



San Marcos Regional Animal Shelter
750 River Rd.
San Marcos, TX
Animal Services Division



Cat Room Cleaning Guidelines

These guidelines serve to protect our cats from disease and to reduce their stress levels as much as possible. Read through each section closely and be sure to review the Feline Wellness Check at the end of the document. You must conduct a mental Feline Wellness Check with each cat that you interact with at the shelter. The sooner we identify concerning medical or behavioral issues, the faster we are able to help the kitty!

Order of Cleaning:

Ideally, one employee should be stationed to clean each cat room. However, when one employee cleans multiple cat rooms, it is important to follow this general order of cleaning:

Kittens under 4 months **first**, then adults in each section:

- 1) Cat Adoption Room – least vulnerable population
- 2) Cat Pre-Adoption Room – second least vulnerable population
- 3) Cat Stray Room – MOST vulnerable population
- 4) Cat ISO Room (Red Room) – sick animals likely to spread illness to others

Visually check for signs of illness in your cat population BEFORE you start cleaning. If you notice sneezing, nasal discharge, diarrhea or vomit, notify a supervisor or vet staff and clean that cage LAST. **If you notice a cat gasping for breath, bleeding, drooling, seizing, or unable to get up, FIND A LEAD TECH OR SUPERVISOR IMMEDIATELY to address its needs.**

Cat Kennel Set Up:

All cats should have the ability, at a minimum, to

- Turn freely
- Easily stand, sit, and stretch
- Move his head without touching the top of the enclosure
- Lie in a comfortable position with limbs extended
- Hide if shy
- Move about and assume a comfortable posture for eating, drinking, and elimination
- Hold his tail erect (applies to cats and dogs)

This can be achieved by setting up kennels with:

- Litter pan in the back corner
- Food & water in the opposite corner (front)
- At least one blanket
- Kuranda bed if cage is tall enough, cardboard box on its side if not tall enough
- If a cat is fearful, drape extra blanket over kuranda bed to cover under it or offer hiding hole through cardboard box, mammal box, or transfer kennel



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Daily Spot Cleaning Procedure for Cat Cages:

Cats become overly stressed and are more likely to get sick when they are moved around, exposed to loud noises and strong scents (like Rescue and other cleaning products), and do not have something familiar in their space. Because of this, if a cat is staying in its cage (e.g. not going to surgery or getting adopted) we only spot clean our cat cages so long as the cage is not soiled with vomit/feces/urine.

See additional information below for cleaning cages with unsocialized cats.

- **Sanitize your hands between cat cages** with an alcohol-based hand cleanser and be sure to allow them to dry before using any new gloves.
- **Empty out litter pan, wipe out debris, and replace with new litter.** If box is heavily soiled, replace the entire pan.
- **Refill food and water bowls.** If dishes are soiled, replace.
- **Remove bedding and toys from cage or enclosure and shake out over trash can.** If bedding or toys are soiled, replace.
- **Use a clean hand broom** to sweep up all loose hair and debris in the enclosure.
- **Use Rescue cleaner to spot-clean the habitat.** Pay special attention to scrub vomit, feces, nasal discharge, litter mud, etc. Spray the Rescue directly onto a clean washcloth and wipe down any visibly dirty areas of the cage, including the bars, ceiling, floor and walls.
 - BARS SHOULD BE WIPED DOWN DAILY TO STOP BUILDUP OF BACTERIA DUE TO CATS RUBBING ON THE BARS.
- **Replace soiled newspaper** and line kennel with fresh newspaper
- **Use a clean broom to sweep the cattery floor** in its entirety and then mop using a disinfectant at the proper dilution ratio.

Cleaning a cat cage with a mammal den:

If a cat has a mammal den in its cage, it's safe to assume the cat may be more difficult to handle or shy/fearful.

