

40-13-13-.08 Euthanasia.

(1) The use of sodium pentobarbital or a derivative of it shall be the exclusive method for euthanasia of dogs and cats by animal shelters or other facilities which are operated for the collection and care of stray, neglected, abandoned, or unwanted animals. A lethal solution shall be used in the following order of preference:

(a) Intravenous injection by hypodermic needle: Venipuncture of a superficial vein, preferably the cephalic or lateral saphenous is the method to be used on all dogs and cats except for the following:

1. Animals too small to effectively perform a venipuncture,
2. Intractable or dangerous animals, or
3. Animals in which superficial venous pressure is insufficient for effective venipuncture.

If venipuncture cannot be performed for one of the above reasons, then the following method may be used.

(b) Intraperitoneal injection by hypodermic needle: Two to three times the recommended intravenous dosage should be injected into the abdominal cavity through the midabdominal region. Intraperitoneal injection may be the alternative method used for animals described in (a)(1) , (2), and (3) above. The time between injection and death is not immediate as with intravenous injection, therefore, a proper amount of time should be allowed for chemical absorption and action prior to an alternative method being used.

(c) If the dog or cat is unconscious, intracardial injection by hypodermic needle; intracardial injection by thoracic cavity penetration is to be used on comatose animals only.

(2) Under no circumstance shall a chamber using commercially bottled carbon monoxide gas or other lethal gas or a chamber which causes a change in body oxygen by means of altering atmospheric pressure or which is connected to an internal combustion engine and uses the engine exhaust for euthanasia purposes be permitted.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this rule, any substance which is clinically proven to be as humane as sodium pentobarbital and which has been officially recognized as such by the American Veterinary Medical Association, may be used in lieu of sodium pentobarbital to perform euthanasia on dogs and cats. Succinylcholine chloride, curare, curariform mixtures, or any substance that acts as a neuromuscular blocking agent may not be used on a dog or cat in lieu of sodium pentobarbital for euthanasia purposes. The State Veterinarian will maintain a list of approved inhalants and injectable solutions that may be used for humane euthanasia.

(4) In cases of extraordinary circumstance where the dog or cat poses an extreme risk or danger to the veterinarian, physician, or lay person performing euthanasia , such person shall be allowed the use of any other substance or procedure that is humane to perform euthanasia on such dangerous dog or cat.

(5) A dog or cat may be tranquilized with an approved and humane substance before euthanasia is performed.

(6) Euthanasia shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian or physician or lay person who is properly trained in the proper and humane use of a method of euthanasia. Euthanasia, which is performed by a layperson, shall be observed by at least one other employee.

(7) A layperson performing euthanasia by injection must be under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian or physician. This shall not be construed, so as to require, that a veterinarian or physician be present at the time euthanasia is performed.

(8) A letter, stating which layperson(s) is properly trained for a method of euthanasia shall be on file at the animal shelter and with the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

(9) No dog or cat may be left unattended between the times euthanasia procedures are first begun and the time death occurs, nor may its body be disposed of until death is confirmed by a qualified person.

(10) The supervising veterinarian shall be subject to all record-keeping requirements and inspection requirements of the State Board of Pharmacy pertaining to sodium pentobarbital and other drugs authorized under paragraph (3) of this rule section and may limit the quantity of possession of sodium pentobarbital and other authorized drugs to ensure compliance with the provision of this Code section.

(11) Euthanasia records shall be kept on forms approved by the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the State Board of Pharmacy and shall be signed by the person performing euthanasia and the witness.

(12) Euthanasia records shall be maintained for a period of one (1) year and shall be made available to the Commissioner of Agriculture or his duly authorized representative for inspection upon request.

(13) The Animal Shelter must be registered with the Drug Enforcement Administration prior to the storage of any controlled substance.

(14) The storage of any controlled substance must be in an approved, secure safe or if a lockable storage container is used it must be approved by the Georgia Department of Agriculture and be strictly maintained under double lock and key.

(15) The Commissioner or his authorized agent shall have the right to obtain a sample of the euthanasia agents for analysis.

(16) Species other than dogs and cats should be humanely euthanized by a method recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association, when such recommendation exists.

Authority O.C.G.A. Secs. 4-10-1, 4-11-1 et seq. **History.** Original Rule entitled "Violations" adopted. F. Mar. 5, 1987; eff. Mar. 25, 1987. **Repealed:** New Rule entitled "Exemptions" adopted. F. Jan. 24, 1991; eff. Feb. 13, 1991. **Repealed:** New Rule entitled "Euthanasia" adopted. F. Jan. 6, 1999; eff. Jan. 26, 1999. **Amended:** F. July 21, 2010; eff. Aug. 10, 2010. **Amended:** F. Mar. 23, 2011; eff. Apr. 12, 2011.