



PO Box 95  
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## **Guidelines for Safe, Humane & Effective Feral Cat Trapping**

Please read the following information that will help ensure a safe and humane trap-neuter-release experience for the cats and for you. It is very important that trapping be done in a responsible manner to protect the person trapping, our clinic staff, and the cats.

1. Make sure that you are trapping on your own property or at a location where you have permission to trap and have legal access to. You must have prior authorization/permission from the owner of the property before you can trap.
2. Trap at the same time and place that the cats are normally fed. If they are not on a feeding schedule, start them on a schedule by feeding them canned food at the same time every day. This will make trapping much easier.
3. Withhold food for 24 hours before trapping. Always provide fresh water.
4. Set as many traps as you can. Do not trap in high winds or in rain due to limited success. If trapping in a public area, try to place traps where passersby will not see them. Line the bottom of each trap with folded newspaper.
5. Use tuna, sardines or strong smelling cat food. Bait the trap at the very back, with a small trail of morsels or juice to lead them there. Do not put too much food in the front of the trap - the cat will spend too much time at the front and may get distracted or scared away before reaching the back and tripping the trap. Make sure that the trap is set properly and that the back door is locked and secured.
6. **NEVER LEAVE TRAPS UNATTENDED.** This means that you should not set a trap and leave it unattended overnight, or even more than 5-10 minutes at a time. Cats left unattended in traps are vulnerable to the weather and may be released or injured by other people. Note where you place all the traps, and make sure that you retrieve all of them at the end of trapping.
7. **As soon as a cat is trapped, cover the trap with a large towel or sheet.** This calms the cat. Check for an ear tip, which means they have already been spayed/neutered.
8. **Do not attempt to touch the cat through the trap.** The cat will not be comforted, and you risk being scratched and bitten. Keep cats covered and check on them

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periodically. Do not stick fingers into the trap or allow children or pets near the traps. These are wild animals who may scratch and bite. All animal bites are serious! If you are bitten, seek medical attention and do not release the cat. The cat will need to be quarantined. Contact your vet for quarantine instructions.

9. Both pregnant cats and nursing mothers can be spayed. A lactating mother can be released as soon as she is fully awake and can continue nursing her kittens. The kittens' main threat is exposure to the elements. Your choices for trapping a lactating mother in winter are:

- wait until the kittens are weaned before trapping her,
- wait until the weather warms up, or
- shoo the mother away from the trap.

**Never store traps in the "set" position, or door open** - animals may wander into the trap, even without bait and starve to death.

#### **CONTAINMENT & TRANSPORT**

Transport the cat(s) to our clinic Wednesday morning between 7a-8a, or if necessary to keep them overnight, place the cat in a safe, quiet place that is protected from weather, such as a basement, garage, or spare room. Do not attempt to open the trap. Feral cats are very fast and will take advantage of any opportunity for escape. Put newspaper under the trap for easy cleanup. **Do not feed or water the cat the night before surgery since surgery is safer with an empty stomach.**

#### **SPAY/NEUTER SURGERY**

When you drop off the cat, let us know of any medical conditions that you know of. The cats will be sterilized, vaccinated (FVRCP - distemper & rabies), and eartipped (left ear) to identify that this cat has been sterilized. **Be aware that any cat showing obvious signs of illness will be tested for Feline Leukemia & Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. Any cat testing positive for either virus will be humanely euthanized.**

#### **POST-SURGERY RECOVERY**

Lay newspapers and soft towels underneath the trap. To feed and water the cats, you can slip in small containers of food and water by raising the door a few inches. As always, be careful to avoid being bitten or scratched. **The cats should be left alone, covered at all times, in a quiet place to rest and recovery after surgery. Watch for bleeding or difficulty breathing. Call Dr. John Hayes at 434-242-3564 for help.**

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### **RELEASING THE CAT**

Male cats may be released the day after surgery if they are fully alert and recovered from anesthesia. Female cats should be kept 2 nights if possible, except if they are lactating - if this is the case, they should be released within 24 hours. Before release, make sure the cat is sitting up and fully alert. If the cat is still groggy after the recommended recovery period, do not release the cat and contact Dr. Hayes at 434-242-3564 as soon as possible.

### **A NOTE ABOUT WILDLIFE**

If you catch a racoon, opossum, or other wild animals, release as follows:

Cover the trap with a towel.

Pull the towel back from the releasing end - the animal will retreat under the part of the trap that is covered by the towel.

Open the door and stand behind the trap.

Pull the towel off and the animals should run out of the trap.

If you trap a wild animal, you must release it in the same location where they were trapped. Many wild animals cannot survive relocation. Please respect our wildlife and their right to live.

To deter wildlife from cat feeding stations, only feed at set times of the day and remove the food at other times. For the health and safety of wild animals, it is best not to allow them to get used to cat food handouts.

### **ADDITIONAL HELP**

If you are having difficulty trapping a cat, call one of our experienced cat advocates for advice. Call 434-985-3203 for those contact numbers.

### **PLEASE HELP US HELP MORE CATS IN MADISON & GREENE COUNTIES.**

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation toward the care of the cat(s) you bring to the clinic. This will help us help other feral and stray cats.

We have a limited number of traps, so *please return all borrowed traps as soon as possible. Traps may not be loaned to other persons for any reason.*

*Thank you for helping the feral cat colonies in our community!*

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**TRAPPING RELEASE FORM & LOAN AGREEMENT**

\_\_\_ I will be trapping feral cats on my property or at a location to which I have legal access and authority to trap.  
(or)

\_\_\_ I have received authorization by \_\_\_\_\_ to trap on their property or on a location to which I have legal access /authority to trap.

I understand that Madison-Greene Humane Society's Trap-Neuter-Release program is available solely for wild/stray unowned cats, and I certify to the best of my knowledge that these cats are unowned. I also recognize the risks all animals face when undergoing anesthesia, especially cats who are pregnant or in heat, and hold Madison-Greene Humane Society and its members harmless should a cat not survive surgery or experience complications afterward. Any cat that has an allergic reaction or is deemed by the veterinarian to be fatally ill or fatally injured may be humanely euthanized. I also release Madison-Greene Humane Society and its members from any liability for injuries that I may incur or cause while trapping or transporting these cats.

I promise to see that these cats receive food and water and necessary care on a regular basis when they are returned to the location from which they were taken following surgery, and I acknowledge the possibility that once released, some cats may not return.

Madison-Greene Humane Society recommends that all cats' vaccinations be kept current; please contact us to borrow traps for this purpose.

By my signature below, and my receipt of \_\_\_ humane trap(s), I also acknowledge the following:

- 1. The trap(s) is the property of Madison-Greene Humane Society and will be returned to the MGHS shelter.
- 2. The value of the trap is \$75.00 each, and I will be responsible for said sum, plus any costs of collection and attorney's fees necessary to secure its return or replacement.
- 3. I will not use the trap to capture my owned cat, or to commit any other unlawful act, but only to capture cats known to be unowned, and only for the purpose of spay/neuter procedures or any other medically necessary treatment. I agree that any cats so trapped, unless it deemed medically inappropriate, shall be returned in a lawful manner. Under no circumstances shall this trap be used to capture a healthy animals for surrender to animal control agencies. I will indemnify Madison-Greene Humane Society and its members from any liability based on my use of the trap.
- 4. I will transport or arrange for transport of said cats to MGHS shelter as directed and will adhere to all rules and instructions pertaining thereto.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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