

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

Animal Population Control Program

2011 Annual Report

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Governor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- I. Program Intent**
 - Statutory Compliance**
 - History**

- II. How the Program Operates**

- III. Program Totals**
 - Vaccinations/Sterilizations**
 - Income**
 - Expense**
 - Connecticut Humane Society**
 - Five-Year Report**
 - Low-Income Program**
 - Feral Cat Grant Program**

- IV. Breed Profile Report**

- V. Participating Practices**

- VI. “Caring for Pets” Commemorative License Plate**
 - Plate Categories**
 - Plate Report**

- VII. APCP On The Web**

- VIII. Standard Dog License Application**

- IX. Recommendations**

Attachments: A) Chapter 436a/Spaying and Neutering

I. PROGRAM INTENT:

The goal of the Animal Population Control Program (APCP) is to: 1) reduce the overpopulation of surplus dogs and cats in Connecticut at the municipal level, 2) provide benefits to non-profits for feral cats, and 3) help CT low-income residents vaccinate and sterilize their pets. Pet overpopulation is a significant burden on the limited resources of local municipalities. The goal of reducing the overpopulation of cats and dogs and immunizing animals placed through the program significantly impacts the local public health and safety agenda. The reduction of surplus animals in Connecticut's communities decreases the risk of the spread of rabies and other infectious diseases. Additionally, the reduction in animal overpopulation allows municipalities to shift their resources to activities focused on law enforcement, animal control and those issues that include education and public awareness regarding responsible pet ownership.

Statutory Compliance

This report has been produced in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statute Sec. 22-380k titled, animal population control program: Report re operation of program. This section states in part pursuant to Sec. 22-380e to 22-380m inclusive and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the general assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment setting forth a complete operating and financial statement regarding the operation of said program. The commissioner shall include an evaluation of the effectiveness of said program and any recommendations for statutory or regulatory changes deemed appropriate. For further reference, please see Attachment B titled Chapter 436a Spaying and Neutering.

History

The Animal Population Control Program was created by Public Act #92-187 in July 1992 and implemented on May 22, 1995, to provide vaccination/sterilization benefits for any unsterilized dog or cat adopted from a municipal impound facility. In 2007, the program expanded to non-profit organizations to help sterilize feral cats and in 2008 to low-income residents for their own pets. Connecticut is one of only a few states in the country to offer a companion pet sterilization program through a state agency and is believed to be the only one in the country offering benefits to municipal pound animals, feral cats and low-income families.

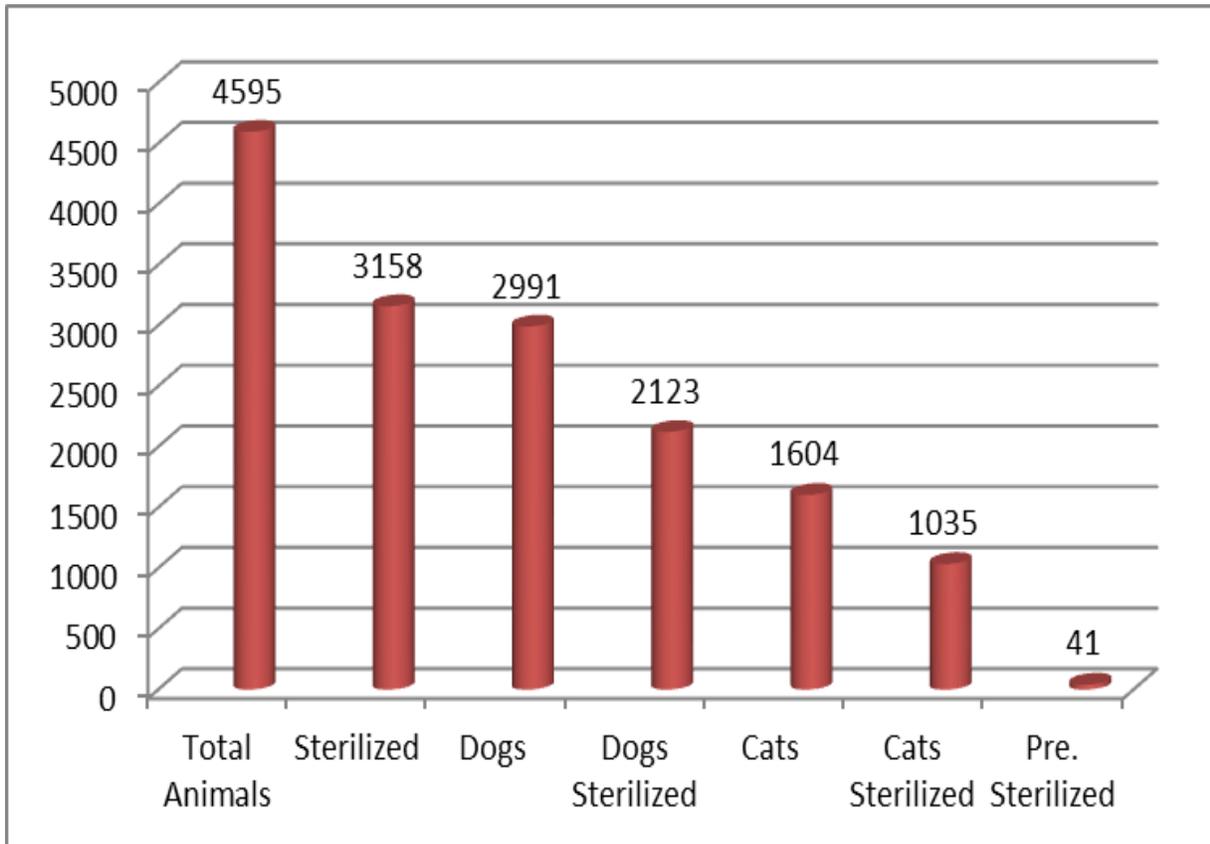
II. HOW THE PROGRAM OPERATES:

Vouchers are issued at the municipal pound for unsterilized dogs/cats to Connecticut residents who must pay a \$50 fee. The voucher is good for sixty (60) days from the adoption date and provides a one-time sterilization fee of \$50 for a male cat, \$70 for a female cat, \$100 for a male dog and \$120 for a female dog. In addition, two coincident pre-surgical vaccinations are provided with the sterilization. Pets that are too young or sick are granted a medical extension from a participating veterinarian. The APCP also provides vouchers to Connecticut non-profit organizations for feral cats and to low-income residents to help vaccinate and sterilize their own pets.

