

## ASPCA: Pets abandoned amid foreclosures

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says U.S. residents losing their homes to foreclosures routinely leave their pets behind.

ASPCA Executive Vice President Stephen Zawistowski the foreclosure wave facing parts of the nation has resulted in a growing number of abandoned pets finding their way into animal shelters, The Washington Times said Friday.

"They'll leave the microwave and leave the pets, too," Zawistowski said of those abandoning foreclosed homes.

The ASPCA official said one in every 117 U.S. homeowners is facing foreclosure during the ongoing economic crisis. That figure comes as 63 percent of U.S. homes have at least one pet, Zawistowski added.

Laura Rizer, community-outreach director for an animal shelter in Loudoun County, Va., told the Times her site has seen an increase in abandoned pets and animal assistance requests.

"The reasons these pets are coming are not behavioral," Rizer said. "We have also seen a 30 percent rise in the number of people asking for assistance from our (Companion Animal Resource Effort) program, which partners with the Department of Family Services to provide pet items to families with financial need."

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