



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2012

RESPONSIBLE OWNERS CONTROL THEIR PETS

Spaying/Neutering Decrease Pet Overpopulation, Improve Pet Health

St. Charles County, Missouri – Nearly 70,000 puppies and kittens are born every day in the United States, which is a great deal more than can ever be placed in loving homes. By spaying and neutering their pets, responsible owners do their part to control overpopulation and to limit the number of unwanted animals. In recognition of the benefits of this process, Humane Society International has declared the last Tuesday in February (Feb. 28, 2012 this year) to be World Spay Day.

The mating cycle is different for male and female animals and lasts different lengths for dogs and cats. Male dogs and cats are capable of breeding at approximately six months of age and often display aggressive behaviors when seeking a mate after reaching maturity, unless they are neutered. Female dogs experience a “heat” cycle every six months (depending upon the dog) that can last up to three weeks. Female cats come into heat every two to three weeks during the breeding season (typically March through September in our area).

While spaying and neutering are major surgeries, these commonly performed procedures to remove reproductive organs have a low incidence of complications. Using general anesthesia and medications to minimize pain, the surgery usually heals within a few days. Typically, the only complication is that the owner will need to keep their pet calm for a few days until the incision heals.

Studies show that surgical sterilization enhances a pet’s health and quality of life. Dogs and cats are shown to be better behaved, do not “mark” their territory and are less likely to roam the neighborhood. In addition, spayed and neutered pets live longer and have fewer incidences of cancers.

All dogs and cats adopted through the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center are spayed or neutered, but this process can also be performed on other unaltered pets through a local veterinarian. For information on adopting a pet or questions on the spaying/neutering process, please call the Pet Adoption Center at (636) 949-PETS (7387).

In addition to adopted pets, the Division of Humane Services offers low-cost spay and neuter services for feral and barn cats. Run by volunteers one day each month, the Sterile Feral program at the Pet Adoption Center (4850 Mid Rivers Mall Drive in St. Peters) altered more than 300 cats last year. Open to St. Charles County residents only, the cats are vaccinated for rabies, treated for parasites and altered so that they can no longer breed. To learn the date of the next Sterile Feral event or to make an appointment to participate, please call the Pet Adoption Center at (636) 949-PETS (7387).

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