

Got Cat Problems?

Stray cat solutions for property managers, landlords, HOAs, & neighbors



Illustration by Alyona Achilova

Tenants with too many cats? Stray cats spraying your property? Neighbors leaving food out for the neighborhood strays? Community cats can pose challenges, but there are humane solutions!

In this packet you'll find information on:

- FREE resources to help manage the cat population in your community
- Answers to common cat questions about stray or free-roaming cats
- Humane cat deterrents to keep cats off your property
- Arizona laws on community cats
- Important animal cruelty phone numbers to keep on hand
- Conflict resolution tips for tenants and neighbors
- Resources for tenants with pets (low-cost clinics, vaccines, and more)

Community Cats & Trap Neuter Return (TNR)

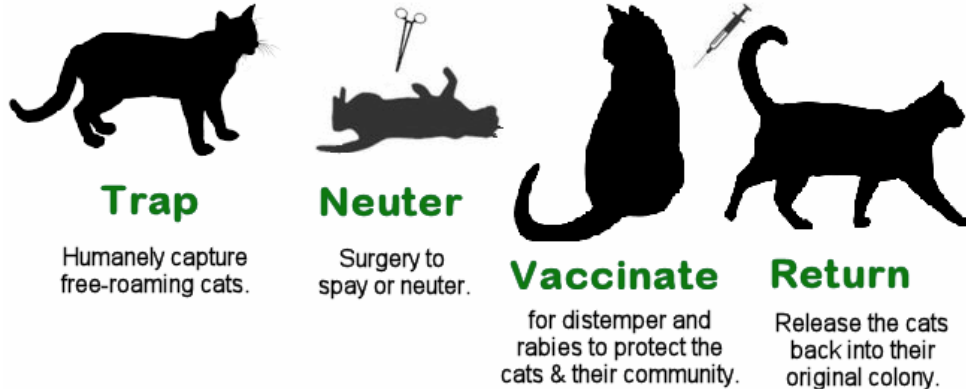


What are community cats?

Community cats, also called stray or feral cats, are unowned, free-roaming outdoor cats. There are an estimated 60 million community cats in the U.S.—a problem we all have a responsibility to humanely solve.

What can I do about community cats on my property?

The best option for outdoor cats is Trap Neuter Return (TNR). Cats are safely trapped using humane traps, then brought to a vet clinic to be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and treated for any basic illnesses or injuries. While under anesthesia, cats receive an ear tip on their left ear—the universal sign that a community cat has been spayed/neutered. Cats are then returned to the same location where they were trapped, where they can live out healthy lives without reproducing.



Trap Neuter Return benefits a community by:

- ✓ Reducing population
- ✓ Improving nuisance behaviors like fighting and spraying
 - ✓ Improving community health (cats are vaccinated)
 - ✓ Providing effective rodent control
- ✓ Saving taxpayer money by keeping cats out of shelters
 - ✓ Creating harmony among neighbors

Assistance is available to help with Trap Neuter Return. You don't have to do it alone. Call the Humane Society of Southern Arizona's Community Cats Program at (520) 327-6088 ext. 186 to get started, or visit: www.nokillpimacounty.org/pet-owner-resources/trap-neuter-return/

But I don't want cats on my property.

First, make sure you don't end up with *more* cats on your property. Cats reproduce quickly! Starting with TNR will ensure that the cat population doesn't increase.

Although community cats may be unwelcome guests, they're just trying to survive, and they depend on humans for their survival. They're also protected by law. Community cats cannot be removed or

improperly relocated. With TNR and other resources for managing outdoor cats, community cats can be good neighbors.

For ways to keep cats off your property, see section “Conflict Resolution & Keeping Cats Away” at the end of this packet.

Benefits of TNR



BIDEA WEE'S FERAL CAT INITIATIVE
Website: bideawee.org/fci
Help Desk: nycfci.happyfox.com/new
Social: campsite.bio/nycfci

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Common Cat Questions (& What DOESN'T Work)

I want tenants to stop feeding the cats so the cats will go away.

There's one thing we know: feeding bans DON'T WORK. The cats won't go away. When feeding abruptly stops, cats will start eating from dumpsters, killing wildlife, and sneaking into homes through doggie doors and open windows. Cats will become ill from starvation and can eventually die slow, painful deaths.

People who feed community cats aren't *causing* the cat problem. When community cats are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and fed an appropriate diet, they can co-exist peacefully with human neighbors without reproducing or spreading disease.

Why can't I just remove the cats?

It's illegal in Arizona to remove or relocate community cats. It's also ineffective: if cats are removed from their outdoor home, it creates a territorial opening that will not remain empty. You'll just end up with new cats!

