



**Press Release** Issued July 20<sup>th</sup> 2009.  
National Desexing Month runs throughout the month of August 2009

## **“Cats and dogs activate heat-seeking missiles”**

SUMMER is approaching and with it will come thousands of accidental and unwanted litters of kittens and puppies. The warmer weather marks the beginning of the breeding season; female pets on heat - male pets in heat-seeking mode.

August is National Desexing Month and National Desexing Network program manager Tracey Skeet hopes the month-long campaign will encourage pet owners to desex their cats and dogs before they breed. Vets, councils and animal welfare groups nationwide have been invited to join in the awareness month by offering incentives such as discount desexing prices, two-for-one deals, prizes, microchipping specials and so on. The National Desexing Network also has \$3000 worth of Dirty Dog Eyewear to be won by lucky pet owners having their pets desexed through participating vets.

Ms Skeet said NDM was a vital campaign as already in Australia too many pets were losing their lives simply because there were not enough homes.

“Every hour about 23 cats and dogs are put to sleep in shelters and pounds around the country simply because people fail to desex their pets before they breed,” Ms Skeet said.

“It is not so hard to find homes for cute puppies and kittens, an innocent baby is hard to turn away, but take a look around your local shelters and pounds - the eyes looking back at you are often not much older.”

She said one of the dangers for dogs and cats which were continually breeding was they can easily become nutritionally exhausted. Pregnancy is taxing on the body at the best of times, yet some pets are left undesexed to have litter after litter, seemingly without any thought for their physical wellbeing or quality of life.

“What a lot of people don’t realise is that cats can fall pregnant again within days of giving birth,” she said.

“The belief about pets needing to have a litter before they are desexed is just an old wives’ tale.

“Shelters, pounds and rescue groups around the country are already struggling to cope with the huge number of abandoned and unwanted companion animals.

“The massive influx of accidental and unwanted litters over the breeding season adds to this pressure.

“As a result, it’s often older cats and dogs who end up paying with their lives because there are simply not enough resources to cope.”

Ms Skeet also said it was just as important to desex male animals as they can impregnate hundreds of females each year; producing thousands more puppies or kittens for whom there are no homes.

The advantages of desexing are clear. Everyone is a winner when pets are desexed; hormones can cause much anxiety and stress for both male and female companion animals, and can often be the cause of uncharacteristic and unwanted behaviours. Pets are less likely to roam and get into trouble, shelters, pounds and rescuers have less unwanted animals to cope with and more time and resources to put into saving lives.

For more information including participating vets and competition details visit [www.ndn.org.au](http://www.ndn.org.au) and help end pet overpopulation.

**For more information or an interview call Tracey Skeet, NDN Program Manager, on (07) 5509 9001 or e-mail [info@ndn.org.au](mailto:info@ndn.org.au)**