



Approximately 4,000,000 Pets are Euthanized in United States Shelters Each Year

This approximation is determined by first estimating the number of pets euthanized in California's shelters each year, then extrapolating to the entire country.

Part 1: Pets euthanized in California annually

According to California Department of Public Health, Veterinary Public Health Section (CDPH / VPHS), "Rabies Control Activities Reporting by Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ), California, 1995-2007":

Statistic*	Number
Total Dogs and cats euthanized in CA public shelters in 2007	391,457
Cats euthanized in CA public shelters in 2007 (62.6%)	240,726
Dogs euthanized in CA public shelters in 2007 (37.4%)	150,729

These numbers show a slight *increase* over the 2006 numbers. Preliminary data from the CDPH / VPHS for 2008 again shows an *increase* over the 2007 numbers.

The **391,457** number is low for two reasons:

1. Shelters have a demonstrated tendency to under report euthanasia or numbers in general. In many jurisdictions, only a portion of shelters report their numbers, however we treat those numbers as a representation of the full jurisdiction in our extrapolation.
2. This public shelter number does not include any of the private shelters in the state.

Based on these two reasons, it may be assumed that a minimum of **500,000** pets are euthanized in California shelters each year.

Part 2: Extrapolating to the United States

According to the US Census Bureau at www.census.gov, in 2008 California had approximately 12.1 % of the US Population (304,059,724 U.S. / 36,756,666 California). Thus, *approximately* **4,132,231** pets (500,000 / 12.1%) are euthanized in US shelters annually. The exact number cannot be known as most states do not require shelter euthanasia reporting in the same way that California does.

Another way to estimate the number of animals euthanized in the United States:

Andrew N. Rowan Ph.D., Executive Vice President of The HSUS, provides a rough estimation method in his March 11, 2009 article *Animal Sheltering Trends in the U.S.* Dr. Rowan writes: "On average, communities in the United States... euthanize about 12.5 animals per 1,000 people".

At this euthanasia rate, the United States in 2008 euthanized **3,800,746** pets (based on a 304,059,724 U.S. population).

* According to the CDHS / VPHS, based on reports received in 2007, 50 out of 61 possible jurisdictions reported that 320,866 dogs and cats were euthanized in CA shelters. Extrapolating 50/61 = 81.9% reporting = approximately 391,457 pets euthanized in 2007. Many of these 50 jurisdictions reported for only a portion of their shelters, although their numbers are treated as complete in this calculation.