



## NAPA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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**ALLISON HALEY**  
District Attorney

For Immediate Release  
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### PRESS RELEASE

#### NAPA WOMAN CONVICTED OF ANIMAL CRUELTY

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Napa County District Attorney Allison Haley announced today:

On September 24, Natalie Covarrubias, age 28, was convicted of two felony crimes of Animal Cruelty and one misdemeanor crime of Failure to Care for an Animal by a Napa County jury. The Honorable Francisca P. Tisher presided over the four day jury trial in Napa Superior Court.

The convictions stem from Ms. Covarrubias' abuse of her then seven-month old German Shepherd-Border Collie mix puppy named "Enzo". On October 30, 2018, Enzo escaped Ms. Covarrubias' backyard in the City of Napa while she was at work. A neighbor found Enzo running loose and called Napa County Animal Services when she discovered that Enzo had a metal collar imbedded in his neck, causing visible injury and signs of infection. Napa County Animal Services Officers responded and decided that Enzo needed immediate medical attention. They discovered that Enzo was wearing a "prong" or "pinch" type collar made of metal links and curved prongs. The prongs were so deeply embedded into his neck, that they were not immediately visible.

Enzo was taken to a local veterinary hospital. Due to the nature of the injuries and extent of Enzo's apparent pain, he had to be sedated in order to have the prongs surgically removed. Enzo was left with puncture wounds all of the way around his neck. After examining the dog, the treating veterinarian determined that the injuries were caused by Enzo's neck slowly growing into the collar for at least two to eight weeks.

The investigation in this case was handled by the Napa Police Department and Napa County District Attorney's Office, with assistance from Napa County Animal Services. Deputy District Attorneys Taryn Hunter and Kayla Richeson prosecuted the case. Deputy Hunter commented that "this verdict demonstrates that this community cares deeply for animals, and that their mistreatment, abuse and malicious injury will not be tolerated. These cases are particularly troublesome because animals are completely reliant upon their owners for their well-being and cannot otherwise speak up when victimized. We take these types of allegations seriously not only because of the unjustifiable harm suffered by animal victims, but also due to the fact that animal abusers are more likely to commit violent crimes against people."

Sentencing is scheduled for October 23, 2019 at 8:30 am in Department E.

Any questions in case may be directed to Assistant District Attorney Paul Gero.