

Fact Sheet

SB 697- Unlicensed Activity

- The illegal practice of veterinary medicine is harmful to the consumer and harmful to animals.
- Unlicensed activity exists in small animal, food animal, and equine medicine.
- A recent survey on unlicensed activity was sent to all licensed California veterinarians and CVMA member RVTs to gather data on the illegal practice of veterinary medicine in California. The survey showed:
 - 34% had a client relay a negative experience with an unlicensed layperson providing illegal veterinary services
 - 23% have treated patients that have been injured by an unlicensed layperson
 - 54% indicated the unlicensed layperson was illegally diagnosing and treating animals
 - Unlicensed activity occurred in feed stores, boarding facilities, grooming facilities, pet stores, in client's homes and by mobile laypersons, breeders and others.
 - Unlicensed activity was reported in both food animal and small animal practice, through embryo transfer, pregnancy checks, acupuncture, animal physical rehabilitation, chiropractic, teeth floating and anesthesia-free teeth cleaning.
- Unlicensed persons are:
 - Endangering the health of animals
 - Offering their services to the unsuspecting public
 - Providing services in uninspected facilities
 - Breaking the law
- Many consumers are led to believe an unlicensed person:
 - Is educated in treating animals
 - Is regulated by the state
 - Is legally performing services they are offering
- Owners often won't file a formal complaint; they don't want to get involved and are intimidated by the legal process. This allows unlicensed persons to harm more animals in the future.
- There is limited legal recourse to pursue cases by the Veterinary Medical Board. Stronger enforcement authority is needed.
- Veterinarians are medical doctors. They are educated to care for and protect the health of all animal species. Only veterinarians are licensed to provide medical care to animals, and are regulated by the state. Veterinary premises are also regulated and they must adhere to strict rules of animal safety.