III. PROGRAM TOTALS

PROGRAM VACCINATIONS/STERILIZATIONS

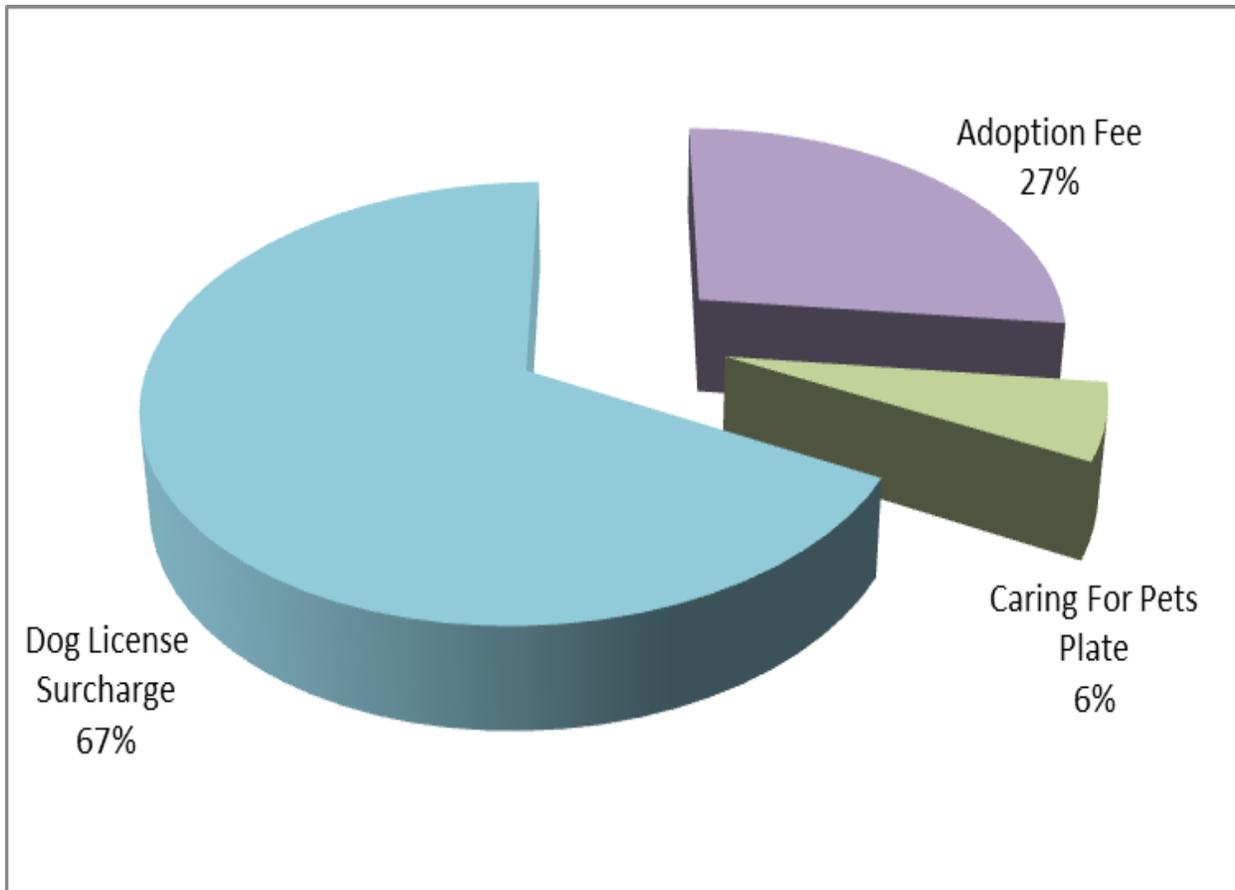
For FY 2011, the APCP handled 4,595 animals (2991 dogs/1604 cats) from municipal impound facilities, pets owned by low-income Connecticut residents and feral cats associated with Connecticut non-profit organizations. Benefits were provided for 3,158 pets (2123 dogs/71% and 1035 cats/65%) for a 69% overall sterilization compliance rate. From that total 41 animals (36 dogs/5 cats) were found to be previously sterilized. In addition, 6,316 pre-surgical vaccinations were issued, of which one-half were rabies vaccines.



