



Clean Ocean Action's 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. By cleaning the litter box each day you will reduce the amount of odor caused by cat's concentrated urine. 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 water ways. They also may go to the bathroom in your or neighbors gardens or sandboxes. Cats also harm and kill wildlife. To protect water quality and wildlife leash or supervise. To protect wildlife and water quality, prevent your pet cat from wandering outside without supervision.

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

4. Ice melting products contain salt and can harm your pet if ingested accidentally. These chemicals can also contaminate local water bodies. Use pet-friendly, eco-friendly and salt-free ice melts and use only recommended quantities. Protect your cat's paws and wash them regularly. Protect paws with booties if possible to minimize exposure to chemicals and deicers.

5. Give a new life to lightly used cat beds or toys by donating them to a local animal shelter or rescue group for reuse.

6. 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*.

7. 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 made from recycled materials.

8. 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.

9. Adopt. Visit your local shelter for a family pet. Not only are you giving a homeless pet a home, but you may also reduce the number of feral cats. If you see feral cats in your neighborhood do not feed them. Instead call the local rescue group to give them a chance to find a home. Also, to decrease the amount of feral cats, make sure your cat is spayed or neutered.

10. Flea the use of chemicals. Consult with a veterinarian and/or visit greenpaws.org for safe flea and tick treatments.

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.

For more information and the complete 10 Tip Series visit us at:

www.CleanOceanAction.org

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