



Spay/Neuter Clinic
12 Airport Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94401
650/340-7025

Habitat Modification

Though they often disdain human contact, feral cats prefer areas in and around human habitation. They may live in abandoned buildings, weedy areas, post piles, junked cars, brush piles, culverts and other places that provide cover and protection. As a first step in controlling the growth of feral colonies, habitat can be humanely modified to prevent habitation.

Fencing, repairing windows and doors, and plugging holes into buildings is a practical way of discouraging feral cats from colonizing an area. Since cats can climb, it may be necessary to provide overhead fencing to keep cats outside the premises. Wire mesh with openings smaller than 2 1/2 inches (6.35 cm) should adequately discourage the cats.

Additional methods of habitat modification include:

- Sealing entrances of old buildings.
- Plugging holes under foundations.
- Removing brush and/or weeds, junk piles, old machinery and junk cars.
- Mowing areas of vegetation.

Please note! Before sealing entrances, plugging holes and/or mowing vegetation, make sure that all cats and their kittens have vacated the premises. Sprinkle flour at the exit and watch for footprints that lead away from the exit. When you are sure the animals are gone, seal it up securely.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has registered the following for repelling cats:

- Lemongrass oil
- Citronella oil
- Menthol
- Citrus oil
- Eucalyptus oil
- Geranium oil
- Lavender oil

Use repellents around flower boxes, furniture, bushes, trees and areas where cats are not wanted. Pet supply and garden supply stores may carry such repellents.

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(Material adapted from information provided by Colorado State University.)