

# THE WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

WV Board of Veterinary Medicine 5509 Big Tyler Road, Suite 3, Cross Lanes, WV 25313  
E-mail address: [wgoodwin@wvnet.edu](mailto:wgoodwin@wvnet.edu) Web address: [www.wvbvm.org](http://www.wvbvm.org) Phone: 304.776.8032 FAX 304.776.8256

## Annual Renewals



We send out two newsletters annually. One in the summer and one with annual renewal notices. The renewal notices are sent out on or before December 1 each year for veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians and certified animal euthanasia technicians.

These renewals are to be completed and returned to this office no later than December 31. As that is only a half work day, mail generally is not delivered to the Board by the end of the business day. So, be sure that you mail renewals with time allowed to reach us by December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please check to be sure all questions are answered and that continuing education that meets the criteria for renewal is listed. Do not list a program such as AVMA or AAHA, as that does not verify the classes attended. We must have the name of the class and the length of each listed class. The number one reason for rejection of renewals is inappropriate or incomplete continuing education.

On our website, there is a continuing education sheet that you may print out to keep track of c.e. each year.

For those veterinarians who obtained a new license in January, you are required to complete the required 18 c.e. hours this year to renewal for 2009. Those who obtain license in June are not required to complete c.e. in 2008 to renew for 2009.

**Effective this year, RVTs must complete 8 hours of Board approved classroom c.e. each calendar year, with at least 4 of the 8 hours in the field of veterinary technology.** ☆

## New Website



We are happy to announce that we have a new website. The web address is [www.wvbvm.org](http://www.wvbvm.org)

On this site, you can access our veterinary laws, names of licensees who renewed for the current year, information on upcoming meetings and examinations and some of our application forms. Access to other links of interest is available on our site as well, such as AAVSB, AVMA, WV State home page, etc. You may also email our office from the website.

This site is a work in progress. We will be expanding our services on this site as time allows.

We created a new site as the previous site did not allow us to modify or update information. Also, the previous site had to be accessed through the WV State Association of Licensing Boards, which made the web address very lengthy. You may still link to us if you wish through [www.wvlicensingboards.com](http://www.wvlicensingboards.com). But it is more direct at our new website. Our plans are to add our most recent newsletter to the site and add other forms such as the license renewals. We will continue at present to mail renewal forms to your address of record. But, if you lose or make an error on the form, you will be able to print out the renewal form from our website and fill it in.

Your suggestions and comments on how we can make this website more user friendly are welcomed. ☆

## The Complaint Process



It's a beautiful day and all is right with the world. Then, you receive a certified letter from the WV Board of Veterinary Medicine. It states that a complaint has been filed against you by one of your clients. You read the

attached complaint and documents supplied to you in this mailing. The Board requires that your response to the charges as specified in the client's complaint be submitted in writing to the Board within 30 days. You must also send the medical records on the patient referenced in the complaint with your response. When your response is received, a copy of all documents submitted by you are sent to the party filing the complaint. The client is informed that your response and documents is sent to them for their information only, and that the board does not expect further communications from the client as a result of your written response and associated documents.

What do you do now? What happens when you respond? Well, we will try to answer some of those questions for you in this article. First, we are compelled to say that complaints are on the rise. Clients have greater expectations than they did a few years ago. Some reasons may be access to information through the internet that could be contradictory to the care provided, a stronger bond between the client and the patient, and increased costs of caring for animals. These factors may lead to actions or statements that can affect the clients perceptions of you and your practice.

You file your response along with your medical records within 30 days. The complaint committee of the Board has

received the clients complaint along with any supporting documents and then obtains your written response and documents, once received in the board office.

If your response is received in enough time to be reviewed by the complaint committee before our next quarterly board meeting, your case will be addressed in executive session at that meeting.

In executive session, no decisions or motions are made. Executive session does not allow any persons to be in attendance other than board members, staff and counsel. Your case is relayed to the board members who are not on the complaint committee by the complaint committee. No references are made that would identify the parties in the complaint. The case is referred to by a case number. The complaint committee indicates what action, if any, the committee recommends on your case. When the board reconvenes to general session, the board receives motions on complaint cases that were addressed in executive session. The board may accept the recommendations of the complaint committee or take a different position on the cases altogether.

If the board determines that action is called for against a veterinarian, it may prepare a consent agreement, which is a legal document stating charges and resolution of the case. The proposed consent agreement is sent to the veterinarian. The board recommends that the veterinarian thoroughly review this document and consult with legal counsel, if he or she wishes. The veterinarian is to respond within thirty days either by signing the consent agreement or sending written rejection of the agreement. If a consent agreement is rejected by the veterinarian, the board could proceed to a formal hearing against the licensee.

