

## Maryland Humane Society Branch Struggles Finding Homes for Cats

**Staggering euthanasia statistics show dire need to spay or neuter and train pets.**

The Humane Society of Washington County, Md., took in 5,000 animals in 2005, but was forced to euthanize 3,037 of them, including 2,383 cats and 521 dogs. During that same time, just 1,115 animals were adopted, according to Humane Society statistics.

According to the HSWC, many of the strays and owner-surrendered animals have some type of behavioral problem, such as aggressiveness or chewing, but that having animals spayed or neutered and making sure they are properly trained can help reduce the number of pets that end up at the shelter.

To also help lower the number of stray animals, the Humane Societys offering discount certificates to all county residents toward the cost of spay and neuter surgeries. Residents interested in the program must contact the Humane Society, where they receive the certificates to present to their veterinarians for the discounted surgeries.

In addition to the number of animals that were euthanized or adopted last year, 137 were purebreds placed in shelters, 104 died, 119 died on arrival, 439 were reunited with their owners, 81 went to wildlife rehab, 21 were returned to the wild, one cat couldn't be accounted for and another cat was stolen, according to Humane Society data. Posted: April 8, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST