



New Team of 'Peace Officers' Ready to Combat Crimes Against Animals

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Schenectady County has a team of new 'peace officers' to catch crimes against animals.

The "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" graduated 11 members last night. They carry guns and can arrest people just like police officers - but this group is entirely dedicated to animals. And they expect to be very busy with summer looming. Some officers say higher temperatures often mean more incidents of pets left out in cars or left out in the sun. Officials say the peace officers will be a big help to police agencies already swamped with calls.

"Police are going out there going after bad guys, and we pick up the slack and basically investigate cruelty to animals," says SCSPCA Assistant Chief Greg Rinckey.

"Resources are very sparse in law enforcement, or any kind of government - so if we can have volunteers that do this, it's a tremendous advantage to us," Schenectady County Sheriff Harry Buffardi says.

All peace officers are volunteers, so they will give their time without any pay in return.