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New Grant Helps Animal Shelters Keep Pets Healthy

New grant from the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and Wysiwash funds projects to improve the health of pets at animal shelters.

March 14, 2017 – Wysiwash and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians just announced the first winners of the Wysiwash Wellness Grant: Niagara County SPCA and Helping Animals of Warren County. Designed to empower animal shelters to take proactive moves to prevent disease, the Wysiwash Wellness Grant is partnership between the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and Wysiwash.

The first two projects funded by the grant both focus on holding areas for animals who show signs of illness. Aside from preventing disease by keeping affected animals away from healthy animals, a separate holding area allows shelter staff to better monitor sick animals.

For the Niagara SPCA, the Wysiwash Wellness Grant will allow them to make improvements to an existing cat holding room. Upper respiratory infections (URIs) are very common in cats brought to animal shelters, and recent studies indicate that having a larger enclosure area allows for faster healing time. With these studies in mind, Niagara County SPCA will install inner doors that allow cats to move between two cages. This will effectively double each cat's living area, decreasing stress, and reducing healing time for ill cats.

Thanks to the Wysiwash Wellness Grant, Helping Animals of Warren County will be able to finish work on a separate holding area for sick animals. Currently, holding room is almost complete, but it still lacks electricity and insulation. Helping Animals of Warren County will use the grant to fund these key elements. They expect the new holding room to significantly cut the rate of transmitted disease within the first year.

“The Association of Shelter Veterinarians received an outstanding number of applicants for the Wysiwash Wellness Grant. Selection of this year's recipients was a difficult process, as the need for each shelter was so real and their projects were all well conceived. In the end, our committee selected this year's grant recipients based on impact to the well-being to the animals they serve,” said Lesa Staubus, ASV board member and chair of the committee that evaluated the grants.

“Animal care workers are an amazingly creative, dedicated bunch. In our years working in the animal care field, we've met so many dedicated, creative individuals making huge improvements in the health and wellness of animals in their community. We've wanted to start a grant to help give back to the animal care community,” said Wysiwash co-founder, Ken Hungerford. “We're very pleased that this grant program is now a reality, and congratulate Warren and Niagara counties.”

For animal shelters, preventing disease is incredibly important, but also difficult due to the large number of animals living together. The Wysiwash Wellness Grant gives two animal shelters funds to take on new initiatives to prevent the spread of illness within their animal population. The grant recipients were chosen by a committee of ASV veterinarians, who evaluated the applications from across the United States.

About the Association of Shelter Veterinarians: The mission of the ASV is to advance and support the practice of shelter medicine in order to improve community animal health and well-being. Founded in 2001, the ASV is the professional organization for shelter veterinarians and is now comprised of nearly 1,000 members from around the globe including 28 student chapters. The ASV has spearheaded several nationwide task forces including the Shelter Standards Task Force and the Veterinary Task Force to Advance Spay Neuter. <http://www.shelternet.org/>

About Wysiwash: Wysiwash was founded by Ken Hungerford and Duncan Dowling on the belief that Wysiwash's innovative disinfecting system could save the lives of humans and animals. Ken was acutely aware of the challenges that animal shelters faced from watching his mother work tirelessly with local animal groups to rescue thousands of dogs.

After using a prototype of Wysiwash in Ken's dog training facilities, Ken and Duncan saw how revolutionary this disinfectant system was both in terms of effectiveness and ease of use. The two partnered to buy the patent. Improving on the work of Dr. Brent Hoadley, Duncan and Ken developed the current Wysiwash system, which is now used by kennels, food processing facilities, schools and maintenance professionals throughout the world.

www.wysiwash.com