The first full week in May (this year, May 6-12) is generally observed as "Be Kind to Animals" Week, and it gives humane societies and animal control agencies an opportunity to reach the public with important messages.

Using press releases, posters, public service announcements and other methods, you can remind your community of these important points:

- Being kind to your pets includes having them properly licensed and under control at all times to prevent their being lost or injured by vehicles. It means protecting your pet from disease with current and proper inoculations.
- Be kind to your neighbors by keeping your pet from being a neighborhood nuisance.
- Spring animal births remind us of the need to control the pet population -- have your pet sterilized!
- Animal lovers in the community can be of help to the local humane society at this busy time of year by sending a check or donating cat and dog food, bedding supplies and other items.
- The local animal shelter has a variety of attractive and healthy animals for qualified persons interested in adopting pets.

We've emphasized the importance of public education many times in these pages. When a public event comes along that has a direct relation to animal sheltering and control, it is in your best interests to take the opportunity to educate people.

Let your community know that being kind to animals doesn't end with giving the neighbor's dog a pat on the head -- it means everyone in the community doing his or her part in controlling the dog and cat population and providing all animals with responsible homes.

Humaneness isn't just sentimentality -- sometimes it's plain common sense. ■