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## The Difference between Euthanasia and Killing

Millions of cats die in U.S. animal control pounds and shelters every year. The pounds and shelters say these animals are “euthanized.” But they’re not—they are killed. An animal is only euthanized when she is terminally ill or untreatably injured.

*Euthanasia n. The act or practice of ending the life of an individual suffering from a terminal illness or an incurable condition, as by lethal injection or the suspension of extraordinary medical treatment. The American Heritage Dictionary*

Genuine euthanasia is a medical decision and is always done in an individual animal's best interest. It can be an important part of end-of-life care. But most animals who die in pounds and shelters are killed for very different reasons. Facilities kill animals to make room for new ones, to manage disease, or to compensate for inadequate staff or funding. Decisions to kill reflect the operating interests of facilities, not the best interests of animals.

Using the word “euthanasia” masks what really happens to cats in pounds and shelters—they are killed.

### Cat Fatalities

#### Highlights

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