PROGRAM INCOME

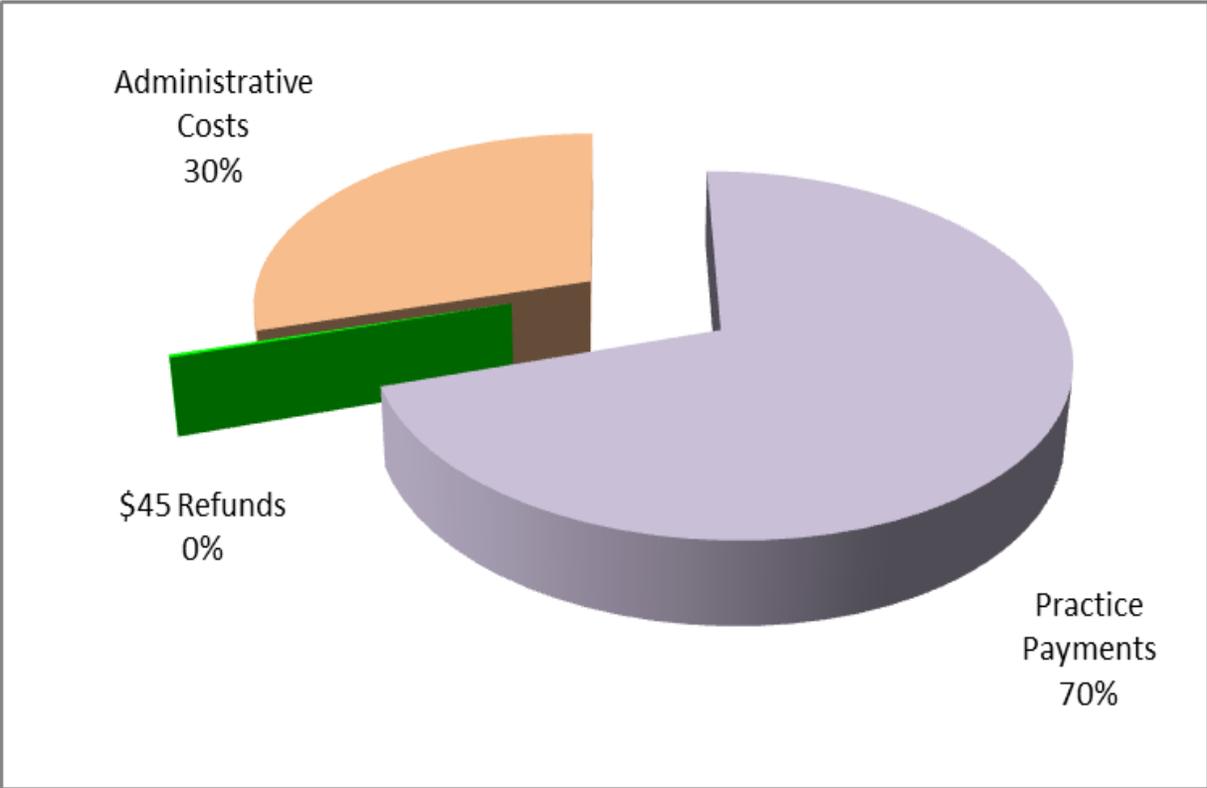
The APCP has its own dedicated account and receives no money from the state's general fund. Revenue is received from the following: annual surcharge on Connecticut dog licenses (\$2.00 sterilized/\$6.00 unsterilized), the \$45 mandatory voucher fee, proceeds from the sale of the "caring for pets" commemorative license plate and donations. Dog license surcharge fees are collected by the municipalities and forwarded to the Department of Agriculture on an annual basis, voucher fees are also sent in by the towns on a quarterly basis and revenue from pet plate sales are deposited weekly by the DMV into a program account.

For FY 2011, \$515,403 was received from dog license surcharge revenue, \$205,650 from the \$45 program adoption fee, \$44,110 from the DMV for the sale of the "caring for pets" commemorative license plate and no donations for a total of \$765,163.



PROGRAM EXPENSE

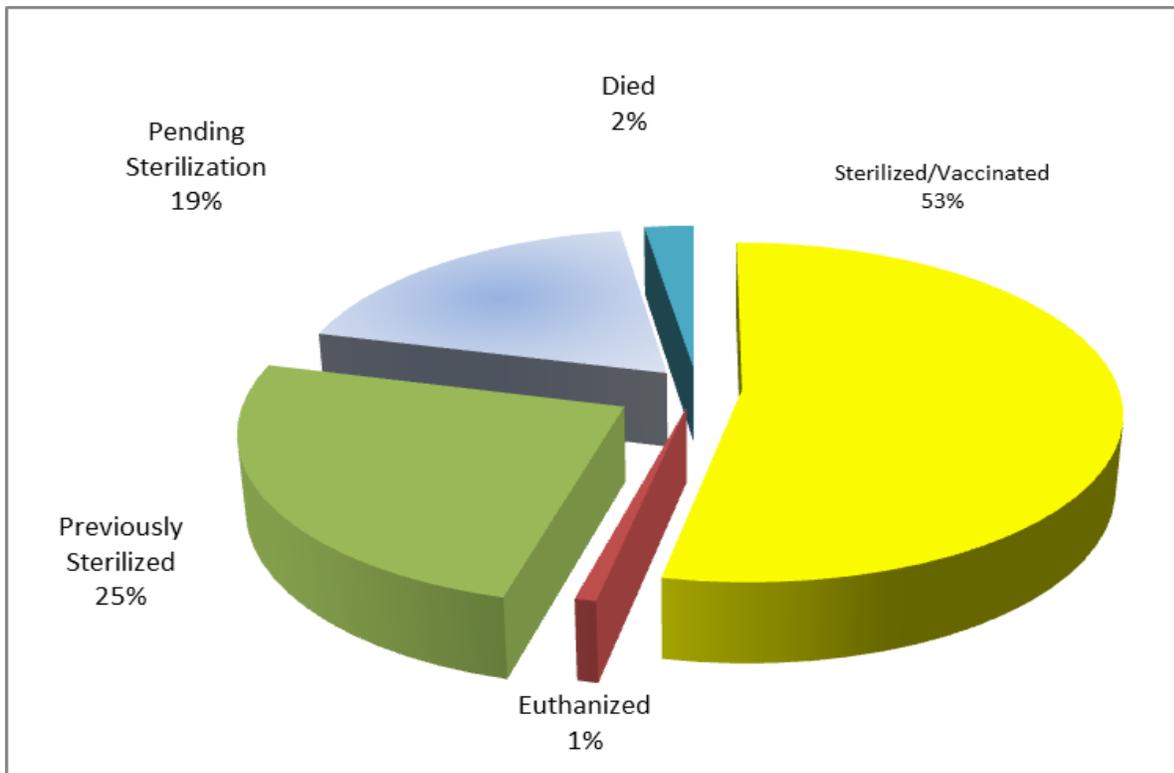
For FY 2011, the program provided benefits for 3,158 pets for a total payment of \$477,440 to 228 participating veterinary practices. The monthly average payment to practices was \$39,787. The average benefit for cats is \$80 and \$130 for dogs. In addition, \$1845 was paid out as \$45 adopter refunds for 41 pets that were previously sterilized. Administrative costs totaled \$201,259 for an overall program expense of \$680,544.



