

## ASPCA Mission: Orange Welcomes New Partners

**Communities selected to join program, which is designed to benefit shelter animals.**

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ASPCA recently selected Buncombe County, N.C., and Oklahoma City to join its Mission: Orange partnership for improving the lives of shelter animals. A program created to prevent animal cruelty and increase adoptions at animal shelters has shown signs of success, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The ASPCA Mission: Orange initiative has developed various partnerships with shelters across the country, including in New York, Philadelphia and Austin, Texas. The goals of the program include providing positive outcomes for shelter animals by increasing "live release rates" through increased adoptions, reuniting lost pets with families and reducing shelter intake through spay/neuter.

Live release rates refer to the percentage of animals that leave the shelter system alive through adoption or return to owner. When the ASPCA partners with a community as part of the program, plans are outlined to help the animal shelters continue finding homes for cats and dogs.

Communities that have recently been selected to join the ASPCA partnership are Buncombe County, N.C., and Oklahoma City. Starting in July 2009, the organizations are set to launch a four-year plan to achieve the highest possible live release rate for shelter animals, including spay/neuter programs.

In Charleston, S.C., which is where the Mission: Orange campaign was first launched in 2008, the number of cats and dogs who left animal shelters in the past year increased by 25 percent, compared to the previous 12-month period, according to the ASPCA.

Ed Sayres, ASPCA president and CEO, said these latest findings reaffirm the importance of working with organizations that share a common goal — to provide positive outcomes for shelter animals.