

VETERINARY UPDATE

Permanent Pet ID: Crucial for Helping Homeless Pets



What's one of the easiest ways to reunite lost dogs and cats with their owners? Permanent ID in the form of a tattoo or microchip!

Asking pet guardians to have their pets tattooed during their spay/neuter surgery or microchipped during a routine visit is an easy way to help ensure pets find their homes quickly. Also, veterinarians are in the unique position to educate pet owners about the advantages of permanent pet ID, such as the vastly reduced likelihood the pet will stay a stray.

Participating in a suitable identification system is an

essential component of programs that manage stray animal populations, enabling shelters to recognize that animals may have already been spayed or neutered. It also helps to reduce the number of animals in shelters as well as owner anxiety.

Veterinarians across the province are starting to work with BC SPCA branches to offer microchip clinics to encourage pet owners to take responsible action towards caring for their pets. The Island Veterinary Hospital in Nanaimo was the first to partner with our Nanaimo BC SPCA Branch in 2012; they have been hosting clinics annually ever since.

If you're interested in hosting a microchip clinic or learning more about how permanent ID can be built into your spay/neuter business model, contact Amy Morris, Policy and Outreach Officer at amorris@spca.bc.ca.

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The British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) is a not-for-profit organization reliant on donations from the public.

The Need for Accessible Spay/Neuter Programs

Unwanted cats, and their subsequent suffering, is the biggest issue facing companion animals in B.C. today. Spay/neuter surgeries – including affordable and accessible services – are the key to addressing the negative consequences of overpopulation, says *The Case for Accessible Spay/Neuter in Canada* - a report by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies.

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians' Spay-Neuter Task Force also identified spay/neuter programs as the best solution to overpopulation:

“At this time, [accessible spay/neuter] programs are the best antidote to mass euthanasia of cats and dogs resulting from overpopulation. They represent the most financially responsible and humane way for communities to increase the numbers of cats and dogs that are neutered. By engaging in this new and rapidly developing practice area, veterinarians can play vital roles in alleviating overpopulation and decreasing untimely euthanasia of cats and dogs.” (Looney et al, 2008)

In a similar vein, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association states that: “neutering is an important aspect of responsible pet care both because it

helps to combat dog and cat overpopulation, and because of the health and behavioural benefits to the animals.” The CVMA strongly recommends that all cats and dogs that are not part of a responsible breeding program be neutered before sexual maturity, except where there are valid health or behavioural benefits for delaying the procedure.

Potential benefits of offering accessible spay/neuter programs include:

- a decrease in companion animal overpopulation;
- decreased levels of euthanasia;
- fewer animals admitted to shelters;
- fewer stray and feral animals;
- fewer animal nuisance complaints;
- decreased risk of animal-to-human transmission of communicable diseases;
- an increase in community animal welfare; and
- greater capacity for adoptions.

While the evidence is clear that accessible spay/neuter programs are effective in reducing the costs to society of companion animal overpopulation, many communities still do not have such programs to help low income animal owners, or, even more importantly, outdoor cats that are being fed but don't



have traditional “owners.” The BC SPCA is committed to working with veterinarians in the province to increase the number of accessible programs and decrease the number of homeless and uncared for animals in B.C.

To access spay/neuter packs/gowns/drapes and administrative support for a spay/neuter blitz day, or to discuss other ways you can contribute to ending cat overpopulation in B.C., contact Amy Morris, Policy and Outreach Officer at amorris@spca.bc.ca.

FAST FACT:

We see a 10-15% increase in pregnant cats in our spay/neuter programs starting in January. Cats are getting pregnant in December!

Summer Lovin': B.C.'s Vets Assist With Cat Care

In June, the BC SPCA issued a release recommending that anyone who feeds a cat should take the time to take it to a veterinarian for a spay/neuter surgery and veterinary care.

We know that there are more cats than homes in British Columbia. Each year that these outdoor-living cats are not spayed and neutered, their colony sizes and subsequent suffering only grows.

Veterinarians like Creekside Animal Clinic in Vernon are stepping up to the plate by offering a free spay/neuter blitz day for free-roaming community cats. The BC SPCA provides the spay/packs along with drapes and gowns, and the clinic is donating their time.

Partnerships like this help to keep the cat population under control and continued humane education programs work



towards changing the culture so that cats start to be valued as much as dogs. If you want to contribute to helping cats in B.C., send an email with your ideas to spayneuter@spca.bc.ca.

Speaking Out Against Cruelty on Dairy Farms

In response to undercover video of horrendous abuse and neglect of animals on a Chilliwack dairy farm, the BC SPCA has recommended charges under the Criminal Code of Canada. Upon receipt of the video, the BC SPCA immediately launched

an investigation and proactively involved the dairy industry and provincial government for a collaborative approach. The BC SPCA has also submitted a proposal to the provincial Minister of Agriculture recommending that

the government incorporate the Canadian Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle into the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act as a minimum care standard for dairy cattle. Learn more at spca.bc.ca/dairycattle.