CONNECTICUT HUMANE SOCIETY

Effective October 1, 2003, statutory language was added to Sec. 22-380f (a) (b) (c) and (d), allowing the Connecticut Humane Society (CHS) to assist with pet overpopulation efforts at local municipal facilities by removing dogs and cats fee free. Once a pet is removed from a municipal impound facility, CHS is required to provide vaccination, sterilization (if unaltered) and adoption services through one of its three statewide facilities. The Society is also required to submit a biannual report to the APCP, accounting for the disposition of each pet removed. If the Society fails to comply with any provision of this section, the Commissioner of Agriculture may terminate the organization's fee exemption status.

For calendar year 2011, 124 pets (47 dogs - 77 cats) were removed from municipal impound facilities. From that total, 66 pets (53%) were vaccinated and sterilized, 31 (25%) were found to be previously sterilized, 1 (1%) was euthanized, 3 (2%) died and 23 (19%) were grouped as returned to the pound, in foster care or pending surgery.

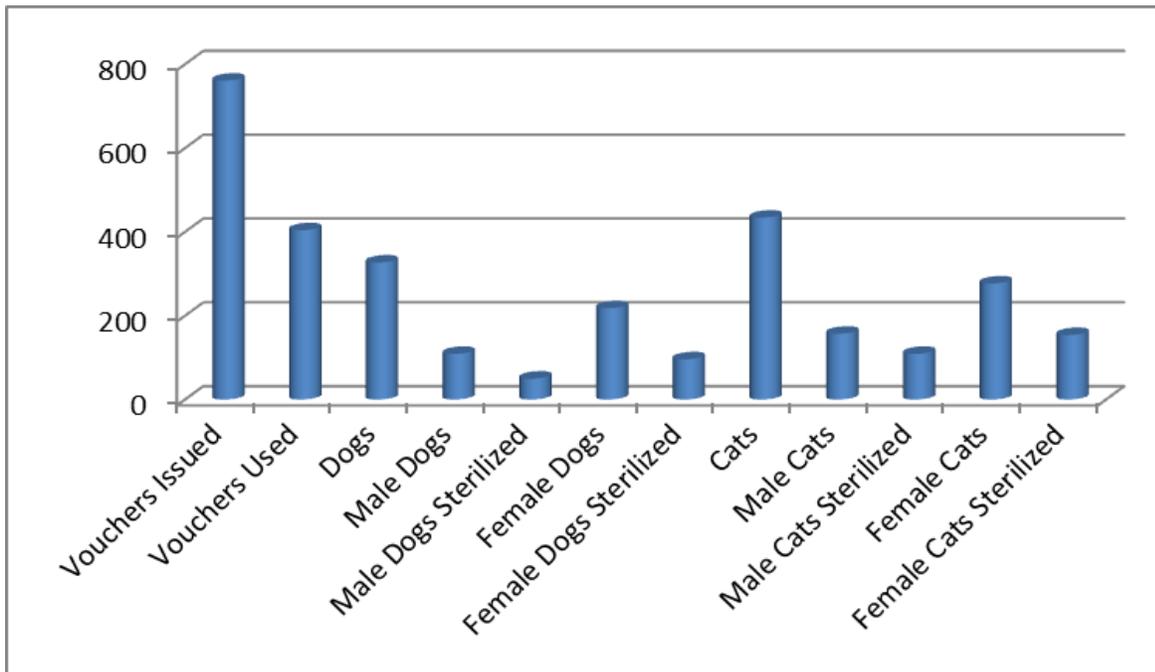


LOW-INCOME PROGRAM

Public Act 07-105, passed in 2007, allows the APCP to set aside up to 10% of program income to be used to vaccinate and sterilize the pets of CT Low-Income residents. To be eligible for benefits, recipients must be a Connecticut resident and on one of six public assistance programs outlined in Sec. 22-380e (12) (A – G) and then verified by the Department of Social Services (DSS). Once approved, vouchers are then issued by the APCP to low-income recipients for up to two pets. All vouchers are good for sixty (60) days.

For FY 2011, \$77,000 was set aside for the low-income program. The APCP issued 761 vouchers statewide and 404 were used for a 53% overall sterilization compliance rate (see chart next page). Vouchers were issued for 434 cats (57%) and 327 dogs (43%). Male dogs totaled 109 (50 sterilized/46%) and female dogs equaled 218 (96 sterilized/44%). Male cats totaled 157 (109 sterilized/69%) and female cats totaled 277 (154 sterilized/56%).

