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Fat Cats & Dead Dogs

Over 600,000 cats and dogs are euthanized annually, despite national nonprofits raising \$630 million



Executive Summary

In 2024, more than 600,000 cats and dogs were euthanized in pet shelters in the United States. This number is no outlier. Shelter euthanasia totals have been climbing since 2020, increasing by 43 percent since that year. Homeless pets in America are facing a crisis.

What does this crisis look like in real terms?



More than one shelter cat or dog is killed every minute of every day.



The number of stray cats and dogs killed in 2024 could fill Madison Square Garden 30 times.



The number of shelter cats and dogs killed in 2024 was larger than the population of Baltimore.

Many organizations have claimed to help cats and dogs, and have raised huge amounts of money to do so. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Humane World for Animals (HWA) – formerly known as the Humane Society of the United States – and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) are three of America’s largest animal charities and raise a combined total of over \$630 million each year.

The three organizations have a total of \$1.1 billion in assets, but do relatively little to aid cats and dogs facing the euthanasia crisis. Despite their names, HWA is not affiliated with local humane societies across the country, and the ASPCA is not affiliated with local societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals. HWA does not run a single pet shelter. The ASPCA operates a lone adoption center in New York City.

Meanwhile, PETA directly contributes to the euthanasia crisis rather than helping fix it. PETA operates a single “shelter” in Virginia that killed two-thirds of its cats and dogs in 2024—one of the highest kill rates in the state.

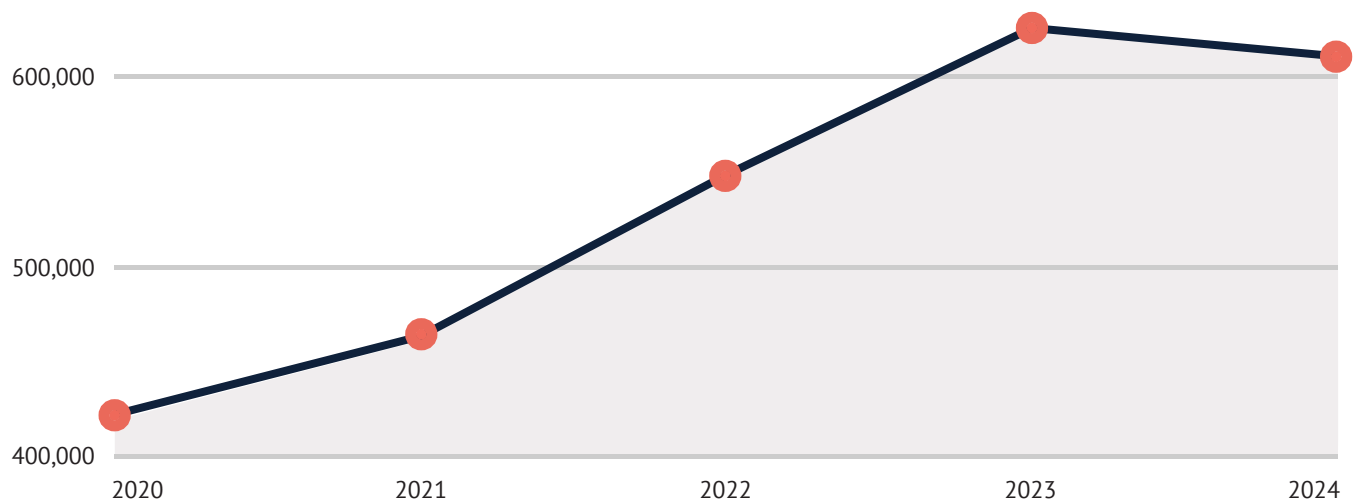
These groups also make little effort to direct their large asset stockpiles to shelters on the front line. Both HWA and the ASPCA give approximately 1 percent of their budgets to local pet shelters in the form of financial grants. PETA granted money to just a single shelter, according to its most recently available tax return.

Fast Fact: Shelter euthanasia totals have been climbing since 2020, and have increased by 43 percent since that year.

Sheltering an animal costs an estimated \$950 per year. The annual revenue raised by these three leading animal rights organizations is enough to save every single cat and dog that was put down last year.

