



August 10, 2023

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MEDIA RELEASE

WEATHERFORD (CITY OF WEATHERFORD), Texas – Over the past few months, our Animal Shelter staff has been investigating an unexplained increase in kitten deaths. As part of the investigative process, the shelter administration quickly began working to determine the cause.

Initially believing it was disease-related, staff sent multiple specimens for testing and completed necropsies to identify the issue. Results showed no diseases; therefore, staff installed additional HVAC systems, ensured proper cleaning procedures were followed, reviewed the chemicals in all cleaning products, implemented new policies, and closely tracked every missing or deceased animal.

On July 14, 2023, Animal Shelter staff contacted the Weatherford Police Department after an employee witnessed a coworker, Gabriel Caswell, mistreating a kitten. Before the officers arrived, Caswell was confronted by staff members and left the area. Upon arrival, Officers reviewed the video with Shelter staff and determined that a criminal offense had occurred. Detectives immediately began investigating the case and obtained a warrant for Caswell's arrest. Within a few hours, Caswell was located and arrested by the police department for cruelty to animals. As a result of reviewing more video footage, an additional cruelty to animal warrant was issued for Caswell on July 28th, and he was arrested on July 29th.

Our shelter staff and volunteers take great pride in the love and care provided to the animals that visit our shelter. For something like this to happen is unfathomable, and we are heartbroken by the harm caused. This case is still being investigated, and the Shelter is partnering with the Police Department as the City continues to seek justice for all of Caswell's actions.

For news inquiries, please contact Communications and Marketing Coordinator Oscar Diaz at 682-229-2616 or odiaz@weatherfordtx.gov.

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