

EUTHANASIA POLICY

The SPCA lives for the day when healthy animals are no longer euthanised owing to the lack of suitable homes. However, as a result of the current overpopulation of domestic animals caused by indiscriminate breeding, the dumping of unwanted animals, irresponsible guardianship of companion animals, lack of sterilisation and inadequate enforcement of legislation, the SPCA accepts with great reluctance that euthanasia is necessary. The reality is that there are more unwanted animals in South Africa, than there are good, quality homes which places SPCAs in an incredibly difficult position.

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Euthanasia is a humane release for many suffering, injured, traumatised, sick or homeless animals. However, healthy animals may also require euthanasia due to behavioural reasons, such as where they are very aggressive, and where the animal would have to endure long-term suffering through the deprivation of basic needs in incarceration. The long-term housing of individual animals that does not cater to their physical, physiological and psychological needs is not an acceptable alternative.

It is inhumane to confine animals for long periods. The result of long term confinement is stress and this may lead to self-injury/harm, or behavioural problems which may never be overcome: - rendering the animal even less likely to be adopted or to settle in a home. Not to mention, the psychological and emotional health of an animal is as important as their physical health. The SPCA believes that unwanted companion animals deserve a dignified, painless death rather than risk suffering resulting from animal cruelty such as malnutrition, disease, trauma, and physical abuse - all commonly associated with unwanted or neglected animals.

In conclusion, the SPCA is opposed to the euthanasia of fit and healthy animals but accepts the reality that euthanasia is necessary. The SPCA treats each case with the greatest care and compassion, realising that there are fates far worse than death.