

Sentencing in Riverfront Aquariums Case

Calgary, AB -- Immediate Release

On February 28, 2017, Riverfront Aquariums owner Michael CHOW and manager Wayne WOO were convicted of Animal Protection Act offenses. WOO was sentenced to a maximum fine of \$20,000 and lifetime ban on owning animals except fish and a current dog, CHOW was sentenced to a \$4,000 fine and 10 year ban except fish and one dog.

Charges stem from a mass seizure on December 2, 2015 in which 333 animals were found in varying states of distress. This seizure, the second largest in Calgary Humane Society history, followed three smaller seizures and subsequent charges in the year prior to the final removal. Brad Nichols, Senior Manager, Animal Cruelty Investigations said, "This case was unique in that neither compliance nor prior Animal Protection Act charges were effective in getting the message across to the business and its management that their general animal husbandry needed to improve significantly. What concerns me most in this case was the apathy regarding the most basic needs of the sentient creatures in their care. This landmark sentence cannot be ignored. The maximum fine is the first in our jurisdiction and one of very few in the Province. It reflects the commercial and profit oriented aspect of the operation. The prohibition ensures the subjects will never care for the type of animals that they were never equipped or motivated to care for previously."

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