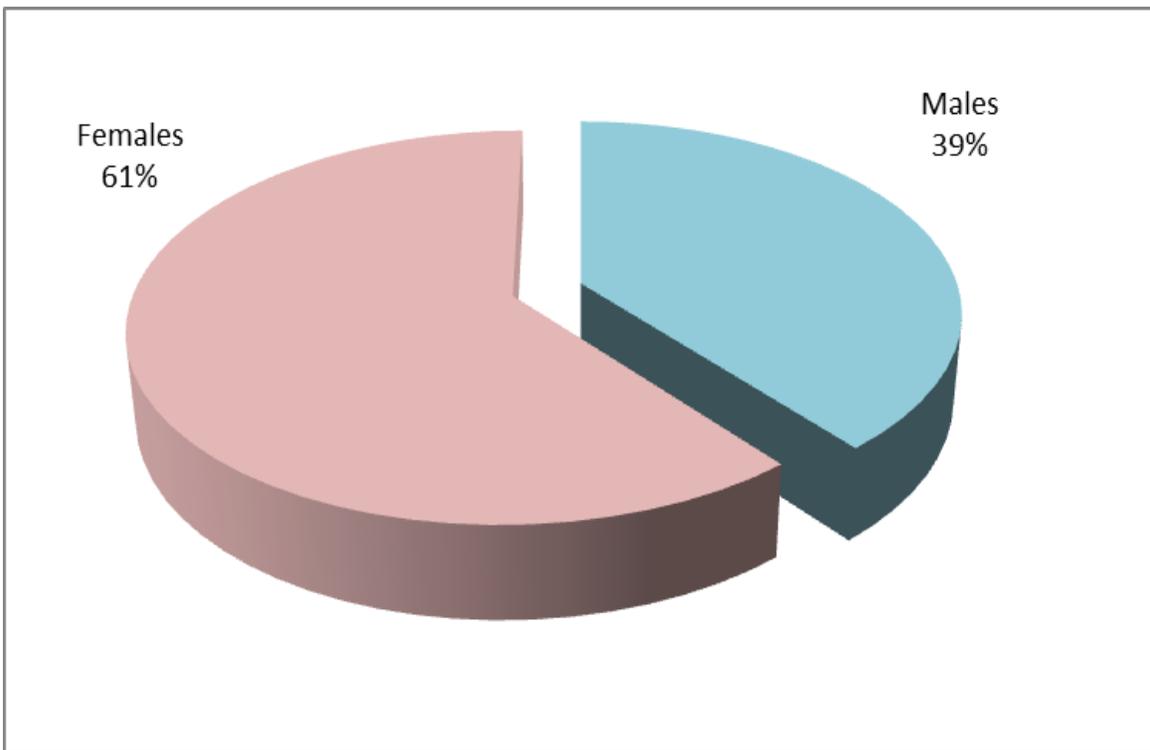
The top five dog breeds submitted from low-income applicants were the Mixed Breed 126/54 sterilized (43%), Pit Bull 50/20 sterilized (40%), Chihuahua 34/15 sterilized (44%), Labrador Retriever 11/5 sterilized (45%) and the Shih Tzu 10/7 sterilized (70%). Cat totals came to 364 Domestic Shorthairs, 224 sterilized/62%, 27 Domestic Longhairs, 13 sterilized/48% and 18 Domestic Medium Hairs, 13 sterilized/72%.



FERAL CAT GRANT PROGRAM

Public Act 07-105, passed in 2007, allows the APCP to set aside up to 10% of program income for Connecticut non-profit organizations to provide vaccination and sterilization benefits for feral cats. For FY 2011, the APCP issued 925 vouchers to fifteen (15) non-profit organizations of which 886 were used for a 96% compliance rate. Every county in the state was represented, reflecting half (75) of the state's towns and cities. Sterilized feral cat totals per county were New Haven/257, Fairfield/209, Hartford/193, New London/129, Windham/55, Litchfield/36, Middlesex/6 and Tolland/1 (see chart next page).

The pie below reflects the percentage of male (345) and female (541) cats that were vaccinated and sterilized.



IV. BREED PROFILE:

Of the 4,595 total pets handled by the program (pound, low-income and feral cats) in 2011, the mix breed was once again the primary dog type with 1,329 dogs/999 sterilized (75 %). The Pit Bull/Pit Bull mix was second with 693 adoptions/454 sterilized (66%). The top five purebreds are as follows: Chihuahua 135/101 sterilized (75%), Beagle 78/55 sterilized (71%), Shih Tzu 65/47 sterilized (72%), Labrador Retriever 64/49 sterilized (77%) and German Shepherd 41/25 sterilized (61%).

Cat adoptions totaled 1604 with 1035 sterilized (65%). The domestic short hair lead the way with 1,288/819 sterilized (64%). The domestic medium hair was second with 154/109 sterilized (71%) and the domestic long hair third with 143/89 sterilized (62%). A few pedigree cats such as Himalayans, Manx, Persians and Siamese were also included in the total.

V. PARTICIPATING PRACTICES:

The program provides for certification of Connecticut Veterinary Practices wishing to perform vaccination/sterilization benefits for the state. Practices wishing to participate need to complete program application form APCP-02, SP-26 NB and the federal Request for Taxpayer ID Number form W-9. Once certified, practices will receive the standard voucher amount as previously outlined in this report. Veterinarians may also charge adopters for post-surgical complications and a fee differential, which is the amount between the voucher and the hospital's normal spay/neuter fee. For FY 2011, 228 practices were certified to participate encompassing 533 individual veterinarians.