Removing cats may cause a temporary decrease in the cat population, but more cats WILL take their place and it won't take long. This phenomenon is known in conservation studies as the Vacuum Effect and has been observed in many species. Catching and removing (or killing) cats is futile. It is an expensive, deadly cycle which yields no long-term benefits.

Trap Neuter Return (TNR) is the only way to stabilize cat populations. **Over time, the cat population will decrease as the cats are no longer reproducing.**

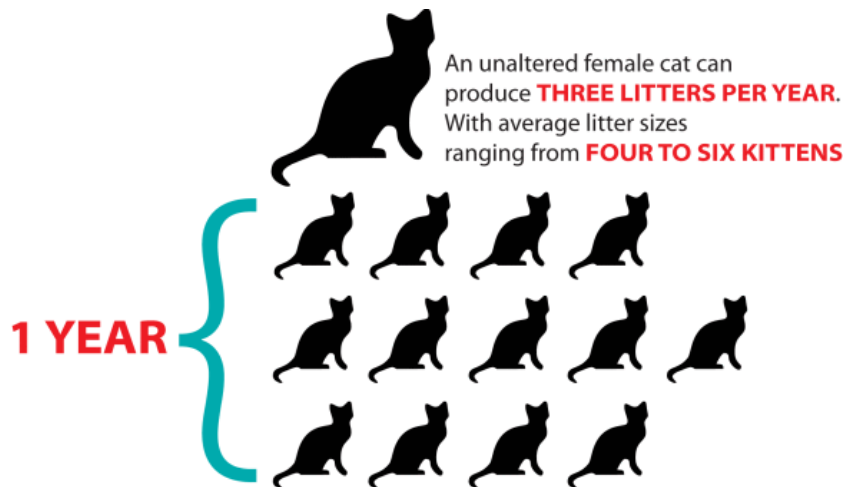


Illustration from Ten Lives Cat Rescue

Trap-neuter-return before (more) kittens appear.

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I'm sick of stray cats spraying, fighting, and making a mess.

Spay and neuter stops most nuisance behaviors! After cats are altered, they will stop fighting, mating, spraying, and yowling all night. Noisy cats will suddenly be quiet. And when they're fed according to the best practices shared in this packet, food should not attract bugs or cause other messes.

Email communitycats@hssaz.org for a copy of our resource packet for colony caregivers or download our bilingual flier [here](#) on "best practices" to distribute to residents who feed cats.

What about the smell?

Noticeable cat urine smells are usually from intact male cats, who spray to mark their territory. TNR will decrease this smell dramatically. Neutering removes hormones that decrease the odor and motivation for spraying.

Odors can also be reduced with an enzyme cleaner, such as Simple Solution, Nature's Miracle and Odoban. More information can be found further in this packet under "Conflict Resolution and Keeping Cats away."

How long will it take for me to see results?

As long as 75% of the cats in the colony have been TNR'd, the colony will stabilize and decline over time. Immediate results include no new kittens and improved behavior. Depending on the colony, population decline can happen within a few months. When most of the cats in a colony are TNR'd, they also keep new cats away.

My evicted tenant left cats behind. What do I do?

If the cat is friendly and you can pick it up, call your local animal shelter or rescue for options. If the cat is wild, or you are unable to handle it, then the best option is to Trap Neuter Return. See resources in this packet to get started!

I waited too long and now the outdoor cats are pregnant. What do I do?

It's never too late! Pregnant cats can still be spayed. It's the best thing for the cat's health, and will prevent a new litter of kittens on your property. Don't wait for kittens to be born! Prevention is key to get the cat population under control.

How much does it cost?

Trap Neuter Return is FREE in Pima County! It's completely free in Pima County to borrow humane traps and get community cats spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and treated for basic injuring and illness. Assistance is available to help with Trap Neuter Return. You don't have to do it alone.

Call the Humane Society of Southern Arizona's Community Cats Program at (520) 327-6088 ext. 186 to get started, or visit: www.nokillpimacounty.org/pet-owner-resources/trap-neuter-return/

Community Cats and the Law

Are feral cats considered wildlife in Arizona?

No, feral cats are not considered wildlife in Arizona. All cats, whether domesticated or feral, are considered companion animals under section ARS 12-2910 and are protected by the animal cruelty provisions set out in sections ARS 13-2910. Crimes against outdoor cats are punishable by state law.

Community cats are protected by state law.

