



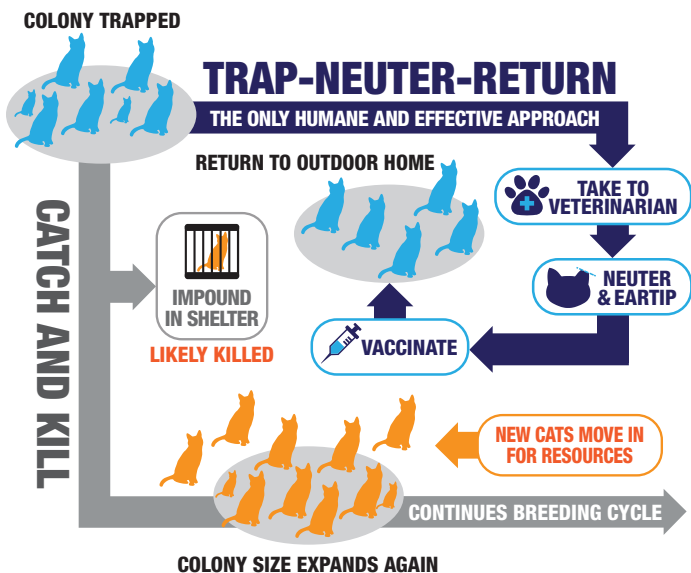
**Alley Cat Allies**<sup>®</sup>  
The cats' leading advocate

## JUST THE FACTS: The Vacuum Effect

### Removing cats from their outdoor home creates a vacuum

The **Vacuum Effect** has been documented worldwide in many species. Animal control's traditional approach has been to catch and kill community cats, or unowned cats who live outdoors. While this may temporarily reduce the number of community cats in a given area, it is ultimately counterproductive, as the population of cats rebounds. Due to the Vacuum Effect, untrapped cats continue to breed, and other cats move into the newly available territory to take advantage of the resources that sustained the original cats.

## THE VACUUM EFFECT



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**MARBLES**  
Casper, Wyoming



## **Community cats are at home outdoors.**

Cats have lived and thrived outdoors for thousands of years, and it is their natural environment and their home. In fact, cats lived nearly exclusively outdoors until the invention of kitty litter in the 1940s sparked a trend to have cats as indoor companions. Community cats live full, healthy lives with their feline families in their outdoor homes and instinctively know how to find food and shelter. If they live in an area, it is because they have access to those resources.

## **Time and again, communities find catch and kill doesn't work—it needs to stop.**

Municipal animal control agencies have been catching and killing cats for decades in a misguided attempt to reduce the number of community cats in a given area. Catch and kill is counterproductive, as it has no permanent impact on the population of outdoor cats. This endless, cruel cycle is not supported by the public, wastes tax dollars, and fails to meet the needs of the cats and the community. The Vacuum Effect is just one reason catch and kill is so ineffective.

## **Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) does work.**

TNR is the only effective and humane approach to address community cat populations. It involves humanely trapping, spaying or neutering, vaccinating, and returning community cats to their outdoor homes. Afterward, there are no more litters of kittens—the population is stabilized. TNR stops the stress associated with pregnancy and mating behaviors, such as yowling or fighting. Not only is TNR the effective, humane approach for outdoor cats, but it improves their lives.

## **You can make a difference and save lives.**

Together, we can fight the ineffective catch and kill approach, support TNR, and ensure local policies address the needs of outdoor cats and our communities.

Learn more at [alleycat.org/VacuumEffect](https://alleycat.org/VacuumEffect).

**Join our movement to  
protect cats at [alleycat.org](https://alleycat.org).**



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