

# LIVING WITH CATS IN THE COMMUNITY

## What is a Community Cat?

Community cats are a common sight in most neighborhoods. These outdoor cats may be fractious or fearful but can also be friendly or used to human interaction. Community cats normally have a caregiver, multiple caregivers, or an owner that is a nearby neighbor.

## What is Trap-Neuter-Return Monitor?

The best method to resolve common community cat concerns is by Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor (TNRM). TNRM helps humanely manage cat populations through spay/neuter, which prevents the cats from reproducing. This is done by humanely trapping cats for spay/neuter services, including vaccinations, flea medication and an ear tip (a universal symbol that signifies a cat has been spayed or neutered). The cats are typically returned to their communities of origin the day after surgery. Their caregivers and the community continue to monitor their health and safety.

## What attracts cats?

Cats are commonly attracted to pet food, human food, open trash bins, non-operational parked vehicles, other intact cats, and dark, covered areas.

## How do I prevent cats from visiting my yard?

- Keep pet food indoors or monitor the food intake of other pets and/or community cats and store away any leftovers
- Put trash in trash bins
- Keep trash bins shut and locked at all times
- Utilize indoor storage to prevent clutter out in the open
- Do not trap and remove - Actively seek assistance for TNRM efforts

### TNRM Eliminates/ Decreases:

- Fighting
- Yowling
- Spraying
- Breeding
- Roaming

## Why removal is not recommended:

When residents experience cat-related issues in their community, many think removing them will eliminate their problems. While this may seem logical, it will likely only offer a temporary solution due to The Vacuum Effect.

The Vacuum Effect occurs when a cat population is permanently removed from its home range. The initial population of cats lived in this location because there were resources such as shelter, food, and water. Once emptied, this still resource-rich habitat will attract new cats from neighboring areas.

Both the new cats and any remaining members of the original cat population will then reproduce. They reproduce at higher rates to fill the habitat and take advantage of the available resources. Before long, the area fills back to capacity again, as if the cats were never removed.



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# HUMANE DETERRENENTS

## Humane Deterrents:

- Protect gardens
- Prevent damage
- Decrease roaming
- Deter wildlife

### Ultrasonic deterrents ►

A motion sensor device emits a high-pitched, ultrasonic sound. The sound can barely be heard by humans but will deter most cats. For the best effect, place the device facing the area you want to protect. Some versions include a USB charging cable or nine-volt batteries, while others are solar-powered. These devices can be purchased through online retailers such as Amazon.

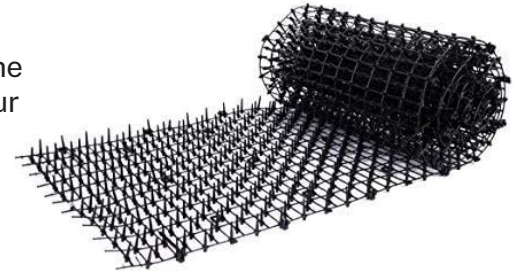


### ◀ Jet spray deterrents

A motion-activated sprinkler with an infrared sensor that releases a short blast of water. The sprinklers can “fire” up to 1,000 times on one nine-volt battery and typically cover an area of 35 by 45 feet.

### Scatmats ►

These harmless mats are made of flexible plastic spikes. Place on the ground with the spike side up to discourage cats from digging in your garden. An alternative to scatmats is poultry wire.



### ◀ Other affordable deterrents

Place forks or chopsticks into small potted plants. Use pinecones, lava rocks, concrete pavers or stones as mulch to prevent cats from digging.

**Smells that repel cats:** To keep cats out of yards or gardens, plant the herb rue or sprinkle dried rue. Citrus and lemon scents, garlic, ammonia, vinegar, coffee grinds, pipe tobacco, mustard, citronella, and eucalyptus all deter cats as well. The scents diminish over time, so re-applying is necessary.

### Deterrent Tips:

- Install deterrents directly facing affected areas
- Do not install deterrents in high-traffic areas
- Monitor the battery level of deterrents (if applicable)

For assistance and additional information with community cats, please contact:

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