- ARS 13-2910 protects all animals, including community cats (also known as stray, feral or free-roaming cats), from improper relocation/dumping, mistreatment, poisoning, unsafe trapping methods, and physical harm.
- ARS-11-1013 allows for shelter-neuter-return (trap neuter return for cats impounded at shelters). Other statutes on animal cruelty can be found at <http://www.act-az.org/local-and-state-laws/>.
- There is NO state law that prohibits feeding or watering community cats.

You can help animals in Pima County by keeping these phone numbers handy.

Emergencies/In-progress animal cruelty – 911

Non-emergency crimes against animals (suspected neglect or abuse, trapped animals in houses with no escape, pets being sold on the street)

- Pima Animal Care Center Animal Protective Service (520) 724-5900 option 4
- Animal Cruelty Taskforce (520) 547-0260 (can be anonymous)
- 88-CRIME (can be anonymous)
- Pima County Sheriff's Department (520) 351-4900

Suspected neglect or abuse, loose dogs, deceased animal on the street

- Pima Animal Care Center Animal Protective Service (520) 724-5900 option 4

Stray cats, stray kittens, and Trap Neuter Return

- Humane Society of Southern Arizona's Community Cat Program (520) 327-6088 ext. 186
- Pima Animal Care Center's Community Cat Program (520) 724-5983

Injured or orphaned wildlife

- Tucson Wildlife Center (520) 290-9453
- AZ Game & Fish (520) 243-5900

Conflict Resolution & Keeping Cats Away

Remember that community cat caregivers didn't create the cat problem; they're just responding to it. Whether you love cats or hate cats, we all have the same goal: fewer stray cats on the streets!

Can I at least keep cats out of certain parts of my property?

Yes! Humane deterrents can help keep cats from digging in your garden, sleeping on your car, or showing up where you don't want them. You can try scent repellants like citrus or citronella; motion repellants like motion-activated sprinklers; covers for your car and furniture, ultrasonic products made to repel cats; or simple solutions like using fencing to block off crawl spaces.

Here are some products you can purchase online or at your local store right away:

- Lay [Cat Scat Mats](#) or plastic carpet runners (spikes side up) lightly covered in soil in areas cats lay or defecate in
- To remove scent of urine, clean with a urine enzyme cleaner like [Odoban](#) or [Nature's Miracle](#) and then spray a deterrent like vinegar
- Use a [car cover](#) or a [tarp](#) to protect furniture
- Purchase an [ultra-sonic animal repeller](#) or [motion-activated sprinkler](#) like the [CLEANRTH Advanced Ultrasonic Animal Repeller](#) or the [Orbit Yard Enforcer Motion-Activated Sprinkler](#)



View a detailed list of humane cat deterrents from No Kill Pima County:

www.nokillpimacounty.org/humane-cat-deterrents-problem-solving-outdoor-free-roaming-cat-issues/

Feeding the cats is making a mess.

Encourage anyone feeding stray cats to follow best practices, like cleaning up bowls promptly after cats eat, not leaving leftover food outside, and using products like food-grade diatomaceous earth to keep ants and other bugs away. Ask for a copy of our resource packet for community cat caregivers for more information and tips on keeping cats healthy and neighbors happy.

Read more about resolving conflicts over community cats from Best Friends Animal Society:

resources.bestfriends.org/article/resolving-conflicts-over-community-cats

Read more about solutions to cat-related problems: resources.bestfriends.org/article/solutions-cat-related-issues

Email communitycats@hssaz.org for a copy of our resource packet for colony caregivers or download our bilingual flier [here](#) on "best practices" to distribute to residents who feed cats.

Additional resources for community cats and owned pets in Pima County

No Kill Pima County has a directory of local resources for pet owners, including information on low-cost vet care, pet food assistance, pet insurance, pet-friendly housing, pet training, re-homing a pet, lost and found pets, and more.

www.nokillpimacounty.org

The Humane Society of Southern Arizona's Community Cats Program offers humane trap loans and free spay/neuter for community cats in Pima County and surrounding areas. www.hssaz.org/TNR

For TNR organizations by state, visit <https://www.saveacat.org/cat-action-teams-tnr-groups-by-state.html>

Havahart provides information on the benefits of TNR vs. euthanasia for community cats. havahart.com/articles/benefits-tnr-programs-euthanasia

Resources used for this packet:

- Bideawee Feral Cat Initiative www.bideawee.org/programs/feral-cat-initiative/
- Feral Cat Focus www.feralcatfocus.org/
- No Kill Pima County www.nokillpimacounty.org
- Best Friends Animal Society www.resources.bestfriends.org/
- AlleyCat Allies alleycat.org
- Indy Feral (aka Indy Neighborhood Cats) www.indyferal.org
- Animal Cruelty Taskforce www.act-az.org/