

**RCW 16.04.025 Owner of animals unknown—Procedure.** If the owner or the person having in charge or possession such animals is unknown to the person sustaining the damage, the person retaining such animals shall, within twenty-four hours, notify the county sheriff or the nearest state brand inspector as to the number, description, and location of the animals. The county sheriff or brand inspector shall examine the animals by brand, tattoo, or other identifying characteristics and attempt to ascertain ownership. If the animal is marked with a brand or tattoo which is registered with the director of agriculture, the brand inspector or county sheriff shall furnish this information and other pertinent information to the person holding the animals who in turn shall send the notice required in RCW 16.04.020 to the animals' owner of record by certified mail.

If the county sheriff or the brand inspector determines that there is no apparent damage to the property of the person retaining the animals, or if the person sustaining the damage contacts the county sheriff or brand inspector to have the animals removed from his or her property, such animals shall be removed in accordance with chapter 16.24 RCW. Such removal shall not prejudice the property owner's ability to recover damages through civil suit. [1989 c 286 § 21; 1985 c 415 § 24; 1925 ex.s. c 56 § 2; 1893 c 31 § 3; RRS § 3092. Formerly RCW 16.04.020, part.]

**Severability—1989 c 286:** See note following RCW 16.04.010.