- **If the mammal den is soiled, get a clean mammal den,** line the front doors of the dens up, place a towel over the top and gently encourage the cat to move into the clean den. Close and affix the doors on the clean den to prevent escape and place the soiled den in the crate washing area in the courtyard to be cleaned and sanitized.
- **If mammal den is not soiled, encourage the cat to go inside** the den using cat tongs (never force the cat with tongs, a gentle nudge is enough) and then slip the side portal door closed using cat tongs, or bite resistant gloved hands.
- **Ensure that both the front slide-up door and the side portal door are secured** by the attached clips so that the cat cannot escape.



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- **Gently remove the mammal den from the cage**, being careful to not bump the cage into any surfaces. Place the den against a wall with the front door facing the wall as an extra preventative escape measure.
- **Clean the cage following the normal cage cleaning procedure**
- **Place the mammal den in the back left corner** so that the side portal exit is facing the middle of the cage and the front sliding door is facing the front of the cage.
- **Place food and water on the side of the cage nearest the portal door** and the litter box in front of the sliding front door.
- Once the cage is fully set up, **open the side portal door so that the cat can move about the cage** when it is ready and close and secure the kennel door with a padlock or clip.

Deep Cleaning Procedures:

Cat CAGES *must* be deep cleaned between cats.

- **Remove all** bedding, toys, litterbox, and dishes from the habitat.
- **Use a hand broom** to sweep up all loose hairs and debris from the habitat.
- **Using soapy water or a detergent**, and a clean wash rag, scrub out the entire enclosure. Be sure to wash all surfaces, including both sides of the cage door/bars, tops and bottoms of shelves, walls, floors, corners, latches, handles, etc. All surfaces must be visibly free of ANY/ALL organic material, dirt, grime, etc.
- **Once the enclosure is dry from cleaning**, saturate the surfaces with disinfectant. This includes cage doors, tops and bottoms of shelves, walls, floors, etc. Allow disinfectant to remain on the surfaces for ten minutes and then wipe the cage out with a clean washcloth.
- **Once the cage is dry**, put clean and disinfected bedding, dishes, and a litterbox into the enclosure. It is vital that you allow the kennel to dry completely before adding new materials.

Each cat room should have its own dedicated supplies to prevent cross-contamination of contagions between populations. Each of these items must be replenished, replaced, or put back prior to leaving for the day.

Deep cleaning of cat rooms (common spaces): *Once weekly staff should perform a thorough deep clean of each cat room. This will include cleaning and then wiping down all walls and surfaces with a disinfectant.*

Restocking supplies and maintaining equipment:

Each cat room must be re-stocked daily at the end of cleaning. This includes emptying the trash cans and relining them with a new trash bag, refilling all food and water containers, refilling litter containers, ensuring that clean litter pans, food bowls, washcloths and bedding are replenished. Each room will have dedicated containers for the items used in that area.



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Any equipment used during the cleaning process must be cleaned and sanitized after use including laundering all dirty laundry (see laundry SOP), washing all soiled dishes that were removed from cages and cleaning and sanitizing all dustpans, brushes and cat handling equipment.



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Cat Room Cleaning Guidelines

Feline Wellness Check

What to look for and report to Vet Suite

Is the cat eating?

Is the cat drinking?

Is the cat coughing or sneezing?

Is there nasal discharge? What color is it? Clear? Green? Yellow?

Is there eye discharge? What color is it? Clear? Green? Yellow?

Is the cat vocalizing in pain?

Vomiting?

Stool? Loose stool? Diarrhea? Not defecating? Blood in stool?

Urine? Foul smelling? Dark in color? Not urinating? Blood in urine?

Is the cat: Bright? Alert? Responsive? Lethargic?

Are there noticeable wounds?

Is there noticeable hairloss?

Is the cat scratching/pawing at its ears or mouth?

Is the cat drooling?

Is the cat limping / seem lame on any legs?

Does that cat's overall appearance seem thrifty (does it appear groomed/clean vs greasy/matted)?

Report anything you see that seems abnormal to vet suite or a supervisor immediately.