscal Year 2011 Financial Information (Unaudited)

Vector Control Operations Revenues:	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2011 Percentage
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$0	0.00%

Medicaid	\$0	0.00%
Fees	\$459,715	94.07%
Access Health	\$0	0.00%
Transfers In	\$28,965	5.93%
Total Revenues	\$488,680	100.00%

Vector Control Operations Expenditures

Program Salaries/Fringes	\$277,684	56.82%
Other Program Expenditures	\$210,996	43.18%
Total Expenditures	\$488,680	100.00%



Vector Control Building Revenues:

Intergovernmental Revenue	\$0	0.00%
Medicaid	\$0	0.00%
Fees	\$0	0.00%
Access Health	\$0	0.00%
Transfers In	\$9,757	100.0%
Total Revenues	\$9,757	100.00%

Expenditures

Program Salaries/Fringes	\$67	0.69%
Other Program Expenditures	\$9,690	99.31%
Total Expenditures	\$9,757	100.00%