Duty to Report: Suspected Animal Cruelty Cases

This summer's horrific situation involving Chilliwack dairy cattle highlights the massive importance of reporting animal cruelty.

Veterinarians are often the first to see the signs of suspected cruelty, and they have a legal and professional responsibility to report, as outlined in Section 22.1 of B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA Act).

A registered veterinarian who believes on reasonable grounds that a person responsible for an animal is, or is likely, causing or permitting the animal to be in distress in contravention of the PCA Act must promptly report, to the best of the registered veterinarian's knowledge and belief, this information to the BC SPCA or RCMP.

Veterinarians can contact the BC SPCA's new animal cruelty hotline at 1-855-622-7722 to report cases of suspected animal cruelty.

For questions about the PCA Act, contact Marcie Moriarty at 1-800-665-1868 or mmoriarty@spca.bc.ca.

Seeking Hospital Director

The BC SPCA is recruiting for a compassionate, efficient and effective hospital director. The position, located in Vancouver, manages the SPCA hospital and serves as the Designated Veterinarian in accordance with the bylaws of the CVBC.

The right candidate is able to provide oversight and management of the two BC SPCA spay/neuter clinics, the hospital and its employees, manage the staff and offer medical advice to BC SPCA branches utilizing the hospital.

Contact Mark Takhar, COO at mtakhar@spca.bc.ca.



Walk to fight animal cruelty

Join the Scotiabank & BC SPCA Paws for a Cause walk to fight animal cruelty. Register for your local walk and find more details at www.spca.bc.ca/walk.

Thanks!

Thank you to the following veterinary clinics for discounting their services to help provide universal access to spay/neuter surgeries for cats owned by low-income members of the community or cats that are free-roaming through our BC SPCA Community Animal Spay/Neuter Programs. Learn more about the BC SPCA and what we do to promote spay/neuter at spayneuter.ca.

Alouette Animal Hospital
 Animal Care Hospital
 Applecross Veterinary Hospital
 Asher Road Animal Hospital
 Benson View Veterinary Hospital
 Bellevue Vet Hospital
 Burns Lake Veterinary Clinic
 Bute Street Veterinary Clinic
 Campbell River Veterinary Hospital
 Cariboo Mobile Veterinary Clinic
 Carrington Animal Hospital
 Central Island Veterinary Emergency Hospital
 Central Saanich Animal Hospital
 Chase River Veterinary Hospital
 Cheam View Veterinary Clinic for Cats
 College Heights Veterinary Clinic Ltd.
 Columbia Veterinary Services Inc
 Comox Valley Animal Hospital
 Coombs Veterinary Hospital
 Cottonwood Veterinary Clinic
 Dr. Atkinson
 Dr. Barker
 Dr. Kennedy
 Departure Bay Veterinary Hospital
 Dewdney Animal Hospital
 Eastridge Animal Hospital
 Elk Lake Veterinary Hospital
 Gulf Island Veterinary Clinic
 Haney Animal Hospital
 Island Veterinary Hospital
 Invermere Veterinary Hospital
 Island Veterinary Hospital
 Jacobson Veterinary Services

Jahren Veterinary Services
 Lakeland Veterinary Clinic
 Lakeshore Animal Hospital
 Lighthouse Vet Hospital
 Little Mountain Veterinary Clinic
 Manzini Animal Hospital
 Maple Ridge Veterinary Hospital
 Marshall Veterinary Hospital
 Menzies Pet Hospital
 Merecroft Veterinary Hospital
 McKenzie Veterinary Services
 Mid-Isle Vet Hospital
 Mill Bay Veterinary Hospital
 Mission Creek Animal Hospital
 Murdoch Veterinary Clinic
 Nanaimo Veterinary Hospital
 Nelson Animal Hospital
 Norgate Animal Hospital
 North Kootenay Veterinary Services
 Oceanside Animal Hospital
 Okanagan Veterinary Hospital
 Ospika Animal Hospital
 Pacific Cat Clinic
 Pacific Rim Hospital
 Pacific Veterinary Hospital
 Panorama Veterinary Services
 Parksville Animal Hospital
 Petroglyph Veterinary Hospital
 Powell River Veterinary Hospital
 Prevost Veterinary Clinic
 Qualicum Animal Hospital
 Queen Charlotte Islands Animal Hospital
 Quesnel Veterinary Clinic
 Riverside Small Animal Hospital
 Saanichton Village Veterinary Hospital
 Salt Spring Veterinary Services
 Sardis Animal Hospital Ltd
 Shaughnessy Veterinary Hospital
 Sidney Animal Hospital
 Sooke Veterinary Hospital
 South Peace Animal Hospital
 Tranquille Road Animal Hospital
 Twin Rivers Animal Hospital
 Twin Cedars Veterinary Hospital
 Valley Veterinary Services
 Vancouver Animal Hospital
 Vedder Mountain Clinic
 Westview Veterinary Hospital
 Williams Lake Veterinary Clinic
 Woodgrove Veterinary Hospital