



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Elbert County Resident Sentenced in Horse Neglect Case

Kiowa, Colo. (November 4, 2014) – Elbert County resident, Ben Mathwin, was sentenced for animal cruelty last week. Mr. Mathwin was charged with one count of animal cruelty, a Class 1 misdemeanor, for allowing his four horses to go without sufficient food and water. The malnourished horses were relinquished to the Elbert County Sheriff's Office after agents from the sheriff's office and the Colorado Humane Society & SPCA (CHS) tried unsuccessfully to educate and assist Mr. Mathwin.

"This situation started with an anonymous tip through Crime Stoppers. When we visited the residence, we found that Mr. Mathwin was overwhelmed with a personal crisis and needed assistance," said Elbert County Sheriff Shayne Heap. "CHS was able to offer education and assistance with hay, but unfortunately, a long-term solution was not reached and the horses had to be removed."

An Elbert County judge sentenced Ben Mathwin to serve 24 months probation and pay restitution to CHS for the costs associated with the horses (\$500.00), as well as court fees. Additionally, the judge ordered the remaining house pets in the residence to be monitored during his probation period.

"There was no reason for the health of these horses to deteriorate," said Katrina Schou, CHS manager. "The Colorado Humane Society investigators worked with Mr. Mathwin to assure he knew how to properly care for his horses and he simply chose not to because of other things going on in his life."

This case was reported as an anonymous tip through Crime Stoppers, which presented the tipster with a monetary reward. To report animal abuse or neglect and be eligible for a reward for any information leading to an arrest or citation on a crime, call 720-913-STOP (7867), or text to: 274637 (CRIMES). Anonymous tips also can be reported online, at <http://metrodenvercrimestoppers.com/cs/animal-cruelty/>.

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