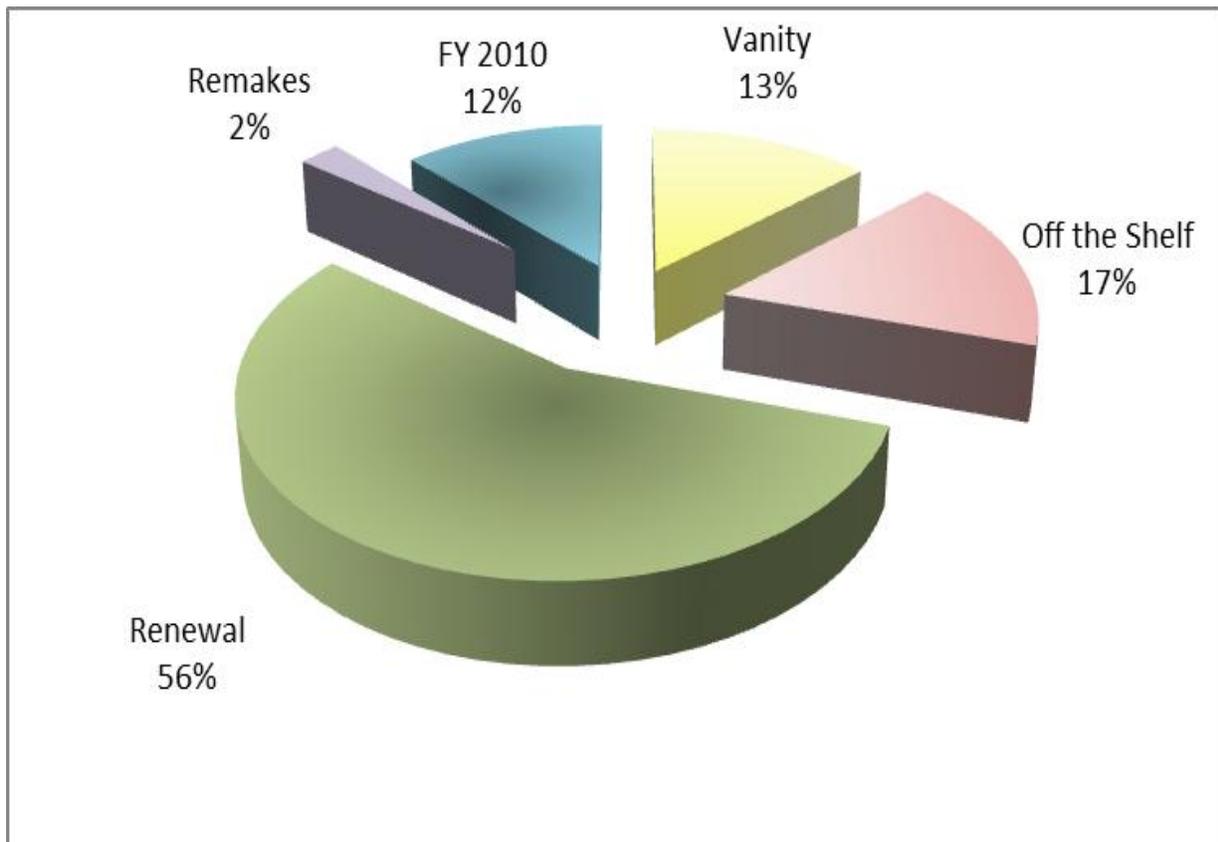
VI. CARING FOR PETS COMMEMORATIVE LICENSE PLATE:

Plate Categories

The "caring for pets" commemorative license plate is available through the Department of Motor Vehicles in three different categories. An off-the-shelf plate with random numbers/letters combination is sold for \$50 (APCP receives \$35). Next is a transfer of a current marker plate for \$70 (APCP receives \$55). The third choice is a new vanity plate for \$135 (APCP receives \$55). Along with the regular renewal fees, there is an additional \$15 fee for each renewal of which \$10 is deposited into the program's dedicated account. Plate applications are located at all DMV outlets, veterinary practices, municipal pounds, town halls, pet and grooming shops, boarding kennels, auto dealerships and can be ordered over the phone by calling the DMV at 1-800-842-8222 or the APCP at 1-860-713-2507. Plates can also be ordered on line as well by going to the DMV web site at **DMVCT.ORG**. The web address allows the public to view the dog/cat design and also provides citizens the ability to type in available acronyms for those seeking vanity plate combinations. The plate design was created in 1998 and donated by local Connecticut artists Mark Maglio of Plainville and Kathy Goff of Avon. A mix breed dog was selected for the canine choice because the majority of pound dogs adopted are mix breeds. The cat choice is a domestic shorthair, which makes up the majority of cats seen in the program.

“CARING FOR PETS” PLATE REPORT

For FY 2011, \$44,110 was deposited into the program’s dedicated account from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Of the 377 plates sold, 210 (\$7,350) were the off the shelf type, 25 (\$1,115) remakes, 142 (\$5,810) vanities and \$24,575 was received from 2,459 biennial renewal fees. Also \$5,260 was carried over from FY 2010. More than \$500,000 has been deposited into the APCP account since the unveiling of the plate in 1998. The “caring for pets” plate has maintained its popularity with Connecticut pet lovers and is still second in sales to **only** the Long Island Sound plate.



VII. APCP ON THE WEB

Information about the program, regulations, certification applications for veterinary practices, feral cat grant and low-income applications and even information about ordering a new “caring for pets” commemorative license plate can all be located by going to:

ct.gov/apcp

The public can also submit questions to the APCP 24/7 by going to the program’s new generic e-address agr.apcp@ct.gov. Staff will review the content of questions and respond within one business day.

VIII. STANDARD DOG LICENSE APPLICATION

In the Spring of 2007, the artwork of New Haven second grader Kylee Brown was selected to act as the symbol for the new generic dog license application. More than 500,000 applications have been distributed statewide in an attempt to increase the number of dog tags sold by making licensing easy and convenient for the public. All dogs over six months of age must be licensed and require a current rabies vaccination prior to licensing. Current fees are \$19.00 for any unsterilized dog and \$8.00 for those that are altered. The main source of APCP income is from a surcharge on all dog licenses. More than 70% of the program’s income comes from the sale of dog licenses.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS:

After eighteen years of operation, the Animal Population Control Program (APCP) continues to see a reduction in the number of dogs and cats impounded at municipal facilities. However, an expansion of benefits to the low-income component of the program is needed. Presently, up to 10% of APCP income is set aside for the low-income program, but that percentage needs to be increased.

