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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **78 Rats Living Inside Van Now Safe at San Diego Humane Society**

*Escondido Police tow van full of rats inside to SDHS Escondido Campus for rescue and care*

**ESCONDIDO, CA** — Rats in the seats, in the dashboard and inside dirty terrariums. This morning, 78 rats are safe at San Diego Humane Society, after they were found living in squalor inside a stalled van.

On Thurs., June 1, 2023, Escondido Police contacted San Diego Humane Society's Humane Law Enforcement, stating they had towed a van in the overnight hours to the organization's Escondido Campus. Police had been alerted to the vehicle in a hotel parking lot with expired registration plates and noticed the van had animals living inside.

Humane Officers and animal care staff suited up with protective gear and found the rats living in filth inside the van. Staff were able to get 23 adult rats and 7 pinkies (babies) out on the first day. The additional rats were hiding in the dashboard, seating and lining of the vehicle, and had to be captured with food incentivized traps over several days in order to be rescued. Staff will continue to monitor the traps daily, as they believe additional rats may be hiding in the van.



Humane Officers have been in touch with the owner of the van and the animals. Because she agreed to surrender all animals to the nonprofit organization, officers will not be recommending any charges be filed. "This was a sad situation all around," said Lt. Regina Price with San Diego Humane Society's Humane Law Enforcement. "The owner had fallen on hard times and was unable to properly care for the animals."

Anyone who needs help caring for their pets can contact San Diego Humane Society for assistance. For more information, visit [sdhumane.org](http://sdhumane.org). **If you suspect animal cruelty or neglect in your neighborhood, please report it to San Diego Humane Society by calling 619-299-7012 (press 1 to report animal abuse).**

Once vaccinated and medically released, the rats will be placed up for adoption at San Diego Humane Society's campuses in Escondido, El Cajon, Oceanside and San Diego. [You can learn more about why rats make great pets here.](#)

San Diego Humane Society is open for walk-in adoptions Tuesday – Sunday, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. at its campuses in Escondido, El Cajon, Oceanside and San Diego. Visit [sdhumane.org/adopt](http://sdhumane.org/adopt) to view animals available for adoption.

**Photos/videos for media use can be downloaded here: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/Bct1IcvQVG>**

**Photo credit: San Diego Humane Society**

### **About San Diego Humane Society**

San Diego Humane Society's scope of social responsibility goes beyond adopting animals. We offer programs that strengthen the human-animal bond, prevent cruelty and neglect, provide medical care, educate the community and serve as a safety net for all pet families. Serving San Diego County since 1880, San Diego Humane Society has campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside, Ramona and San Diego. For more information, please visit [sdhumane.org](http://sdhumane.org). Follow the SDHS Media Relations department on [Twitter @sdhumane](https://twitter.com/sdhumane).

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