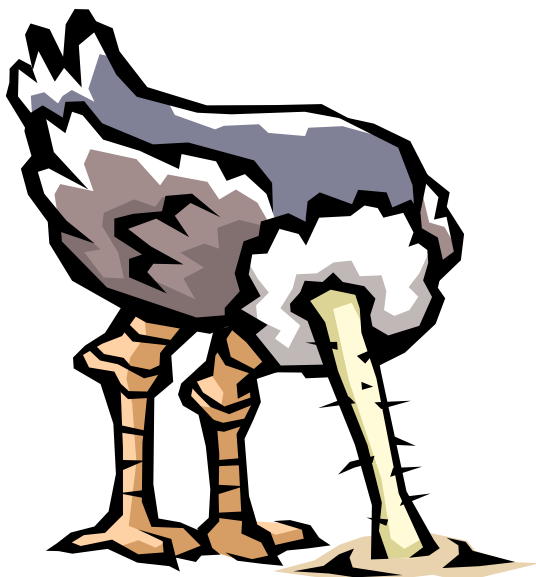
As a result of a formal hearing, the final decision could be no action, suspension or revocation of licensure. Any formal disciplinary action as a result of a consent

agreement or a hearing is reportable to our national disciplinary database.

We have recently been instructed by legal counsel to file a Final Order if the board finds no cause for action. Previously, we sent a letter to the veterinarian indicating that the board found no cause for action, and a copy of this letter was sent to the complainant as well.

Now, with a Final Order, we must specify the reasons that the board found no cause for action on the complaint. This Final Order is reviewed by the Attorney General's office. Once it is finalized and meets with approval of counsel, it is sent to the veterinarian, the complainant, our board members, our legal counsel with the Attorney General's office and is also filed with the Secretary of State's office. Final Orders are public documents, which may be accessed by the public. ✨

## Are You Aware Of Your Clients' Expectations ?



We are all consumers. If the only cereal we ever ate was corn flakes, then corn flakes are wonderful. Suddenly, other cereals are on the market. We have a vast array of other cereals to

choose from. They are all making offers of being more nutritious, better tasting and more economical than corn flakes. We start to wonder... do I really want or even like corn flakes? Should I try another cereal? Then, the price of corn flakes takes a dramatic increase. What do we do?

This analogy may sound simplistic, but imagine this situation from the perspective of the consumer (aka your client). You are the only veterinarian for thirty miles and you can set your own hours and never make house calls or farm calls. It has always worked fine, so there is no reason to change.

Then, a new vet comes to town. A local boy with ties to the community. He opens up a new clinic. He makes house calls and farm calls. He doesn't have your overhead. He is fresh out of school with lots of enthusiasm and drive.

Or, you feel insulated because there are no other veterinarians within thirty miles. But, you are suddenly aware that there is someone offering alternative therapy services to animals in your area. This person is not a veterinarian. Your clients are being convinced that the alternative holistic methods are more enlightened than your old school practices. They are also charging a fraction of your fees.

We have all heard the old adage that if we build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to our door. Suppose we think our old mousetrap is fine. Or, we scoff at the new fangled mousetrap, thinking no one would ever buy it.

Look around you. Open up to new views regarding animals and their place in your clients lives. Don't trivialize the clients relationship with their animals. Learn what clients want and need. If they have questions about a new healing theory, it would help if you could explain why it is not in the best interests of their pet. Simply saying it is not legal doesn't always work either. If we thought there was a miracle cure but it was not legal, that argument would not stop many of us from seeking out the treatment. Research what is going on with alternative therapies, legal or otherwise. You can not fight or rebut what you have no knowledge or are not aware of. Knowledge is power. Ignorance is not bliss when we are dealing with professional survival. ✨

## Certified Animal Euthanasia Technicians–

### Who Are They and What Do They Do?

In 1999, the position of Certified Animal Euthanasia Technicians was created by the West Virginia Legislature. In 2000, rules and regulations governing CAET's were written.

CAET's are persons employed by legally authorized animal shelters or animal control facilities to euthanize animals belonging to the facility, when they have met the legal qualifications for euthanasia.

The candidates for certification are determined as qualified by their employer shelter or animal control facility, which is either a municipal or county government entity or a 501 ( c ) 3 non-profit organization, as deemed so by the Internal Revenue Service.

Candidates must submit an application to the Board of Veterinary Medicine. They must complete the training program, which is provided by the Board of Veterinary Medicine once a year (in the spring). After completing the two day intensive training, they must submit to three examinations.

These exams are the written jurisprudence exam, the written practical knowledge exam and the practical exam involving animals scheduled for euthanasia.

Candidates must pass each of the three exams. They must also submit to fingerprinting and a background check by the West Virginia State Police.

If a person is certified, the animal control facility or shelter may acquire a DEA permit for the facility to procure the approved euthanasia solution, as determined by the Board by legislative rule. No other controlled substances may be procured, housed or administered by a CAET. The facility must also register with the WV Board of Pharmacy.

To answer some questions this office has received regarding authority of CAET's: CAET's are not authorized to euthanize animals for private owners or any parties other than the facility employing them as a CAET. Controlled substances are not to be taken from the premise specified on the DEA registration. Employees of a veterinary facility may not become a CAET. The sole purpose of CAET's is to authorize animal control facilities to euthanize animals belonging to the animal control facility with properly trained and certified individuals who are legally entitled to handle and administer the approved controlled substance for the euthanasia. 🌟

***Have a Wonderful Summer!***



**WV Board of Veterinary Medicine  
5509 Big Tyler Road, Suite 3  
Cross Lanes, WV 25313**