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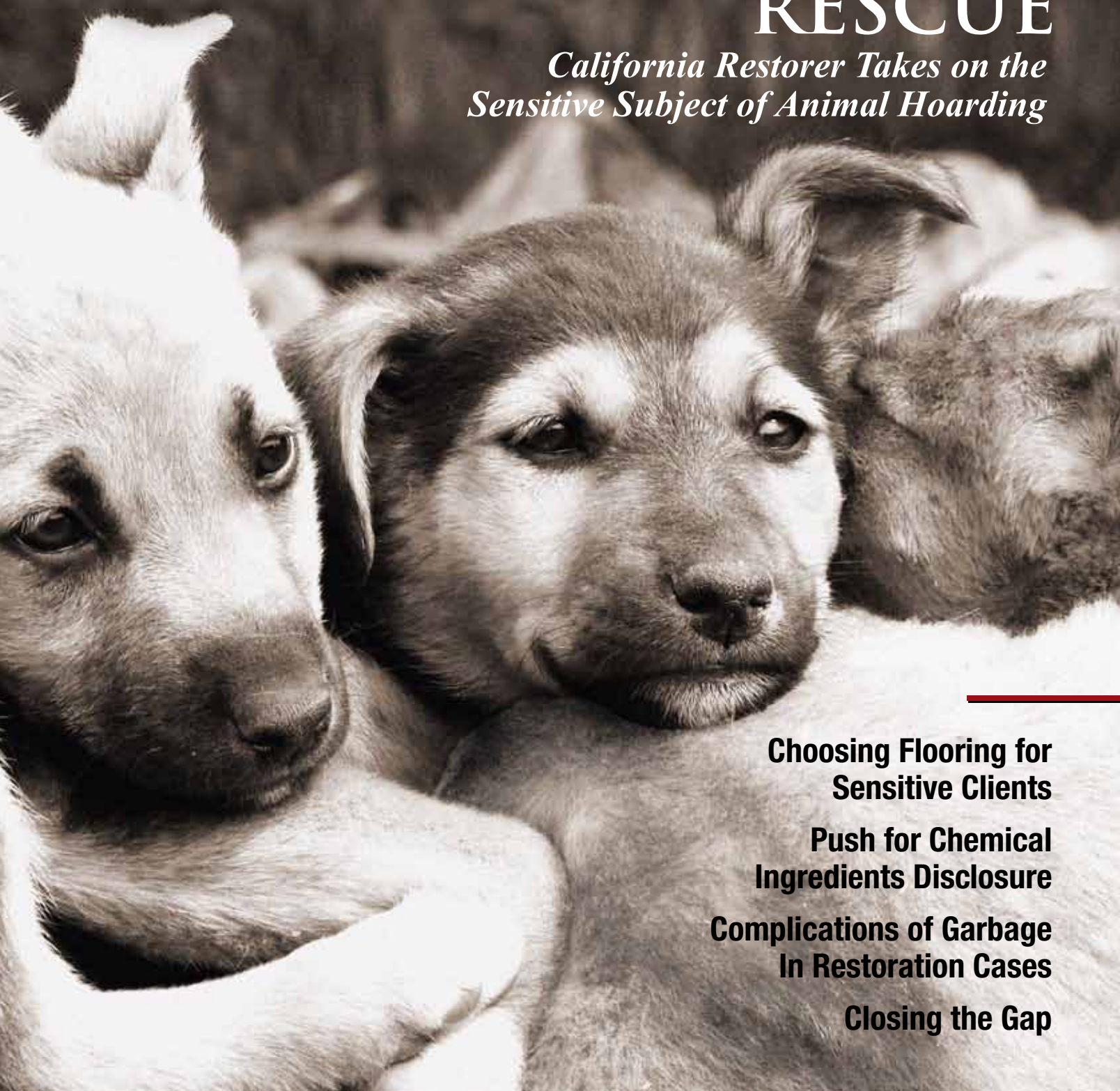
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RESTORATION RESCUE

CALIFORNIA RESTORER TAKES ON THE SENSITIVE SUBJECT OF ANIMAL HOARDING

By Janelle Wilson

In the customer service-based industry of cleaning and restoration, companies know it's not all about mopping and hammering. It's also about comforting those who are directly affected by the damage.

