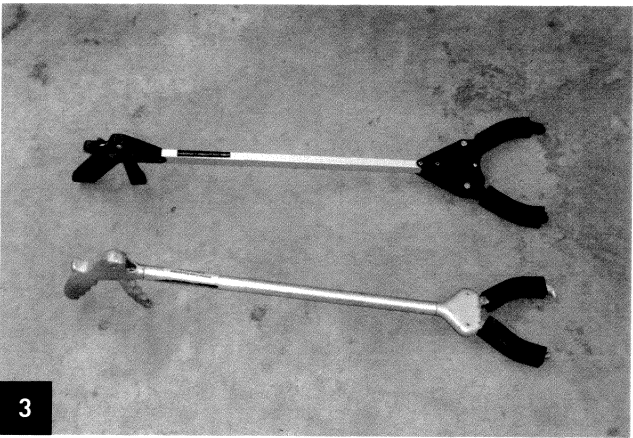


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## OH&S in the AMO role: It's all in a day's work

MARGARET GAAL

*Bathurst Regional Council, NSW*



1 Types of gloves available

2 Disinfectants used daily

- Parvo
- Cleaning of the small animal shelter including: cat cages; equipment; and floors

3 Cat graspers: Used by staff to control cats

4 Cat trap and cat crush: Used for collection of cats wild or otherwise

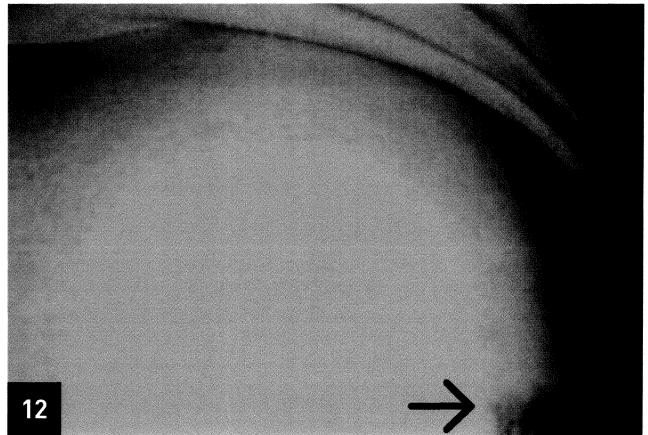
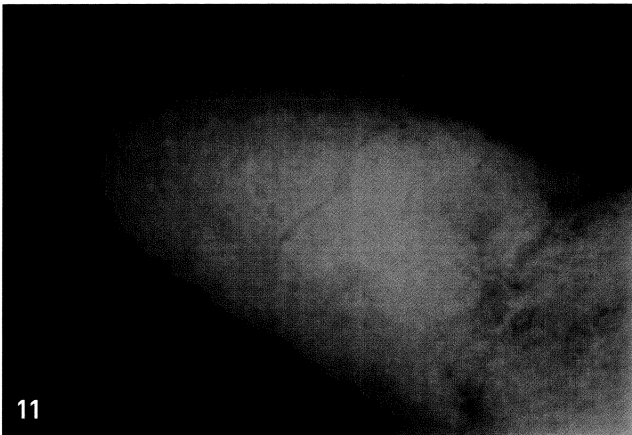


- 5 Cat housing: Individual cages or can be out in larger enclosure
- 6 Hand wash/sanitizer – when gloves are taken off  
Floor sanitizer - daily
- 7 ***It was just another Thursday (or was it?)***

I was carrying out my duties attending TAFE in the morning to assist the staff with animal related matters returned to the animal shelter to prepare for an animal expo on Saturday, checking dogs and cats that would be suitable to display and hopefully rehouse.

We had received a kitten in surrendered by a member of the public, I thought it may be suitable to be displayed at the expo, checked and found that it was an entire male, and thought that it would not be suitable for rehousing at the expo so I returned the cat to the enclosure.

- 8 Something irritated my eye so I rubbed my eye with the sleeve of my long sleeve shirt unknowingly transferring some disease to my eye and face.



9 By Saturday the side of my face was starting to swell near the eye that I had rubbed on Thursday, by Sunday I had to go to the hospital as an outpatient and they admitted me immediately. By this time my face was swelling with the infection travelling across from one side of my face to the other via the bridge of my nose.

10 The pain was excruciating like someone was poking my face and eye with a white hot poker. My blood pressure had increased considerably and the hospital couldn't contain the infection and there were concerns that the infection may affect my brain (luckily that didn't happen).

I was in hospital for 5 days, off work for 7 weeks and returned to work on light duties and reduced hours for a further 2 weeks.

11 The cat was tested for the disease and it was *not* confirmed that the cat had the same disease, the cat was subsequently destroyed.

I am extremely particular about handling animals and hygiene. It is amazing that unknowingly by doing a normal action as simple as wiping your face could have such an effect on both my family and me.

12 The medication load (including morphine for pain relief and penicillin) was immense with hourly antibiotics delivered by cannulas. This resulted in blown veins, severe swelling and additional infection as a result.

*I wanted to bring this to the attention of all participants to remind them to **BE CAREFUL and BE AWARE.***

## CONTACT

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