

CF Animal Welfare

# Ordinance targets pet overbreeding

p.1

By LANE WALLACE  
STAFF WRITER

RP  
JUN 7 1993

A "pet overpopulation" ordinance that would require permits for breeders and limit giveaways of animals is being proposed by the Santa Cruz County SPCA.

The ordinance is aimed at reducing the number of stray pets destroyed, said SPCA Education Director Marilee Geyer. "We destroyed 4,334 dogs and cats last year. That's 4,334 too many," she said.

Geyer said a similar ordinance in King County, Wash, led to a 30 percent reduction in the number of pets destroyed.

The SPCA sent the ordinance to county supervisors and asked them to meet with representatives of the cities to consider a uniform law for the county. Supervisors will consider the request tomorrow morning.

The proposed ordinance calls for:

- Mandatory spaying and neutering of cats and dogs by the age of six months, except for those kept for breeding.

- Breeders who meet a set of rules would pay a fee of \$15 to \$25 a year. Those include providing immunizations and a requirement that offspring of the breeders be spayed and neutered, unless the offspring is to be used for breeding.

- Breeders who don't conform to the above rules would pay a higher fee; the SPCA is suggesting \$100 to \$150 a year.

- Animals could not be given away at public places such as flea markets and shopping centers.

Geyer said the ordinance would be accompanied by an education campaign urging people to spay and neuter their animals.

Ray Belgard, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, said this morning he supports the idea of an ordinance, but wants to study the SPCA proposal further before making a specific endorsement.

"I get a ton of cards" about stray-pet issues, Belgard said.