

## Daily checks show huskies living in trailer 'well cared for'

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PORTSMOUTH — Police are telling concerned members of the public the four huskies who have lived in a horse trailer in a hotel parking lot for more than five months are “being well cared for,” despite the rising temperatures.

The dogs are owned by a couple from Florida who moved to the area last winter for work, but have had difficulty purchasing a home on the Seacoast, according to police. They have since stayed at the Comfort Inn on Lafayette Road while the dogs stay in the horse trailer.

While the original concern from members of the public was the freezing temperatures, the abnormally high temperatures over the weekend prompted several inquiries on the dogs' health. Lt. Rodney McQuate said animal control officer Patti Tate has approved of the arrangement and is checking on the dogs daily.

“We're on top of it,” said McQuate. “The trailer is clean, the dogs are happy and healthy, the (animal control officer) checks them on a daily basis and they're fine ... No laws are being broken and the dogs are being well cared for.”

Police in March said the couple had hoped to find a new home by the end of that month, but McQuate said they have yet to move.

Police were first made aware of the situation by a complaint from a concerned citizen in January. Several other complaints followed and many more came over the weekend, when temperatures on the Seacoast rose above 80 degrees, according to Deputy Chief Len DiSesa. Tuesday is also expected to be in the 80s.

“If it gets really hot tomorrow we'll take them,” said DiSesa. “We won't leave them in there if it gets over 90 degrees, but we're doing temperature readings and everything has been fine ... There's no way we're going to let the dogs get injured.”

The trailer contains dog houses, hay, water and food. The dogs are walked daily, according to police.

Animal cruelty laws require shelters to “be structurally sound and have an area within to afford the dog the ability to stand up, turn around and lie down, and be of proportionate size as to allow the natural body heat of the dog to be retained.”

Steven Sprowl, manager of the N.H. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Field Services Division, said the NHSPCA is not involved in the case. He said it is the sole discretion of the police departments and any complaints should be directed there.