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**QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH ANIMAL CRUELTY, ARSON FOR KILLING DOG AND
BURNING THE BODY**

Surveillance Video Shows Defendant Dragging Motionless Dog Through the Street Before Dousing Animal with Accelerant and Setting it on Fire in South Ozone Park

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Isaiah Gurley has been charged with animal cruelty, arson, petit larceny and reckless endangerment after allegedly killing a male pit bull before burning the body on a public street in South Ozone Park on July 24.

District Attorney Katz said: “Animals are not punching bags. They are not toys. They have every right to proper care, just as humans do. The allegations in this case are heart wrenching as the defendant is accused of killing the dog before dragging the lifeless body and setting it on fire. We will use all tools available to hold the defendant responsible for his alleged actions.”

ASPCA President & CEO Matt Bershadker said: “The ASPCA commends the coordinated effort involved in helping seek justice for this dog, including the diligence of the public and the strong commitment from the New York City Police Department and the Queens District Attorney’s Office for prioritizing animal cruelty response in New York City. Our veterinary forensic scientists play a critical role in supporting animal cruelty investigations like this by gathering crucial evidence that gives a voice to those who cannot speak—hopefully ensuring no other animal has to endure such cruelty again.”

Gurley, 29, of S. Conduit Avenue in Jamaica, was arraigned last night on a criminal complaint charging him with aggravated animal cruelty, arson in the fifth degree, reckless endangerment in the second degree and petit larceny. Criminal Court Judge Glenda Hernandez ordered Gurley to return to court on September 17. If convicted, he faces up to two years in prison.

According to the charges, on July 24, at approximately 9 a.m., an NYPD Lieutenant out on an unrelated assignment observed the charred remains of a dog on the street in the vicinity of 127-20 116th Avenue in South Ozone Park. The NYPD Animal Cruelty Investigation Squad was notified and an investigation was launched.

Nearby surveillance was pulled and showed the defendant walking into First Class Deli on Rockaway Boulevard at approximately 4:40 a.m. on July 24. He was seen picking up a bottle of oil and leaving the store without paying.

Approximately five minutes later, Gurley was allegedly seen on video footage dragging an unconscious dog by the leash along 116th Avenue. He then stopped and allegedly used the oil to douse the dog’s body and set it on fire.

Upon releasing an image of the defendant to the public, the NYPD received a 911 call on July 28 from someone who spotted the defendant at a Foot Locker at the Queens Center mall. The defendant was arrested by members of the 110th precinct.

Assistant District Attorney Justin Bobko, of the District Attorney's Animal Cruelty Prosecutions Unit, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Nicole Reid, Interim Section Chief, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Kate Quinn, Bureau Chief of the Domestic Violence Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Special Prosecutions Joyce A. Smith.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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