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MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Media Advisory

- WHO:** Notice of upcoming law enforcement training: "Investigating & Prosecuting Animal Cruelty"
- WHEN:** Monday, July 30, 2012, 9:00-4:30
- WHERE:** County Board Room, Madison County Administration Building, 157 N. Main St., Edwardsville, IL

SIGNIFICANCE: State's Attorney Tom Gibbons, in conjunction with the Metro-East Humane Society, is sponsoring the upcoming training "Investigating & Prosecuting Animal Cruelty" for local law enforcement, animal control officers and workers from local animal shelters. The goal of the training is to improve the response and investigation of cases involving animal cruelty and abuse. "Better investigations will lead to better outcomes by my office," states State's Attorney Gibbons. "As with cases involving human victims, my prosecutors need as much evidence as possible in order to be successful in court. By sponsoring this training, I hope to provide our police and investigators with the information and tools they need for improved recognition of and response to situations involving harm to animals."

The one-day training will feature a presentation by Michael R. Gillingham, a former police officer now serving as the Program Coordinator for the National Animal Control Association Training Academy, who will discuss several topics including techniques for collecting evidence, documentation, search and seizure, and interviewing and interrogation. Assistant State's Attorney Amy Maher will offer an overview of applicable Illinois statutes and new legislation, advice for accessing local resources for investigators and insight into the decision making process prosecutors undertake when reviewing evidence for potential charges. ASA Maher currently sits on the board for the national organization Noah's Wish who rescue and shelter animals during disasters throughout the U.S. She was a charter member of the Illinois State Bar Association's Animal Law Section Council and has served as a past chair of the Council. Metro-East Humane Society Executive Director Kathy Turner is also speaking at the training and will offer advice to participants on how to deal with the immediate needs of animals in crisis situations. The training is set to begin at 9:00 in Edwardsville where State's Attorney Gibbons will deliver opening remarks and welcome the participants and speakers. The event is open to members of the media.

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