

## FAST FACTS: U.S. ANIMAL SHELTERS

*There are about 5,000 community animal shelters nationwide that are independent; there is no national organization monitoring these shelters. The terms "humane society" and "SPCA" are generic; shelters using those names are not part of the ASPCA or the Humane Society of the United States. Currently, no government institution or animal organization is responsible for tabulating national statistics for the animal protection movement.*

Approximately 8 million to 12 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year, and approximately 5 million to 9 million are euthanized (60 percent of dogs and 70 percent of cats). Shelter intakes are about evenly divided between those animals relinquished by owners and those picked up by animal control. These are national estimates; the percentage of euthanasia may vary from state to state.

According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), less than 2 percent of cats and only 15 to 20 percent of dogs are returned to their owners. Most of these were identified with tags, tattoos or microchips.

Twenty-five percent of dogs who enter local shelters are purebred. (Source: NCPSP)

Only 10 percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered. About 75 percent of owned pets are neutered.

The majority of pets are obtained from acquaintances and family members. About 15 to 20 percent of dogs are purchased from breeders, and 10 to 20 percent of cats and dogs are adopted from shelters and rescues. (Source: Ralston Purina and NCPSP)

More than 20 percent of people who leave dogs in shelters adopted them from a shelter. (Source: NCPSP)

Five out of ten dogs in shelters and seven out of ten cats in shelters are destroyed simply because there is no one to adopt them.

The following data are ASPCA estimates unless otherwise indicated.