

Public Trap Neuter Return



Thank you for participating in the City of Edmonton's Public Trap Neuter Return (PTNR) program. Your participation in this program gives feral cats a second chance at a natural life and helps reduce their population within the city.

Each year, the Animal Care & Control Centre (ACCC) accepts more than 600 cats into the facility that are classified as feral. As adults, feral cats cannot be rehabilitated into adoptable lap cats because they have not been socialized to humans and show signs of aggression. Sometimes these cats can be transferred to a rescue agency or 'given a job' through one of our feral cat rehoming programs such as the Barn Buddy Program. Another option is our Public Trap Neuter Return (PTNR) program which runs April 1 - October 31st.

Participants in the PTNR program bring a feral cat(s) into ACCC to be spay/neutered and to receive vaccinations. Participants then return the cat(s) where they were found and act as their initial 'caregivers'.

The benefit to the community is extremely positive because these cats have been spay/neutered and the likelihood of new cats moving into the area is reduced. Over time, their population numbers will decrease.

Why Trap Neuter Return?

Trap Neuter Return (TNR) programs help manage feral cat overpopulation by stopping the breeding cycle. While removal of feral cats from the community may arguably rid an area of cats temporarily, it is not an effective long-term solution because of a scientifically-documented phenomenon known as the vacuum effect (source: alleycat.org). This means that when cats are removed, new cats move in, or the surviving cats left behind breed to capacity. TNR allows the existing colony to remain in a stable state until the colony numbers naturally decline due to attrition.

TNR lowers cat intake into shelters, thereby lowering shelter euthanasia rates. Research shows that spay and neutering also reduces spraying, fighting and yowling as well as reducing the number of new cats into the neighbourhood. Through TNR, homeless and free roaming feral cats are humanely trapped, evaluated and sterilized by veterinarians. They are vaccinated, microchipped and then returned to their original habitat.

Why do they need to be returned to where they're found?

Cats are instinctually bonded to the area where they were born and raised. It is in the best interest of the cat to return them to their existing area once they are vaccinated, microchipped and spay/neutered.

Is it safe to return feral cats back to the streets?

Similar to other 'wild' animals, feral cats spend their whole lives learning to find food, stay warm during colder weather and live as a community. Unfortunately, without programs like this, their future in the shelter is often euthanasia.

What are my responsibilities as caregiver?

Before releasing the cat to its original location, we ask that you observe and report any excessive bleeding or swelling or unusual activity that may have occurred due to surgery. If you see this, immediately call 311 (between the hours of 7am and 7pm) and ask to speak to a Registered Veterinary Technologist or return the cat to ACCC.

How to transfer a feral cat?

- Please do not remove the cat from its approved carrier until you are safely at the found location.
- Cats should be transported within the cab of a vehicle with controlled temperature where possible.
- Covering the carrier with a blanket can help minimize stress on the cat.
- The sooner you can release the cat to its original trapped location, the better.
- Cats should not stay in the carrier for more than two hours.

How do I release the cat?

Return to the location where the cat was originally caught and place the covered carrier door away from you. Standing on the side of the carrier, quietly open the carrier door and walk away. The cat will leave the carrier once they feel safe to do so. Once the cat has left the carrier, please be sure to collect the carrier and store it in a safe location.

Should I feed the cat?

Because we are returning the cat to the location they are familiar with, there is no need to feed the cat. Putting out food attracts other unwanted wildlife to the area, entices more cats and can increase litter sizes.

What if the cat gets injured or ill?

We ask that you monitor the cat's behaviour for the next week. If you notice excessive bleeding, swelling or odd behaviour, please call 780-408-4248 to speak with a Register Veterinary Technologist.

How is the cat marked/identified?

You will notice the cat's left ear will be tipped indicating that it has been spayed/neutered. It will also have a microchip.

For more information or assistance, please call 311 and ask to speak to the Animal Care & Control Centre.