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News Release

For Immediate Release

Animal Control Reports Successful Partnership with SAAFhouse

2011 was a turning point for the partnership between the Springfield-Greene County Health Department's Animal Control program and the Springfield Animal Advocacy Foundation. After years of taking in and euthanizing large numbers of animals, 1,807 dogs were placed with one of seventeen rescue agencies or were returned to their owners last year. Only 305 dogs were euthanized in 2011, and the effective "save rate" for dogs was over 90 percent, excluding pit bulls and aggressive dogs.

During 2011, the SAAFhouse Spay-Neuter Clinic sterilized nearly 5,000 dogs and cats. The clinic opened in August 2010 and has spayed or neutered more than 6,300 animals to date, preventing the births of more than 35,000 unwanted puppies and kittens.

Both agencies partially credit the other for their success. Janet Martin, SAAF President, says, "The commitment that Animal Control has made to protecting animals as well as people is critical. Animal Control understands the importance of spaying and neutering and is a strong supporter of SAAFhouse. We are so thankful to have them as a partner in the fight against pet overpopulation."

Karen Prescott, Environmental Services Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Health Department, says, "SAAF has been instrumental in providing spay/neuter services for animals rescued from our facility before they are placed in new homes. Preventing litters of puppies and kittens is so important when our community continues to struggle with animal over population problems."

In the future, there will be an increased focus on cat overpopulation. It is a particularly demanding problem because of the large number of stray and feral cats in Springfield. However, SAAFhouse and Animal Control are ready for the challenge.

The mission of Animal Control is to reunite dogs and cats with their owners, facilitate adoptions by approved rescue partners and protect residents from animals running at large.

SAAF's mission is to lead a collaborative effort in Greene County to improve animal welfare, promote responsible pet ownership, and reduce pet overpopulation.

For more information on Animal Control, visit health.springfieldmo.gov/animalcontrol. For more information on SAAF, visit www.saaf2018.org.

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