

Steps to Take When the Circus Comes to Town

BEFORE the Circus Arrives

Try to get it canceled. Contact the sponsors of the circus and ask that they book an animal-free circus instead. Order our "Circus Elephants: Training & Tragedy" video about the danger and abuse that animals suffer in the entertainment industry, and make an appointment to show it to the organizers and sponsors of the circus. If you are dealing with a civic group, mention that Lions Clubs International and Kiwanis International have advised clubs to beware of sponsoring circuses that use animal acts.

Circus promoters use our schools as marketing tools, enticing them to organize field trips to the circus. Contact your local school boards to discourage school promotions of circuses with animal acts.

Check with your city manager and state wildlife agency to ensure that the circus obtained the proper permits. Since circuses are only in one location for a short time, sometimes they will skirt local and state permit requirements in hopes that they will be long gone before anyone finds out.

Urge local authorities to closely monitor the animals and to vigorously enforce local and state laws if violations are found. Contact PETA for copies of the booklet "Basic Tips for Circus Elephant Inspections," and the video, "Circus Elephants: Training & Tragedy," and provide this information to your local animal control agency and humane society.

Contact PETA for copies of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection reports or check the factsheets on this site. You can use violations of the Animal Welfare Act to support your position.

Put up posters and stickers.

Sponsor an ad in your local newspaper. [Click here](#) for a few of the ads currently available from PETA.

WHILE the Circus Is in Town

Find out where the animals are being unloaded and be there with a camcorder and/or camera. Look for abuse and violations of state anti-cruelty statutes (copies of these statutes are available at public libraries). Use our "Basic Tips for Circus Elephant Inspections" as a guide. Call your local animal control department or humane society immediately if you see violations. Also, use PETA's guide to help identify violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act and to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Agriculture if warranted.

Organize a demonstration on opening night. Consider peacefully leafleting at every show. If you need help organizing, call PETA's International Grassroots Campaign Department at 757-622-PETA.

Write a news release. If you are having a demonstration, let the media know. PETA's videos are available in 3/4" tape used by the TV media. If any TV stations cover your demonstration, they may run compelling footage from the video on the news that night if you provide them with a copy.

Write a letter to the editor of your local paper. Read our quick facts about the circus for points to make. This is a great opportunity to let people in your area know about the plight of performing animals and to encourage them to boycott circuses with animal acts.

AFTER the Circus Has Left Town

Try to find out where the circus is going and call activists in that area. PETA's Grassroots Campaign Department can give you contacts.

Start a legislative campaign to ban circuses and other traveling exhibits in your town or county. This has already happened in a number of towns, and it can happen in yours! Contact PETA at Campaigns@peta.org for all the information you need to get started!