

29 Feral Cats Found in Wisconsin Home

Owner could face abandonment and/or mistreatment charges.

An Appleton, Wis., property owner could face charges after 29 cats were found in the home, which apparently had been abandoned.

City health officials declared the home uninhabitable after police and firefighters spent more than 11 hours cleaning up debris and removing the animals from the home on Sunday, May 28.

Police were called to the home on Appleton's south side for a possible restraining order violation. But they found no one home, the house unlocked and knew something was wrong, said police Lt. Greg Franzke.

The cats were found in the basement, bedrooms and a crawl space that goes throughout the house. It was unclear how long the cats had been left alone, police said.

The cats were very feral, according to Robin Spears, a humane officer with the police department. The cats included a litter of kittens believed to be a few days old. Spears said officials found a bag of food but it wasn't clear if the cats had access to water.

The cats were taken to the Fox Valley Humane Association in Appleton (<http://www.foxvalleypets.org/>) for evaluation.

On Monday, Franzke said police located the woman who owns the house and lived there with her adult daughter, but neither had been living there for at least two weeks. It is still unclear whether she will be charged. Posted: May 31, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST