

IF A CAT HAS ADOPTED YOU!

Often, we hear that a neighborhood cat is exhibiting nuisance behaviors (digging, leaving feces, urinating on furniture or rugs, harassing birds) and appears to have adopted a citizen's home as their own. The cat returns every day, eats their pet's food and sleeps under their shed at night. The citizen has checked with neighbors and no-one knows where the cat belongs or where it came from. Often the mystery cat is friendly, but some cats may be unfriendly and unkempt.

In these extreme cases, we advise citizens that they have several options:

- They can take humane steps to keep the cat from coming to their property such as removing the food source or one of the tools previously mentioned in this brochure.
- They can contact us for spay/neuter vouchers and decide that they are willing to be "adopted" by the uninvited but welcome feline.
- Some citizens will contact a local humane society or rescue group and work with them to find a new home for the animal.
- Finally, if the property owner or resident of a property determines that the cat is feral and is a nuisance and that it should be removed, there are private nuisance animal removal companies they can contact to arrange for that service.



Mesa County Animal Services

971 Coffman Road

Whitewater, CO 81527

Mailing: P.O. Box 20,000-5002

Grand Junction, CO 81502

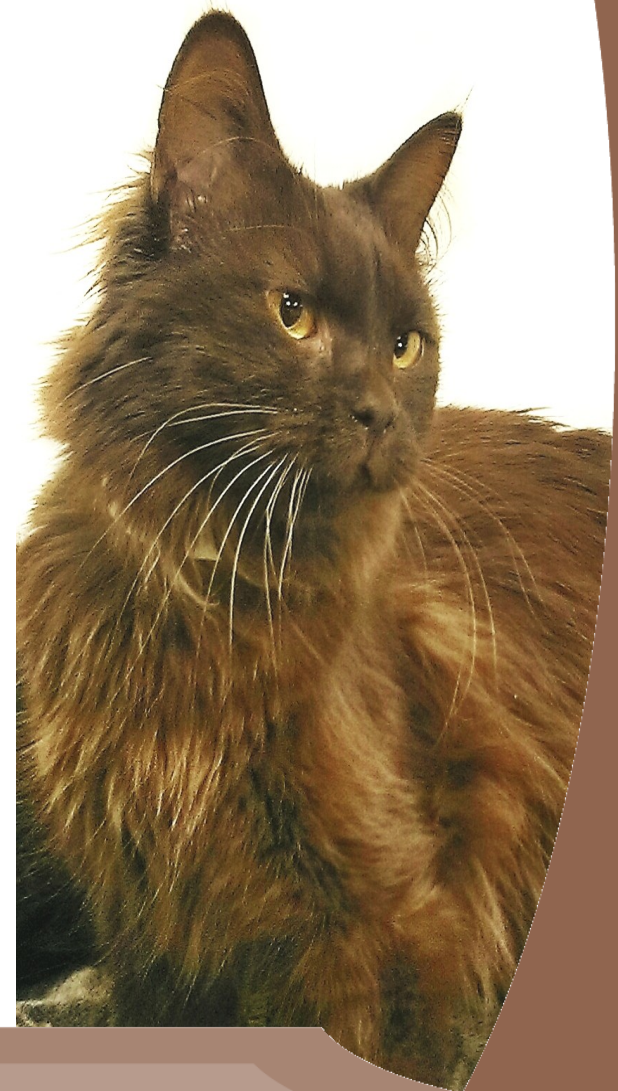
Phone: 970.242.4646

E-mail: AC.Dispatch@mesacounty.us
animalservices.mesacounty.us

*Our Vision: Citizens and pet animals
living together harmoniously.*

*Every pet owner is a responsible owner and
every pet has a humane home.*

That Damn Cat!





THE LAW

Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction do not have provisions in their local laws prohibiting cats from being off their owner's property.

While there is no requirement in our community to keep cats confined, our agency and the animal welfare community value the relationship between our citizens and their feline companions. Thus, the following services are provided by Mesa County Animal Services:

- Quarantine services in cases of cat bites and/or rabies exposure.
- For humanitarian reasons, we will accept or pick up cats when the owner is unknown and that are sick, injured or orphaned neonates (4 weeks old or less).
- Humane euthanasia, by request, for cat owners.
- Investigation of reported animal cruelty or neglect.
- Spay/neuter vouchers to cat owners with domestic or feral cats to address pet overpopulation.
- Pet license to cat owners that wish to license their pet for identification purposes.
- When appropriate, we rehabilitate and rehome cats that have come to us for humanitarian reasons.
- Refer cat owners that have a cat needing to be rehomed to one of our adoption partners. Mesa County Animal Services does not accept cats directly from owners for rehoming purposes.

These animal welfare agencies are experts at providing rehoming services for cats and will accept cats directly from their owners:

Cats League and Assistance of the Western Slope
970.241.3793

Roice-Hurst Humane Society
970.434.7337

For individuals that own feral cats, there are private services that can be contacted if they wish to have those cats removed from their property.

**“Everyone needs a dog to adore him,
and a cat to bring him back to reality”**
——Mary Bly

UNINVITED VISITORS

In light of the fact that citizens do not always appreciate visits from neighborhood cats, we would like to recommend the following options to help you “cat proof” your property or to help you locate the owner of a lost cat:

- If the cat is owned by a neighbor but allowed outside, then your best approach is one that seeks to persuade that neighbor to keep his cat indoors or otherwise safely confined. To succeed at this, the key is to build a good relationship with your neighbor. Gather information to pass to your neighbor about the many benefits to cats if they are kept indoors or allowed outdoors when supervised. Include tips on how to keep cats happy as indoor pets. Speak with your neighbor about your

concerns, whether you are bothered by the cat killing birds, using your garden as a litter box or the cat's overall safety and health. Your neighbor might consider adding an outside litter box to their property. This addition may keep the cat from coming and utilizing your flower bed or garden.

- You may want to post “found” cat posters in your neighborhood.
- If an unwelcome cat is regularly visiting you, make sure you are not intentionally leaving unattended food that they are using as their food source. This could be bird feed, pet food or accessible trash.
- Moth balls are a good deterrent when placed in flower beds or gardens.
- Unbaited mouse traps are an inexpensive “scare tactic”. A cat is fast enough that it will not hurt them, but a snap will startle them and they may eventually decide to avoid that area
- A garden hose being sprayed on the cat will deter a cat if you are home enough to catch them when they visit.
- There are adjustable electronic motion detectors that use safe, non-toxic spray technology to keep unwanted animals away from valuable vegetation.