

*I'm concerned about a cat.*

*What should I do?*

Response to complaints of animal cruelty and neglect are coordinated by a cruelty response system in each county. For information on how to file a complaint:

[www.ReportAnimalCruelty.com](http://www.ReportAnimalCruelty.com)

Or call

**(877) 9-HUMANE**



## **The Vermont Humane Federation's Animal Cruelty Response Coalition**

**A state-wide network of professionals coordinating Vermont's efforts to prevent and respond to animal cruelty through communication, education, and training.**

### **Members include:**

- The VT Humane Federation
- The VT Veterinary Medical Association
- The VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
- The VT League of Cities & Towns
- The VT Farm Bureau
- The Green Mountain Dairy Farmers Cooperative
- The VT Sheriffs Association
- The VT Police Chiefs Association
- The VT Constables Association
- The VT Animal Control Officers Association
- The VT Agency of Human Services

For more information visit  
[www.vermonthumane.org](http://www.vermonthumane.org)

## **Caring for Cats**



## **Vermont's Recommendations and Requirements**

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## Basic Cat Care

### Animal Care Practices

- Fresh, clean water in a spill-proof container should be accessible at all times.
- Should be fed at least once a day with cat food of adequate quality and in sufficient quantity to develop and maintain a healthy body condition.
- Indoor cats must be provided with litter pans and litter material cleaned daily to prevent urine and fecal buildup and odor.

### Cats Confined to a Living Space

- By law, a cat over the age of two months must be provided a minimum living space of nine square feet that is at least 24 inches high. This standard applies to *each cat* in a group housing situation. The cat must be able to turn about freely, stand, sit, and lie down.
- Any cat confined to a living space must be permitted outside the cage, crate, or other structure for an opportunity of at least one hour of daily exercise unless restricted by a licensed veterinarian. Separate space for exercise is not required if the living space is at least 27 square feet.



## Cat Care (cont)



### Additional Recommendations

- Cats should have yearly veterinary exams to ensure their health and to provide any necessary medications and vaccinations against feline distemper, rabies, and (optional) feline leukemia. A rabies vaccination is required by law for "domestic pets", which includes cats.
- The cat should be spayed or neutered. This will prevent the birth of additional litters, and may provide health and behavior benefits for the cat as well. Please note cat overpopulation is a significant problem in Vermont that leads to the suffering and death of many animals every year. For information about having your animal spayed or neutered, please call (877) 9-HUMANE.
- We believe that a primary responsibility of a cat owner is to protect cats from outdoor hazards by keeping them inside; however, if a cat is let outside or kept outside, it must have access to proper shelter such as a barn, garage, etc. where it can maintain body temperature. Feline leukemia testing and vaccinations are strongly recommended for outside cats.

## Common Concerns

### Appearance of Animal

Listless, runny nose and eyes; congested breathing; ear mites; sores from fighting or skin disease; thin body; matted fur; vomiting; diarrhea; parasites; hair loss (possibly from frost bite or skin disease).

### Housing Conditions

Inadequate number of litter boxes, lack of clean litter boxes, dirty or frozen water; lack of available adequate food; lack of shelter; overcrowding (causes stress and infectious disease).

### Behavior

Excessively aggressive; fearful; unresponsive to attention; self-mutilation; constant scratching, biting at self; excessive vocalization.

If the elements above are present, call a veterinarian to examine the animals.