Also, the payment to participating veterinarians for pre-surgical immunizations has not increased since the implementation of the APCP in 1995, while during the same period; the cost of animal vaccines has significantly increased. Therefore, we recommend that the amount of reimbursement to participating veterinarians for pre-surgical vaccinations be increased by 100% (\$10 to \$20) coincident with a spaying or neutering operation.

We also recommend that a new payment be made to participating veterinarians for a heartworm test for dogs. This is required as an essential component of the pre-surgical protocol in most veterinary practices because dogs with heartworm disease present a high anesthetic and surgical risk. It appears that the added cost of this test, not covered by the program, has been a deterrent to some low-income pet owners. The above recommendations are based on what the Department views as the changing needs of the state’s pet population and structuring of the APCP to improve the delivery of its services and benefits to meet those needs.

ATTACHMENT A:

CHAPTER 436A

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Sec.22-380e – Sec. 22-380m

CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES
Chapter 436a
Animal Population Control Program

Sec. 22-380e. Definitions. As used in sections 22-380e to 22-380m, inclusive:

- (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture;
- (2) "Program" means the animal population control program;
- (3) "Account" means the animal population control account;
- (4) "Participating veterinarian" means any veterinarian who has been certified to participate in the program by the commissioner;
- (5) "Pound" means any state or municipal facility where impounded, quarantined or stray dogs and cats are kept or any veterinary hospital or commercial kennel where such dogs or cats are kept by order of a municipality;
- (6) "Eligible owner" means a person who has purchased or adopted a dog or cat from a pound and who is a resident of this state;
- (7) "Medically unfit" means (A) unsuitable for a surgical procedure due to any medical condition that may place a dog or cat at life-threatening risk if a surgical procedure is performed on such animal, as determined by a participating veterinarian, or (B) unsuitable for sterilization due to insufficiency in age, as determined by a participating veterinarian, of a dog or cat under the age of six months;
- (8) "Neuter" means the surgical procedure of castration on a male dog or cat;
- (9) "Spay" means the surgical procedure of ovariohysterectomy on a female dog or cat;
- (10) "Voucher" means a nontransferable document provided by the commissioner and issued by a pound to an eligible owner authorizing payment of a predetermined amount from the animal population control account to a participating veterinarian;
- (11) "Feral cat" means a cat of the species *Felis catus* that is unowned, that exists in a wild or untamed state or has returned to an untamed state from domestication and whose behavior is suggestive of a wild animal; and
- (12) "Low-income person" means a recipient of or a person eligible for one of the following public assistance programs:
 - (A) The supplemental nutrition assistance program authorized by Title XIII of the federal Food and Agriculture Act of 1977, 7 USC 2011 et seq.;
 - (B) The federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act authorized by 42 USC 601 et seq.;
 - (C) The Medicaid program authorized by Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act;
 - (D) The HUSKY Plan Part A;
 - (E) The medical assistance or cash assistance components of the state-administered general assistance program;
 - (F) The state supplement program; or
 - (G) Any other public assistance program that the commissioner determines to qualify a person as a low-income person.

Sec. 22-380f. Payment for adoption of unspayed or unneutered dog or cat. Connecticut Humane Society exemption. Report. Termination of exemption. (a) No pound shall sell or give away any unspayed or unneutered dog or cat to any person unless such pound receives forty-five dollars from the person buying or adopting such dog or cat. Funds received pursuant to this section shall be paid quarterly by the municipality into the animal population control account established under section 22-380g. At the time of receipt of such payment, the pound shall provide a voucher, for the purpose of sterilization and vaccination benefits, as provided in section 22-380i, to the person buying or adopting such dog or cat. Such voucher shall be on a form provided by the commissioner and signed by the eligible owner. Such voucher shall become void after sixty days from the date of adoption unless a participating veterinarian certifies that the dog or cat is medically unfit for surgery. Such certification shall be on a form provided by the commissioner and specify a date by which such dog or cat may be fit for sterilization. If the surgery is performed more than thirty days after such specified date, the voucher shall become void. In the case of a dog or cat that has been previously sterilized or is permanently medically unfit for sterilization, as determined by a participating veterinarian, the voucher shall be void and the eligible owner may apply to the commissioner for a refund in the amount of forty-five dollars.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, no pound shall receive forty-five dollars from the Connecticut Humane Society for any unsterilized cat or dog that is given by such pound to the Connecticut Humane Society, provided such cat or dog is sterilized prior to the adoption of such animal from the Connecticut Humane Society. Such sterilization shall not be required if a licensed veterinarian certifies, in writing, that the animal is medically unfit for sterilization surgery.

(c) The Connecticut Humane Society shall submit a biannual report to the Commissioner of Agriculture that shall include, but not be limited to, the municipal facility from which any animal described in subsection (b) of this section was taken, the impound number of such animal, the species and gender of such animal, the date that the Connecticut Humane Society received the animal and the date of sterilization for such animal.

(d) Upon a finding that the Connecticut Humane Society has failed to comply with any provision of subsection (b) or (c) of this section, the Commissioner of Agriculture may terminate the Connecticut Humane Society's exemption from the payment of the forty-five-dollar fee required pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 22-380g. Animal population control account. Distribution of forms. Programs for vaccination and sterilization of cats and dogs. Funds. Suspension of programs. (a) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall (1) establish an animal population control program to provide for spaying and neutering services to eligible owners of dogs and cats, (2) establish an account to be known as the "animal population control account" that may contain any moneys required by

law to be deposited in the account and any balance remaining in said account at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward in said account for the fiscal year next succeeding, (3) create a standard dog licensing form and distribute said form to veterinarians or the operators of pet shops, pet grooming facilities, municipal pounds or dog training facilities who voluntarily agree to make such forms available for the convenience of dog owners, (4) establish a program to assist registered nonprofit rescue groups with the sterilization and vaccination of feral cats, and (5) establish a program to sterilize and vaccinate dogs and cats owned by a low-income person.

