

Pet Overpopulation Fact Sheet

- On average, 45 per cent of Canadian households own one or more cats and 36 per cent own one or more dogs.
- Stray, roaming pets impact sensitive native bird, mammal and reptile populations; damage local fauna; frighten children and the elderly and threaten and harm livestock.
- Unspayed cats can go into heat for several days every three weeks during the breeding season. During this time, they continually disturb the quiet enjoyment of a neighbourhood as they howl incessantly for a mate.



- In seven years, one unspayed cat and her offspring can potentially produce 470,000 kittens.



- Unneutered dogs are disproportionately responsible for dog bites and attacks compared to neutered dogs. Most bites to humans are by unneutered dogs (70 to 76 per cent).
- At least 65 zoonoses involving dogs and cats may be transmitted to people by direct contact or contact with secretions and excretions of infected pets. These include rabies, ringworm, tuberculosis and salmonella.

- Pet overpopulation leads to increased burdens on animal control complaints and to euthanasia of more animals, which taxpayers fund through municipal pound operations and animal control contracts.

- Spaying and neutering pets reduces the number of unwanted animals, who either end up being cared for at local shelters or are left to fend for themselves in the community.
- Since 2001 in Canada, spay/neuter compliance has dropped from 89 per cent to 79 per cent for cats and from 75 per cent to 69 per cent for dogs.
- Cost is the single biggest barrier to spaying and neutering. The majority of low-income pet guardians would spay/neuter their pets if financial assistance were available.
- Spay/neuter operations generally cost between \$50 and \$150 for cats and between \$100 and \$200 for dogs.