The Euthanasia Crisis is a Matter of Life and Death

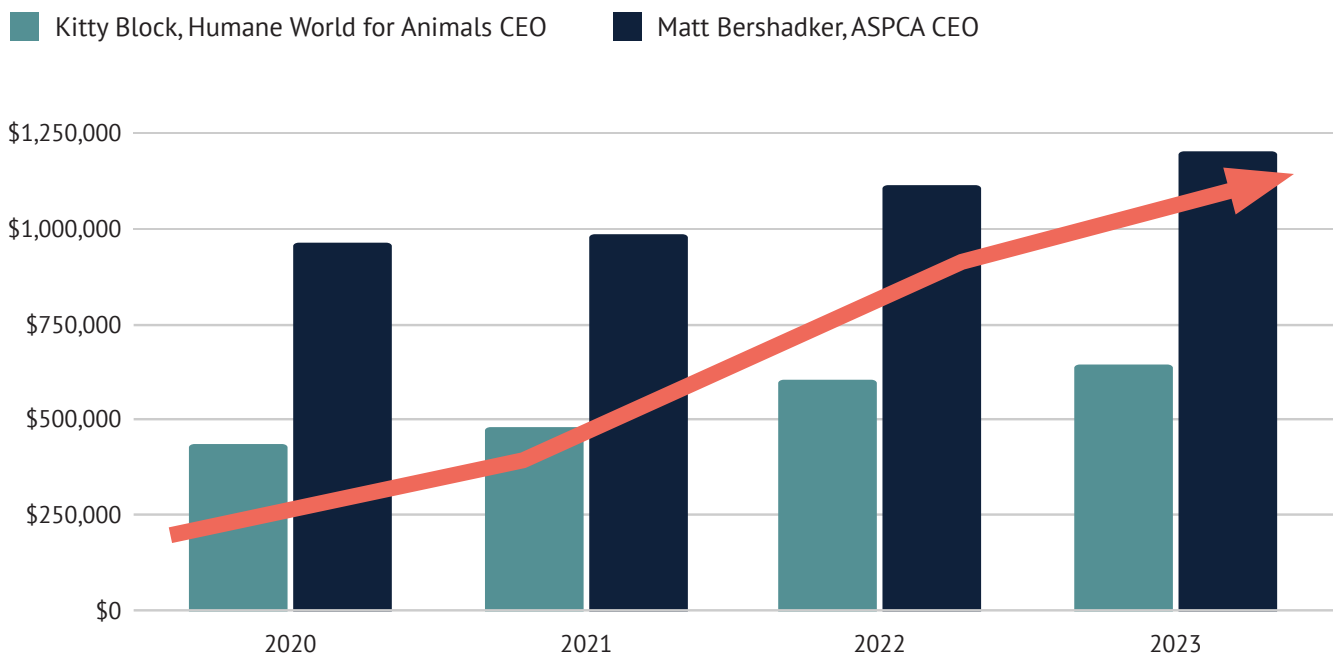
Cats and Dogs Euthanized, 2020-2024



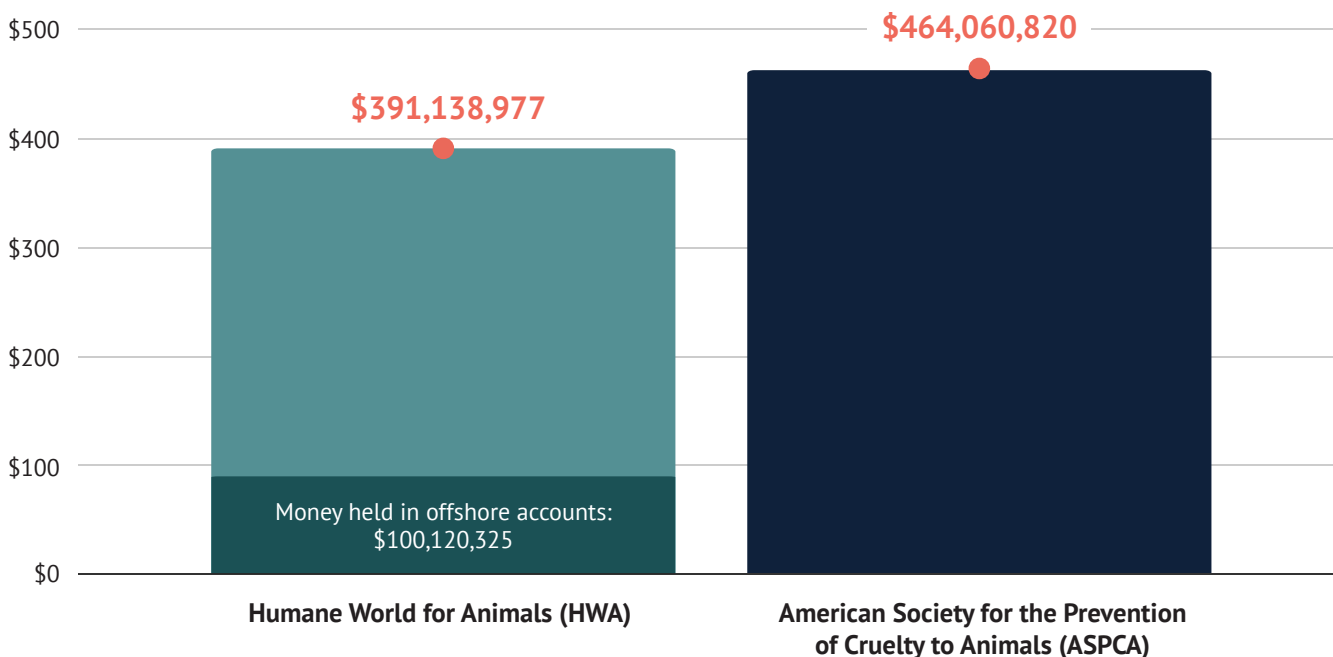
Sad Fact: 2.66 million cats and dogs have been euthanized in shelters since 2020.

What Have Animal Rights Activists Been Doing Instead?

Compensation for the CEOs of the ASPCA and HWA Over Time



Investment Portfolios for HWA and the ASPCA in 2023 (in millions)



Dogs and Cats Killed by PETA Since 2020

Year	Received	Transferred	Adopted		Killed	
2024	3,259	463	45	1.38%	2,174	66.71%
2023	3,136	621	38	1.2%	2,471	78.8%
2022	2,828	663	58	2.10%	2,092	74.0%
2021	2,355	623	27	1.1%	1,699	71.1%
2020	2,595	836	33	1.2%	1,719	66.2%

“In the end, I think it would be lovely if we stopped this whole notion of pets altogether.”

INGRID NEWKIRK, FOUNDER AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF PETA

Methodology and Sourcing

Euthanization totals are taken from Shelter Animals Count, a nonprofit that works to publish a comprehensive, data-driven profile of the state of animal sheltering in the United States. Information about salaries, assets, investment portfolios, and annual grants to pet shelters are taken from the 2023 tax returns of the ASPCA, HWA, and PETA. Information on the number of cats and dogs euthanized by PETA's animal shelter is taken from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which publishes yearly statistics from pet shelters in the state. Estimates for the average cost of housing a shelter animal for one year are taken from analysis done by the Dakin Humane Society.