

## Animal Shelter Shut by Health Inspectors

**New Jersey facility housing about 100 cats could be permanently closed.**

Posted: October 02, 2006, 5 a.m. EST

The Animal Welfare Society in Cape May County, New Jersey, might be forced to close permanently after health inspectors found rodent infestation, poor ventilation, bad lighting and animal housing facilities in disrepair.

Among the violations cited following a joint Sept. 13 investigation by state and county inspectors are:

- A severe rodent infestation in the entire facility, with walls damaged by rodents.
- Rodent feces found in the shelter animal's food.
- Animals housed in incompatible groups; cats observed fighting with each other.
- No area to isolate sick animals from healthy ones.
- Abandoned animals taken in, although the shelter is not licensed as an impoundment facility.

Cape May County Health Officer Kevin Thomas said veterinarians would determine which animals were adoptable and which would be euthanized if the shelter were permanently closed.

He said the shelter was not presented with a date by which to remedy its violations to reopen.

As of Sept. 29, the county animal shelter was housing about 100 cats and 30 dogs.

In 2005, the animal shelter was inspected March 17, July 19 and Nov. 21, with numerous violations documented each time, according to a report by the County Department of Health.

Animal Welfare founder Cass Clark has said she expects the nonprofit shelter to reopen after it addresses problems found during the inspections.