

Animal Groups Discourage Giving Pets as Holiday Gifts

Humane society staff warn that impulse purchases of cats and dogs can lead to disappointment.

Posted: December 20, 2006, 5 a.m. EST

A kitten is not an ideal holiday gift, according to animal shelter staff. Cute kittens and cuddly puppies may seem like ideal holiday gifts, but humane society and animal shelter personnel suggest waiting until after the holidays to add new pets to the home. In fact, some animal shelters put a hold on pet adoptions during the holidays, reports the Eagle Tribune in Massachusetts.

The holidays can be stressful on people and pets, with many more social events on the calendar and potentially harmful decorations adorning homes. Such an environment is not ideal for introducing a new pet into a home, according to the Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire.

If the gift recipient isn't ready for the commitment or responsibility of owning a pet, the situation can become worse for the cat or dog involved, as the animal might be turned in to an animal shelter shortly after the holidays. If a friend or family member is truly ready to be a pet owner and is looking forward to owning a pet, wait until after the holidays to purchase or adopt the animal, the Greater Derry Humane Society suggests. As a gift, give a picture of the pet, or the supplies the pet will need, such as a food bowl or litterbox.