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Update on Mesa Animal Shelter Investigation

On Thursday, October 4, Maricopa County Sheriff’s Deputies were called to the Shelter Paws animal shelter at 8828 East Apache Trail in Mesa by a woman who had come to pick up her dog. The caller reported that upon entering the facility she observed that there were numerous dogs being kept in crates that were emaciated.

MCSO Deputies responded and observed over 50 dogs who were extremely malnourished and being kept in confinement with feces present in their crates. Animal Crimes detectives were then called to the scene to assume the investigation. A search warrant was served allowing detectives to closely examine conditions and make a determination about whether to remove the animals or take any other action.

One dog was transported to an emergency veterinarian in extremely poor condition and later died. Another 52 dogs were transported to the MCSO Animal Safe Haven (MASH) facility in downtown Phoenix for further evaluation and care.

“I want to first thank the individual who came forward,” said Sheriff Paul Penzone. “These dogs are now in our care and we will ensure they have the opportunity to be brought back to full health. It’s heartbreaking to see animals in this condition, and our investigators will seek charges as appropriate in this case.”

The owner of the shelter, Domenic Anthony Asprella, could face animal abuse charges pending the outcome of the investigation.