

# HELP FERAL CATS MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS

Cats Anonymous, Inc. wants a safe and healthy environment for the cats participating in TNR in your area. You'll have a much more receptive audience if you're able to find ways to satisfy any concerns your neighbors might have and to entice you cats to be 'good neighbors'. We hope you'll find the suggestions listed below an asset in keeping your cats and neighbors happy.

## WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

First of all, **get to know your neighbors**. Let them know that you're taking care of these cats and have sterilized them so no additional breeding will take place. Explain that Trap-Neuter-Return is the **ONLY** proven method of reducing the feral cat population. Let them know that you hope they will bring any complaints to you so together you can work it out.

Second, **be proactive**. Don't wait for your neighbor to come to you with his issues, keep an eye on your ferals. Observe their behavior and whether they tend to stray to another persons property. If you notice, for instance, that Freddie Feral enjoys chewing up your neighbor's garden, determine the best solution to this problem and let your neighbor know how you'd like to resolve it. If it's possible, take care of it first.

Third, **be responsive and empathetic**. Keep in mind that your neighbor just wants to live in peace, without having to pay for damage from a cat or sacrificing a yard they're worked so hard to maintain. We have to respect their desire to have their property left intact. Apologize that they are being inconvenienced by Freddie Feral, let them know you plan to address their concerns immediately, and thank them for coming to you rather than voicing complaints to the city. Then **FOLLOW THROUGH**. Check back with your neighbor to be sure they are satisfied with the result.

**In order for our program to be a success, we must gain the support of our neighbors.  
Please keep this in mind when issues arise in your area.**

## PRODUCTS TO HELP REDUCE DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS

To keep cats out of gardens:

Motion activated sprinkler systems Motion activated sprinklers use infra-red to detect when an animal enters a defined territory. When the cat enters the infra-red field, the sprinkler shoots out a burst of water for a few seconds in the general direction of the animal. Not intending to soak the cat, but merely to scare it. Unfortunately, in our area you would be unable to use it during the winter months, but when started in spring/summer, the cats will be trained by late fall, possibly earlier. One such device called the "Scarecrow" was created specially for keeping "unwanted" animals out of gardens, ponds, etc. It is available online, and also at K-Mart for about \$70.

Scent repellents

There are many scent repellents available on the market, both naturally-based and chemically-based. One naturally-based repellent available at most garden centers is a plant called Coleus. It

is very strong scented and both cats and dogs are known to avoid it. There are many chemical-based repellents on the market as well. Most of them contain a chemical called methylonylketone. Be careful around crops and other plants, as it is supposed to be dangerous. Most pet stores and garden centers have chemically-based deterrents, ranging in price.

### Barriers

Sometimes the easiest way to keep cats out is to use physical barriers. Some of these include something as simple as gravel or decorative stone. Otherwise using a thorny plant such as Rose-of-Sharon, or Barberry bushes.

To keep cats out of yards, the use of an ultrasonic device is a nice option. Ultrasonic devices emit a very high frequency sound that humans cannot hear, but annoy cats. They work best when the capacity of the device matches the size of the area to be covered. Ultrasonic devices can be found at many pet stores, varying in prices and sizes. The above mentioned "Scarecrow" would be a great option for yards as well.

### NATURAL REMEDIES

If you have a porch, or a small patch of yard on your own property, you can plant catnip.

Usually the cats will want that more than what they are after in your neighbor's garden. A natural-based repellent is anything citrus (ex, orange peel, extract of orange, lemon peel, etc.) cats don't like anything 'citrusy'.

Create a natural litter box in your yard using sand or peat moss. Cats prefer these options to garden soil. If it's available to them they will use your area for their bathroom and leave your neighbor's garden alone.

### Other Options:

- blood's meal fertilizer
- purple fountain grass - the cats LOVE it and lay in the long leaves all day. If you plant this in a place the cats are using for a potty, they should stop using it for that purpose. They will, however, spend time playing in the grass. If the desired behavior is leaving that area, plant the grass somewhere else.
- chili powder, red crushed pepper, cayenne pepper - be careful, cats who get in the pepper and put their paw to their eye can experience a lot of pain.
- toothpicks
- coffee grounds
- black pepper
- aluminum foil
- gutter covers
- garlic

We hope the ideas mentioned above can help to make our Feral Felines good neighbors. We would love to hear what has worked/not worked for you in the past. Please share your thoughts [suggestions@catsanonymous.org](mailto:suggestions@catsanonymous.org) and we'll publish the ones we can on our site.