Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter
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For Immediate Release   Melanie Sobel, 831-454-7203
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Animal Shelter Officers Make Felony Arrest

The Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter has arrested Watsonville resident Dustin Davis, 44, on suspicion of felony animal cruelty after a neighbor recorded him abusing and tormenting a dog.

On July 17, 2017 an alert neighbor on the 100 block of Paseo Drive in Watsonville used a cell phone to capture a male subject in a neighbor's backyard abusing the dog. The neighbor brought the video to the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter on July 18.

Animal Shelter officers obtained a search warrant for the home and discovered Davis was a former boyfriend of the resident of the home, who was out of town when the incident occurred. The dog, obtained by the owner free of charge on Craigslist, was seized and brought to the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter for treatment by a staff veterinarian. With the assistance of the Watsonville Police Department, Davis was later arrested, charged with felony animal cruelty and booked into County jail.

"Without the assistance of the alert citizen videotaping this egregious event, this subject would not have been caught," Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter Field Services Manager Todd Stosuy said. "We hope this story empowers citizens to use their cell phones to capture cases of animal cruelty and neglect so that we can ensure justice is served."

The Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter responds 24 hours a day, seven days a week to calls for animals in distress. The agency operates two animal shelters, one at 2200 7th Avenue in Santa Cruz and the other at 580 Airport Boulevard in Watsonville. The shelter can be contacted at 454-7200.