



10 TIPS FOR CAT OWNERS

1. Scoop the litter box daily.

Never flush cat waste! The litter material can clog sewage system pipes and damage septic systems. Also, some of cat waste may contain a parasite, *T.Gondii*, which is very dangerous to humans and marine health, and cannot be removed during wastewater treatment. To reduce exposure, change



litter once daily to minimize the risk of potential infection, as well as reduce odor. Cat litter and waste should be collected, sealed in a bag, and disposed in the trash.

2. Don't let them "go" outside. Studies show that feces can contaminate local waterways. They also may poop or pee in your or your neighbors' gardens or sandboxes. Cats also harm and kill wildlife. To protect water quality and wildlife, leash, supervise or prevent your cat from wandering outside.

3. Use bio-degradable or environmentally-friendly kitty litter products, such as litter from recycled newspaper, wood shavings or sawdust. Use odor control products, such as baking soda.

4. Flea the use of chemicals. Consult with a veterinarian for safe flea and tick treatments.

5. Upcycle household materials. Use old blankets and towels as pet beds; convert old socks and leashes into toys; construct wood and carpet scraps into scratching posts. Be creative!

6. Ice melting products contain salt and can harm your pet if ingested. These chemicals can also contaminate local water bodies. Instead of salt based ice melts, purchase eco-friendly and pet-friendly products that contain carbonyl diamide and glycol admixture or acetates. Protect your cat's paws with booties or wash them regularly.

7. Chemical fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides used for lawn care have been shown to increase the risk of certain cancers in pets. Use natural lawn-care products or products that are least toxic. See COA's *10 Tips for Lawn and Garden*.

8. Give new life to lightly used cat beds or toys. Donate them to animal shelters or rescue groups.

9. Consumer power. Buy pet food in bulk and in recyclable or biodegradable packaging. Buying in bulk reduces waste and costs. When buying toys or bedding look for products that are made from recycled materials.

10. Adopt. Visit your local shelter for a family pet. Not only are you giving a pet a home, but you may also reduce the number of feral cats. Also, make sure your cat is spayed or neutered. Do not feed feral cats. Instead, call the local rescue group.

Nonpoint source or "pointless" pollution is the #1 cause of coastal water pollution resulting from stormwater runoff that carries litter, pet waste, fertilizers, pesticides, soil, and waste from leaky sewage systems into waterways. Every time it rains, polluted stormwater travels to the nearest storm drain or waterbody that ultimately drains to the ocean. People can easily become the solution to pollution. By making small changes we can make our ocean fishable, swimmable, and healthy.



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