



Pets & People

More Action Needed To End Pet Homelessness

(NAPSA)—There appears to be a significant difference between what many people offer as their opinion about pet homelessness and what, if anything, they do about the problem.

That's a key finding of a recent survey that revealed that although a growing number of those surveyed say they care about pet homelessness, more than half—many of them pet lovers—still don't provide any support to address the issue.

In addition, the survey—Pet Smart Charities 2014 U.S. Shelter Pet Report—showed that most of those polled (85 percent) underestimate the number of pets who are euthanized annually in the United States. Experts say approximately 4 million pets are euthanized every year—or 11,000 pets daily—because there are not enough homes.

The study also found that among new pet owners the main barrier to adoption was that people said shelters did not have the type of pet they desired, with 34 percent wanting a purebred pet.

This suggests that people are unaware of breed-specific rescue groups. In fact, one in four pets available in U.S. shelters and rescue groups is a purebred.

When it comes to spay/neuter procedures, there is also confusion. For example, fewer than half of pet parents queried knew that low-cost spay/neuter options are available.

That, say experts, may present a problem, given that 30 percent of people whose pets were unaltered said they chose not to spay/neuter because it was too expensive.

Fortunately, PetSmart Charities believes these problems can be addressed through simple steps and more education. It suggests the following:



Findings from a new survey indicate those who think there is little more that can be done about pet homelessness may be barking up the wrong tree.

• **Adopt your next pet:** Seek out animal shelters and even breed-specific rescue groups. There are also online resources for shelters that allow filtering by breed or type of pet to make the search easy.

• **Get your pet fixed:** There are many low-cost options available. This helps to prevent unplanned litters.

• **Spread the word:** Helping other pet lovers to get more involved with local shelters and rescues increases the chances of other pets finding a lifelong, loving home.

• **Donate to animal welfare organizations:** PetSmart Charities funds thousands of local animal welfare groups that offer adoption and spay/neuter programs in communities throughout North America.

PetSmart Charities 2014 U.S. Shelter Pet Report is based on a survey of 2,800 adults, with and without pets, conducted in July 2014 using research firm Ipsos MarketQuest.

To learn more, visit www.pet-smartcharities.org.