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Pet owners across Michigan will now know where to go with the launch of SPAY MICHIGAN, the first statewide pet spay and neuter hotline.

By calling 888-5SPAY-HELP toll free, Michigan pet owners will get information from a live operator about affordable spay and neuter services throughout the state, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

SPAY MICHIGAN is a program of All About Animals Rescue, a Warren, Michigan nonprofit organization that adopts out dogs and cats, and sponsors spay/neuter and vaccination clinics. The group's founder and president Amber Sitko says that the hotline is a much-needed resource as the state's poor economic conditions make it difficult for many pet owners to afford sterilization and as more pets are being abandoned at shelters.

The goal of SPAY MICHIGAN is to help reduce the number of homeless and unwanted dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits and other pets, of which thousands are euthanized in Michigan shelters each year.

The affordable spay and neuter services listed with SPAY MICHIGAN are for people who genuinely cannot afford the full, going rate for spay and neuter of their pets or of strays that they may be feeding, which can amount to \$200 or more per pet. Services are being provided by rescue organizations, special programs and shelters throughout Michigan that are able to offer reduced rates. SPAY MICHIGAN is also seeking veterinarians to participate in a voucher program in which pet owners can receive discounted services.