

Oxford County Unorganized Territories

Animal Control Annual Report – Calendar Year 2025

Brandon E. Holmes, Animal Control Officer

Overview

In 2025, the Oxford County Unorganized Territories (UTs) entered into their first Animal Control services agreement with Brandon E. Holmes. Following approval of the proposed budget by the Oxford County Commissioners in late April 2025, service commenced in May 2025. The UTs represent some of the most geographically remote areas in the coverage zone, including Albany Township, Mason Township, Riley Township, Milton Township, and surrounding unorganized areas.

A total of 19 calls for service were logged within UT jurisdiction between May and December 2025. As a first-year partial contract, this reflects an initial baseline rather than a full annual volume.

Call Volume by Category

- Stray or loose animals – 8
- General animal control and administrative – 3
- Continuing education – 2
- Welfare checks – 2
- Bite investigation and quarantine enforcement – 1
- Kennel inspection – 1
- Aggressive behavior – 1
- Cruelty to animals – 1

Given the size and remoteness of the Unorganized Territories, each call typically involves substantial travel time and distance. Mileage per call is among the highest in the coverage area.

Public Safety and Enforcement

One bite investigation was documented in the UTs in 2025. The incident occurred at a residence in Mason Township and resulted in a wound requiring three stitches. The involved animal's vaccination status was confirmed, and a 10-day quarantine was initiated and monitored in accordance with state protocol.

An aggressive behavior complaint was documented in Albany Township involving a stray canine that charged a bicyclist. The incident was resolved through public education on the state statute and on how to safely respond to an aggressive dog.

A late-night cruelty response was conducted in Milton Township after a complaint was received regarding horses exposed to subzero temperatures in an open field. Contact was made with the owner, and the horses were brought inside without further incident.

Kennel Inspection

One kennel inspection was completed in 2025 at New England Dogsledding in the Oxford UTs, a facility housing 35 sled dogs. The inspection found all animals in good health, with older dogs kept indoors and the facility well managed. The inspection was rated satisfactory. A recommendation was made to post written care instructions in case of an emergency involving the owner.

Stray and Lost Animal Cases

Eight stray and loose animal cases were documented in the UTs in 2025. These included three Huskies recovered at a farm property, a German Shepherd with a history of aggression that was transported to a shelter, two poodles located near Waterford after escaping from their Hunts Corner Road home, and three Great Pyrenees-type dogs reported near Frenchman's Hole in Riley Township that could not be located during the response.

A cat-related response at Hunts Corner Road resulted in the successful placement of 12 cats, including four showing signs of illness and four kittens, through partnering shelters.

Welfare Checks

Two welfare check case activities were documented in the UTs in 2025, both at the same property. Multiple contact attempts were made across separate visits. Due to the nature of the situation, deputy support was deemed necessary before completing the check. Follow-up coordination with dispatch determined that deputies were unavailable at the time of the most recent attempt, and the matter remains subject to further response if additional concerns are reported.

Geographic Considerations

The Oxford County Unorganized Territories cover a large and sparsely populated area. Response distances routinely exceed 40 to 80 miles round trip per call, reflecting the scale of the jurisdiction. In 2025, 982.57 miles were logged for 19 calls, averaging approximately 51.7 miles per call. This mileage profile is expected and consistent with the nature of coverage in an unorganized territory.

Continuing Education

The following training was completed in 2025, with the UT's proportional share included in billing records:

- Maine CARES training – hosted by ASPCApro, focused on coordinated community animal response and emergency preparedness
- Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) Parts I and II – classroom and hands-on training for responding to horses, donkeys, and other large animals in distress
- Maine Humane Conference – three CE credits; sessions on humane handling, community cat programs, and communication

Mileage and Field Activity

In 2025, 982.57 miles were logged responding to Oxford UT calls. This includes emergency response, shelter transports, kennel inspections, welfare follow-up visits, and training travel allocated to the UTs. High per-call mileage is consistent with the geographic character of this jurisdiction and is not expected to decrease significantly in future years.

Closing

The Oxford County Unorganized Territories received their first year of formal, contracted Animal Control coverage in 2025. The partnership was built on a collaborative process with county administrators, and the data collected this year provides a foundation for future planning, service evaluation, and contract renewal discussions. Coverage in this area requires a long-term commitment to rural public safety and animal welfare that goes beyond what simple call counts reflect.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon E. Holmes

Animal Control Officer

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