



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Welfare Association Helps Reduce the Homeless Cat Population With “Beat the Heat” Promotion in February

Sponsored by PetSmart Charities®, “Beat the Heat” Provides \$20 Spay Surgeries for Female Cats

Voorhees, NJ – The cat population in the U.S. is greater than the dog population, and it appears to be growing more rapidly in recent years. Cats’ reproductive cycles are more frequent than dogs’ and as a result, cats can have multiple “kitten seasons,” or times when more kittens are born than usual, each year.

The Animal Welfare Association’s (AWA)—the largest and oldest no-kill animal shelter in South Jersey—offers **“Beat the Heat,”** a February campaign that makes doing the right thing, spaying cats, more affordable at \$20. By spaying female cats before the heat cycle, unwanted litters are prevented.

That’s why AWA is offering a special **“Beat the Heat”** campaign sponsored by [PetSmart Charities](#), the largest funder of animal welfare efforts in North America. Spaying is one of the most effective ways to reduce the homeless pet population and is safe for kittens as young as eight to ten weeks old, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association. Spaying a female cat before the first heat cycle can improve the health of the pet by reducing the risk of certain reproductive cancers and infections.

“Female cats can have as many as three litters a year, and kittens can breed as young as four months old,” says Maya Richmond, AWA’s Executive Director. “Most people don’t want to see their cat get pregnant over and over again, so hopefully our **“Beat the Heat”** campaign reminds cat owners to sterilize their cats before they go into heat this year.”

This special \$20 rate is even less than the organization's normal low-cost price and is available to all residents of South Jersey (Camden, Burlington and Gloucester Counties). *Cat parents who wish to take advantage of this offer must mention the "Beat the Heat" campaign when they schedule their appointment.* This campaign is based on availability.

Thanks to the PetSmart Charities grant, AWA will provide 375 female cat "Beat the Heat" sterilizations for \$20 in February. Please visit www.awanj.org or call 856-424-2288 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

PetSmart Charities' "Beat the Heat" campaign provides more than \$549,700 to spay/neuter clinics to fund affordable, high-quality spay and neuter surgeries for 15,508 female cats across the nation during the month of February.

About The Animal Welfare Association:

AWA is South Jersey's oldest private, non-profit, 501(c) 3 animal welfare organization. Through a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, pet therapy, and humane education, AWA is dedicated to eliminating animal suffering, promoting the importance of the human-animal bond, and improving the role of animals in the well-being of people. In 2013 over 16,000 pets were served through AWA's No-Kill programming. AWA celebrates its 65th year leading the way to progressive companion animal care in South Jersey.

About PetSmart Charities:

PetSmart Charities, Inc. is a nonprofit animal welfare organization that saves the lives of homeless pets. More than 400,000 dogs and cats find homes each year through our adoption program in all PetSmart® stores and our sponsored adoption events. PetSmart Charities grants more money to directly help pets in need than any other animal welfare group in North America, with a focus on funding spay/neuter services that help communities solve pet overpopulation. PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization, separate from PetSmart, Inc. <http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/pci-stories/who-needs-to-beat-the-heat-in-february-your-neighborhood's-cats-that's-who>

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