

August 15, 2008  
**For Immediate Release**

Contact: [Paul Levikow](#)  
(619) 531-3536

## **DA Charges San Diego Police Officer in Connection With Death of Police Dog**

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) said today her office is filing a charge against a San Diego Police Officer who left a police dog in the back of his patrol car, leading to the dog's death from heatstroke. Officer Paul Hubka is charged with one misdemeanor count of leaving a dog in a closed car in a high temperature, causing death.

"I understand and share the strong emotional reaction to Forrest's death, however, it's the only appropriate charge for these facts," District Attorney Bonnie M. Dumanis said. "The law requires the District Attorney's Office to step back from the emotion and follow the law."

An investigation by the County of San Diego Department of Animal Services found that Officer Hubka left a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois named Forrest in his police cruiser with the windows rolled up. The incident occurred at Hubka's home on June 20, 2008, when temperatures in the East County reached over 100 degrees. A necropsy determined the cause of death was heatstroke.

"This case should serve as a reminder that no one should leave an animal inside a closed car, not even for a few minutes," said Dawn Danielson, Director of the County of San Diego Department of Animal Services.

In 2006, the California State Legislature made it a misdemeanor, not a felony, for any person to leave a dog unattended in a vehicle causing great bodily injury or death. Only intentional animal cruelty is a felony.

If convicted, Hubka faces a maximum sentence of six months in jail, a fine and he could be ordered to pay restitution. Arraignment in San Diego Superior Court Dept. 1 is set for Aug, 28 at 1:30 p.m.

###