(b) Not more than ten per cent of the funds deposited in the animal population control account in accordance with subsection (f) of section 14-21h, subsection (a) of section 22-338, section 22-380f and section 22-380l shall be used for the sterilization and vaccination of feral cats program in accordance with subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Not more than ten per cent of the funds deposited in the animal population control account in accordance with subsection (f) of section 14-21h, subsection (a) of section 22-338, section 22-380f and section 22-380l shall be used for the sterilization and vaccination of dogs and cats owned by a low-income person pursuant to the program established under subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of this section.

(d) The commissioner may solicit and accept funds from any public or private source of help to carry out the goals of the programs established under subsection (a) of this section, including, but not limited to, the sterilization of feral cats as provided in section 22-339d. A donor may earmark funds for any or all of such programs.

(e) Any revenue collected pursuant to the provisions of sections 22-380f and 22-380l shall be deposited in the animal population control account. All money in the account shall be used by the commissioner exclusively for the implementation and promotion of the program and for the costs associated with the administration of the program provided not more than two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars may be expended for administrative costs per year.

(f) The commissioner may suspend any or all of the programs at any time that the amount of money available in the account is less than three hundred thousand dollars. The commissioner may reinstate any of the suspended programs when such amount exceeds three hundred thousand dollars.

Sec. 22-380h. Participating veterinarians. Requirements. (a) Any veterinarian licensed pursuant to section 20-199 may file with the commissioner, on forms provided by the commissioner, an application to become a participating veterinarian in the program.

(b) In order to be certified by the commissioner as a participating veterinarian, the veterinarian shall: (1) Perform all spay and neuter surgical procedures in a veterinary hospital facility or mobile clinic equipped for such procedures located in this state that meets the standards set forth in regulations adopted by the commissioner, as provided in section 20-196; (2) make all records

pertaining to care provided, work done and fees received for or in connection with the program available for inspection by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee; (3) maintain records in accordance with regulations adopted under section 19a-14; and (4) hold a currently valid license to practice veterinary medicine in this state issued by the Department of Public Health.

(c) Any licensed veterinarian of this state may be certified by the commissioner as a participating veterinarian unless the commissioner disqualifies such veterinarian. The commissioner may disqualify a veterinarian if such veterinarian has been found in violation of any provision of sections 22-380e to 22-380m, inclusive, or any laws relating to the practice of veterinary medicine. Any veterinarian disqualified or otherwise denied participation in the program may appeal, within ten days of receipt of a notice of such disqualification or denial, to the commissioner who shall hold a hearing to consider such appeal, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54.

(d) Complaints received by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee regarding services provided by participating veterinarians shall be referred to the Board of Veterinary Medicine of the Department of Public Health.

Sec. 22-380i. Payments to participating veterinarians for sterilizations and vaccinations performed. (a) The program established under section 22-380g shall provide for payment to any participating veterinarian of an amount equivalent to the voucher issued pursuant to section 22-380f for each animal sterilization and vaccinations, coincident with sterilization, performed by such veterinarian upon a dog or cat owned by an eligible owner. For a sterilization procedure, such voucher shall be in the amount of one hundred twenty dollars for a female dog, one hundred dollars for a male dog, seventy dollars for a female cat and fifty dollars for a male cat. In the case of a sterilization fee exceeding the amount of the voucher, the eligible owner shall pay the participating veterinarian the difference between such fee and the amount of the voucher. Such voucher shall be in the amount of twenty dollars, in addition to the amount designated for sterilization, for vaccinations coincident with the sterilization of a dog or cat owned by an eligible owner.

(b) The program established under section 22-380g shall further provide for a payment to any participating veterinarian for the pre-surgical immunization of dogs against rabies, distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis and parvovirus, or the pre-surgical immunization of cats against rabies, feline panleukopenia, calici, pneumonitis and rhinotracheitis, as the case may be, on animals not previously immunized. The payment shall be for no more than ten dollars for each immunization procedure and, in any case, not more than twenty dollars for one animal. Such veterinarian shall be paid by the commissioner upon the submission of a voucher, to be provided by the commissioner and signed by the veterinarian performing such operation and by the owner, stating that the animal has been immunized coincident with a spaying or neutering operation under the program.

(c) The participating veterinarian shall be paid by the commissioner for sterilization and coincident vaccinations of a dog or cat owned by an eligible owner upon submission of the voucher issued pursuant to section 22-380f and signed by such veterinarian.

Sec. 22-380j. Procedure for abandonment of dogs or cats in program. In the event that any person who submits any cat or dog for spaying or neutering to a participating veterinarian fails to retrieve such cat or dog within the time recommended by such participating veterinarian, such veterinarian shall transfer custody of such dog or cat to a state animal control officer, regional animal control officer or a municipal animal control officer, as defined in section 22-327. No participating veterinarian who has performed services provided for in sections 22-380e to 22-380m, inclusive, shall be denied payment from the account due to any failure of an owner of a dog or cat to retrieve such dog or cat.

Sec. 22-380k. Report re operation of program. Not later than one year following the inception of the animal population control program, established pursuant to sections 22-380e to 22-380m, inclusive, and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment setting forth a complete operating and financial statement regarding the operation of said program. The commissioner shall include in the report an evaluation of the effectiveness of said program and any recommendations for statutory or regulatory changes he deems appropriate.

Sec. 22-380l. Surcharge on licensure of unspayed or unneutered dogs. For each license issued pursuant to section 22-338 for an unspayed or unneutered dog, the town clerk shall collect a surcharge of six dollars which shall be deposited by such clerk into the animal population control account established pursuant to section 22-380g.

Sec. 22-380m. Regulations. The commissioner may adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of sections 22-380e to 22-380m, inclusive.