In March 2011, the producers of Animal Planet's television series *Confessions: Animal Hoarding* were looking for a company that could not only assist in the cleaning and repair of a northern California home, but also understood the sensitivities of the individuals who appear on the program. The series explores stories of people who own more pets than they can care for.

The producers contacted Cleanrite-Buildrite, northern California's largest carpet cleaning and disaster restoration contractor, to help clean and repair the home of one man who was prone to animal hoarding. With a history of helping customers in difficult circumstances, Cleanrite-Buildrite was prepared to respond.

"Whether it be trauma scene clean-up, hoarding, or unwelcomed disasters, I am proud of our teams across northern California who work with the understanding and insight of what our customers go through and how we can be of service to not only their personal property but to their peace of mind," said owner and president Dan Andreasen.

A Puzzling Disorder

The problem of animal hoarding is little understood, but far more common than most people realize. There are more than 3,000 reported cases a year, and at least 10 times that number that go unreported.

The Mayo Clinic generally defines hoarding as "the excessive collection of items, along with the inability to discard them," which creates disorderly and unhealthy living conditions. As is the case with general hoarding, animal hoarding is linked to obsessive compulsive disorder and also carries the trait of disconnection from daily responsibilities and limiting social interaction with others.

However, there is no typical hoarder. At the initial stages of the syndrome, some hoarders show an ability to recognize the problem before the conditions of the animals decline. Approximately 40 percent of object hoarders are also animal hoarders, and in most cases, domestic pets are most likely to be owned. *Confessions: Animal Hoarding* has been able to provide humane placement, veterinary care, psychological treatment and house cleaning.



A Compassionate Approach

Privacy and respect to the homeowner were the highest priority. Cleanrite-Buildrite had an hour of access to the home for a job assessment on Friday, April 15. Branch manager Peter Sprague coordinated a crew of experienced and efficient technicians and craftspeople from the four locations (Redding, Chico, Yuba City, and Sacramento) to execute the project in less than 12 hours. The plan involved approximately 10 Cleanrite-Buildrite team members whose expertise varied from cleaning and reconstruction specialists to project supervisors.

On the morning of April 18, a team of Valley Humane Society staff members and volunteers took in 10 mixed-breed dogs with the full cooperation of the dogs' owner. The homeowner asked for assistance in this situation and was given the opportunity for a no-kill shelter to adopt the dogs and care for them.

Once the animals were removed, Cleanrite-Buildrite started in full force. The objective was to remove clutter, sterilize, repair interior damage and create a healthy, livable space for the homeowner. During the fast-paced, nine-hour job, Cleanrite-Buildrite cleaned and organized the one-car garage, packed all the items in the house and moved them to the garage. The team removed pet soils from the living space, cleaned and





Photo courtesy of Cleanrite-Buildrite

“IT IS GREAT TO SEE WHAT OUR CLEANRITE-BUILDRITE TEAM HAS DONE IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME TO MAKE THE HOME A FUNCTIONING SPACE AGAIN FOR THE FAMILY—A PEACE OF MIND.”

sterilized several rooms and repaired damage to walls and doors to foster a safe and healthier environment. Animal Planet aired the project Aug. 31.

“It is great to see what our Cleanrite-Buildrite team has done in such a short period of time to make the home a functioning space again for the family—a peace of mind,” said Annie Tautz, business development representative for Cleanrite-Buildrite.

The job had two major challenges—the tight time frame and all the unknowns, said Yuba City Branch Manager Peter Sprague.

“I have watched the show many times and every situation is different,” Sprague said. “We only saw half the interior of the home before starting work. The entire home was affected. . . . The time and resources needed to bring the home back to pre-animal condition was not the goal. The goal was to get things going in the right direction and give the homeowner some hope.”

Janelle Wilson is a marketing assistant at Cleanrite-Buildrite.

