


## Don't Miss

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October 12, 2014

MURRAY, Utah (ABC 4 Utah) – The Humane Society of Utah is teaming up with Unified Police to protect people’s pets.

"We see this as a significant development because today, the majority of people out there look at their pets as members of the family," said Gene Baerschmidt, director of The Humane Society of Utah.

Police have already faced serious public backlash, and even death threats, this year. In June, a Salt Lake City officer shot and killed a dog named Geist, while searching in someone's backyard.

"For many officers, they come from a background where they have no experience with dogs or a negative experience with dogs..." explained Sheriff Jim Winder, of Salt Lake County.

Winder says it was Geist’s shooting that prompted police to take action.

"What we've decided to do—in conjunction with The Humane Society—is to offer mandatory training to all of our officers," said Winder.

The training will include three main steps:

- 1) Officers will learn to identify specific canine behaviors.
- 2) Officers will learn to identify and use alternate uses of force.
- 3) Officers will learn to sensitively handle situations in which dogs are injured or killed.

The Humane Society will work closely with Unified Police to provide officers with what they call 'enhanced dog training.' Everyone seems to agree that this new program is 'Good 4 Utah' and good for our four-legged friends.

"It will open the door for other law enforcement agencies and police departments throughout the State of Utah to offer enhanced training..." said Baerschmidt. "This is a step in the right direction," he said.

Unified Police will begin their new curriculum in early 2015.

