



## Man Arrested in Schenectady Cat Cruelty Case

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By: Kumi Tucker

NISKAYUNA -- Bud is being cared for at the Aqueduct Animal Hospital in Niskayuna. You can't tell because of all the fur, but you can feel that he's just skin and bones.

But he is better now than he was at the time this SPCA video was taken. Last week, he was barely alive and struggling to walk.

Authorities say they found two dead cats in a filthy State Street apartment in Schenectady, and Bud, alive but extremely dehydrated and emaciated.

"But his condition improved and he's a little bit weak right now, but he's eating very well and he's gained about three quarters of a pound since he got here on Friday," said Dr. Kimberly Ellis of the Aqueduct Animal Hospital in Niskayuna.

The SPCA arrested 25-year-old Wendall Smith, who is now facing three counts of animal cruelty, after some 60 tips poured into the SPCA hotline.

"We worked with the Schenectady police department, which had an outstanding warrant for Mr. Smith and were able to track him down in Saratoga County, and the Saratoga Springs police department was able to arrest him last night," said Mathew Tully with the Schenectady, Schoharie and Saratoga County SPCA.

In February of last year, Smith was arrested for allegedly leaving two dogs outside a house without food or water for days in the town of Berne. One dog died.

"He's now a repeat neglecter and steps have to be taken to prevent him from having animals moving forward," said Tully. "Earlier today, the SPCA requested the judge make sure he doesn't have any animals, should he be released on bail. The judge granted that condition."

Bud is still weak and has trouble walking, but he is affectionate and he loves the attention.

"Oh, he's a very sweet cat," said Dr. Ellis. "He's been purring pretty much the entire time since he's gotten here and he's very happy and getting lots of love."

The SPCA, which runs on donations, says it will cost more than \$5,000 to take care of Bud, and they are also helping a Great Dane from another case over the weekend.