

After 26 cats rescued from fire, New Bedford urgently needs oxygen masks

Oxygen masks provided vital support for many of the 26 cats rescued after a fire at 303 County St. in New Bedford March 21.

But this large rescue effort depleted much of the supply of oxygen masks for animals.

The Coalition for Animals, a New Bedford-based, all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to helping animals, is sponsoring a fund-raising campaign to help replenish the supply of this life-saving equipment.

NBCU is helping with that effort with a generous donation of \$1,000.

The check will be presented at a press conference at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 31 at the offices of NBCU, 1150 Purchase St., New Bedford.

Representatives from the Coalition for Animals, the New Bedford Fire Department, EMS, Police Department and Animal Control will accept the check, which will be used to purchase masks.

"We're happy to donate and are hopeful that other business will come forward to help as well," said Berta Varao, president and CEO of NBCU.

Those attending will have the chance to see an oxygen mask placed on an animal to showcase how valuable these life-saving tools can be and provide an important visual image for the public.

The media is encouraged to attend and spread the word about the ongoing need for animal rescue equipment.

Masks must be worn and social distancing will be maintained by all attendees.