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HUMANE OHIO

Humane Ohio operates a high quality, low-cost spay/neuter clinic. Our vision is a community without homeless pets where every resident has access to affordable spay/neuter.

HELPING NEIGHBORS & OUTDOOR COMMUNITY CATS CO-EXIST

- Cats should be spayed/neutered to help prevent the bad behaviors that go along with breeding that neighbors dislike such as yowling, spraying, fighting and roaming.
- Clean areas where cats have urinated and sprayed. White vinegar or Nature's Miracle can be used to eliminate staining and remove odors. Cats will continue to spray in an area that smells of urine so check and re-clean the site if necessary. Avoid using ammonia products because they smell similar to cat urine and may encourage future spraying.
- Make sure cats are vaccinated against rabies to alleviate health concerns. Immediately trap and seek veterinary care for any cat that becomes ill or injured. Maintain good vet records, including a rabies tag number, for each vaccinated cat. This will allow you to provide evidence that the outdoor community cats are healthy and vaccinated.
- Make sure the cats get "eartipped" at the time of the spay/neuter. Eartipping is a way to identify outdoor community cats that have been spayed/neutered and vaccinated. It's an immediate, visual way to ID cats that have gone through the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) process, and it alerts neighbors and animal control that the cat is part of a managed colony with a volunteer caregiver. It also helps you track which cats have been trapped, fixed and vaccinated, and it identifies newcomers who have not been fixed. Eartipping is safe and painless because the cat is under general anesthetic when the procedure is performed. Eartipping is a standard and humane practice that is used nationwide.
- Keep the area in general clean. Pick-up trash regularly and remove empty food bowls, old dried up food, dirty bedding materials, etc. Keep the area as attractive and clean as possible.
- Create a small, partially enclosed feeding site to make cats, food and water bowls less visible.
- Dump sand in an out-of-the-way area to prevent cats from soiling neighbors' yards and gardens, or provide litter boxes at the colony site. Cats prefer to use sand or a litter box and will do most of their eliminating there. Scoop the sand or litter boxes daily (and more often in hot weather) to keep clean for the cats and prevent odor. Pouring a layer of baking soda beneath the clean sand or litter can also help prevent odors. Cats will stop using the sand or litter if the odor is too strong, and odor causes neighbors to complain and get upset.
- Make sure the shelters you have erected look attractive and are unobtrusive. Many caretakers build creative shelters and feeding stations. These structures can be painted in natural colors like dark green and brown to blend in with surrounding foliage so neighbors do not see them as "eyesores."
- If the area where the cats are fed is particularly objectionable to any of the neighbors, gradually move the feeding station to a less objectionable area a short distance way. The move can be done in increments and completed in one to two weeks. The cats will follow their food.
- If the food is attracting wildlife, feed only in the morning or daylight hours when raccoons and other wildlife are not active. Cats will quickly adjust to the new schedule. Be sure to remove leftover food after feeding.
- If you or your neighbors are concerned about fleas, you can mix a small amount of Brewers Yeast and garlic in the cats' wet food to help keep fleas to a minimum. Be sure to change the bedding material or hay in the shelters frequently, or sprinkle herbal products like mint, dried pyrethra flowers or a non-toxic herbal flea powder, beneath the bedding to help prevent fleas.