



Association of Shelter Veterinarians

Euthanasia of Shelter Animals

Last reviewed: July 2014

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) believes that animals selected for euthanasia should be provided with a humane and dignified death by personnel who have received appropriate training from a veterinarian or through a duly authorized program.

The method of euthanasia should be chosen based on the individual animal and circumstances. In most cases, euthanasia should be achieved with an intravenous or intraperitoneal injection of sodium pentobarbital or an equivalent euthanasia solution. Intracardiac injections may only be performed on anesthetized or unconscious animals. The ASV believes that the use of carbon monoxide for individual or mass companion animal euthanasia in shelters is unacceptable due to significant humane, operational and safety concerns.

Resources

American Association of Zoo Veterinarians. (2006) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Non-Domestic Animals. Ed. Baer, CK. AAZV:Lawrence.

AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition. Available online at:
<https://www.avma.org/kb/policies/documents/euthanasia.pdf>

The Humane Society of the United States. (2013) Euthanasia Reference Manual. Available online at:
<http://www.animalsheltering.org/resources/all-topics/euthanasia/euthanasia-reference-manual.pdf>