



VIRGINIA DONOHUE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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In response to calls to our agency, Animal Control Officers immediately made a surprise visit to the home to check on the welfare of the dogs who were the subject of photographs on Nextdoor.

Our Animal Control Officers found a large backyard that had a messy, overgrown area, but the vast majority of the yard was clean and free of debris. Some of the debris is due to a fallen fence. Some are the result of someone throwing human food into the yard. The large, clean area is not shown in any of the photographs that were posted online. The dogs had a large, dry, elevated shelter, plenty of clean water, and food that was provided twice daily. The family is in compliance with animal welfare laws: ([Sec. 41.12 / SF Health Code](#)). The youngest dog was of a normal weight, and the elderly dog was in the final stages of life. We worked with the family to humanely euthanize the older dog.

Some people posting about this on Nextdoor have threatened the family by posting their address and have invited people to gather and “to knock on the door of the abusers and end this”. We ask that people trust the investigation and leave the family alone.

Animal Control Officers report that the remaining dog continues to have fresh water, a raised shelter and food. This family is in compliance with animal welfare laws. In this case, the photo is misleading because it only shows a small portion of the property, and not the clean area where the dogs spend their time. We will not be releasing photos of the yard since this is an invasion of the family’s privacy.

Animal Care & Control receives daily reports of cruelty and neglect. The cases our Animal Control Officers and staff are involved with can be horrific and disturbing, and our agency works tirelessly to investigate and bring perpetrators to justice. In this case, the legal standards are being met. We appreciate the public’s interest in ensuring that the animals of San Francisco are well cared for.

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