Local Government Minister Elliot McAdam said today the recent spate of dumping of unwanted kittens and puppies reflected badly on the Northern Territory.

“If we can be judged as a community on how well we treat our animals, the recent incidents make us look pretty ordinary,” said Mr McAdam.

“I fully support both the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare Authority in condemning this sort of real cruelty.

“In one instance, a litter of kittens was left to suffocate inside taped-up boxes in the rural area, and a week later five pups were found de-hydrated and hungry in a cardboard box at the Humpty Doo tip.

“In the latest of these ‘dump and run’ incidents, four Rottweiller puppies were abandoned at the Shoal Bay Re-cycle Centre at Leanyer.

“For the life of me I cannot understand why animals are being left to die in boxes and cartons rather than taking them to the RSPCA Animal Shelter at Berrimah for adoption and re-housing.

“This is not just thoughtlessness—it’s treating animals in ways they never deserve, and it’s just got to stop.”

The behaviour of the owners of these pets highlights the need for the de-sexing of kittens and puppies. An information kit on the early age de-sexing of kittens and puppies is currently being distributed by the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee to all councils and veterinarians in the NT.

Under the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act it is an offence to abandon an animal. The Act applies to all species of animals including cats and dogs. Animal Welfare Inspectors and the NT Police are responsible for enforcing the Animal Welfare Act and substantial penalties are provided for persons who abandon animals. A person who abandons an animal may receive a penalty of up to $11,000 or imprisonment for 12 months.

“I urge members of the public is asked to report instances of ‘animal dumping’ immediately to the Police or the Animal Welfare Unit and record vehicle registration numbers to assist with identifying these ‘dump and run’ offenders,” said Mr McAdam.

Animal Welfare Unit of the Department of Local Government can be contacted on 8924 4036 during normal business hours and the Police 24 hour response number is 131 444. Staff at the RSPCA Animal Shelter at Boulter Road, Berrimah are available to receive animals between 8.00am to 9.00am and 2.00pm to 5.15pm Monday to Friday and 11.00am to 4.00pm on Saturdays and Sundays. The Animal Shelter can be contacted on 8984 3795.

Note to editors/news rooms. We would appreciate your running the Animal Welfare Unit, Police and RSPCA phone contacts if possible.

Contact: Chips Mackinolty 0419 844 774