



San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association

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November 6, 2014

Honorable Mayor Kristin Gaspar
City Council Members
City of Encinitas
505 S. Vulcan Avenue
Encinitas, CA 92024

Dear City Council Members:

The San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association represents almost 700 members in San Diego County, affiliated with approximately 230 local veterinary hospital facilities.

It has come to our attention that the occasional practice of keeping animals overnight at a veterinary facility without an attendant at all times is a concern for the City of Encinitas. We are perhaps uniquely positioned to provide some insight relative to standard practice.

In this County, and in fact across the United States, it is not uncommon for an animal to be kept overnight, under limited circumstances, without an attendant present. Obviously this is not done in the case of a seriously ill or injured pet.

Sometimes the issue may be as simple as the pet requiring quiet rest away from the family's other pets or children that the owner cannot provide. Circumstances differ and are addressed on a case-by-case basis by the doctor.

No veterinarian would want his or her patient to be subjected to undue risk.

The California Veterinary Medical Board, under the umbrella of the Department of Consumer Affairs, acknowledges the potential need for overnight housing of animals and requires that clients be informed if an attendant will not be present.

When the circumstances indicate that the animal is not able or required to be sent to an emergency facility, or able to go home with the owner for care that they need, the veterinarian and the pet's well informed owner may decide it is in the interest of their particular case that the pet be kept overnight at the veterinary hospital.

We hope that you will not attempt to further limit the professional perspective and decision that the veterinarian can afford his clients and patients should the circumstances dictate it is in the best interest and the best outcome for the pet and its owner.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Harris, DVM, MS, DACVS
President

PW/

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