



City employee keeps job after alleged animal shelter blunder

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MEMPHIS, TN (WMC-TV) - Claims of an animal services worker Action News 5 agreed to disguise helped demonize a Memphis Public Works employee in the eyes of animal lovers.

"I pray that the employee gets fined and terminated," one viewer E-mailed. "Jail time wouldn't hurt either."

Public Works Director Dwan Gilliom said Tuesday he was fully prepared to fire the employee until conducting an internal, albeit brief, investigation.

"I don't see any need to take any action against the public works employee because he followed proper protocol," Gilliom said.

The incident in question took place at the animal shelter last Friday, when an injured dog ended up buried beneath bags of euthanized animals. The animals were on their way to an incinerator where dead animals are burned. But Gilliom says his employee was the one who stopped it.

"He notified two technicians at the animal shelter and explained to them there was an animal in back of the truck that was still alive," Gilliom said.

Gilliom said the injured dog appeared unconscious when the employee answered a call about a dead animal along a street in Whitehaven. It wasn't until he arrived at the shelter that he heard the dog crying in pain.

"It was our employee, the public works employee, that notified them," Gilliom said.

Gilliom said interviews with two other animal services workers contradict what the one worker told Action News 5.

"He continued to throw bags of deceased animals on top of this dog," she said during an interview on Monday.

It's a story she stands behind.

Gilliom said what has been practiced for years will now be written policy as a result of this story: Animal Services will always be alerted whenever an animal's life is uncertain.

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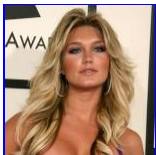
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