

Pair charged with trespassing as crowd swells

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"I would love to call all hands on deck. I'm sure the community will be pouring in to empty the facility," Mr. Godfrey said. "We fear there would be not 350 infected animals, but 3,500 infected animals in the community, along with hundreds and thousands of people."

But residents lined the private driveway of the animal shelter on Woodbine Avenue holding signs, crucifixes and wooden crosses.

Protesters chanted for Ontario SPCA board members, staff and vets to come out and face the public outcry.

"I've been numb since yesterday," Georgina resident and cat rescue shelter volunteer Michele Van Vujd said.

Ms Van Vujd was able to bargain with security and police officers on site to allow her to go inside the shelter in return for a more peaceful passage of cars into the parking area.

With her was a signed petition calling for a stop of the euthanizing of the animals and a list of questions to be answered, including how residents can help save any animals that have not have been euthanized.

Ms Van Vujd was in the shelter for more than two hours without getting answers to her questions.

Meanwhile, outside, protesters became more aggressive toward cars entering and leaving the buildings.

As one car tried to leave the building, forcing protesters to the side of the driveway, Newmarket resident Jennifer Lent's dog, Cuba, was nicked by the moving vehicle.

"If I didn't pull (Cuba), he would have been run over," she said.

The dog was uninjured. Other protesters called for the resignation of Ontario SPCA chief executive director Kate MacDonald.

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Mr. Godfrey said the Ontario SPCA plans to have a full investigation and public report on the holes in the protocol system when the York Region branch is cleared of ringworm.

"This will not stay in the rear-view mirror," he said.

Earlier Wednesday morning, Sharon resident Christine Condy was detained by York police officers as she attempted to enter the building to adopt an animal.

With a cat carrier in hand, she walked past security guards, but was stopped by police.

Ms Condy was charged with trespassing and told to leave the area.

Once released, she said she wasn't there to protest, only wanting to adopt one of the animals yet to be euthanized.

She later called for a public meeting and full review of the decision that led the agency to determine killing more than 350 animals inside the shelter was the only way to cope with the outbreak.

Soon after, a second man who scaled a fence was charged with trespassing.



STAFF PHOTOS/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

Sharon resident Christine Condy leaves the OSPCA shelter yesterday after being charged.



Juliana Carpino (from left), Colleen Dickinson with her dog, Gracie, Maria Ron and Lesley Sloan protest behind the makeshift cemetery set up in front of the Ontario SPCA offices on Woodbine Avenue in northwestern Whitchurch-Stouffville yesterday. Hundreds protested the euthanization of 350 animals to control a ringworm outbreak.

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