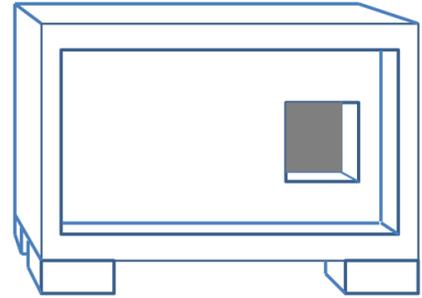


The Shelter Showcase

TNR Insulated Feral Cat Shelter

Tip Sheet

Made of two-inch thick Styrofoam, these are excellent insulators that will trap the cat's body heat and keep the inside warm. Air space is purposely limited so there is less volume to be heated. Typically, 3 - 4 cats can fit comfortably inside & bury into the straw on a very cold night.



Shelters need to stay dry, collect no water, trap the cat's body heat, placed in a safe location that does not get flooded, and weighted down with bricks to prevent wind from blowing them away.

Placement:

Locating the shelter is critical. Shelters should be located away from areas of vehicle & foot traffic. Locating it in a wooded area or in the margin of a wooded area is ideal, as this provides cover from the elements and makes the shelter less obvious. In more developed areas, locate the shelter behind buildings or someplace where it will not be disturbed. Cats will shun shelter if they are disturbed there regularly. Orient the shelter to block the entrances from receiving direct wind and rain/snow. Make sure that if you place anything over or around the shelter that it is anchored firmly and will not blow or fall over in front of the entrance.

The shelter should sit firmly on all 4 feet so it does not wobble when a cat steps in it. The shelter requires little or no maintenance except occasionally placing fresh straw bedding in them and checking them from time to time.

Bedding:

Only use straw for bedding. Do not use hay, it absorbs moisture, causes mold. Do not use blankets, they absorb moisture and wick away heat. That said... you can cut thin strips of newspaper (not magazines, just regular newspaper) and mix a little of that in to soften the straw (not replace the straw)

Food and Water:

Never place food or water in the shelter. However you can draw the cats into the shelter in the beginning by putting catnip inside.

Snow:

Cats can get snowed in, so it's important to remove snow from all entrances to their shelters. Shovel regularly. Caution against using salts and chemicals placed to melt snow near your colonies. They can be toxic when licked off paws or ingested from melting puddles, and can hurt a cat's paw pads.

Weigh down shelter:

Unless it is protected (like being underneath a porch), eventually it will be exposed to wind, so use a sheet of cut plywood to weigh down these lightweight shelters. Or use a few (red) bricks (not too heavy), place on roof, over the left and the right walls or corners, not on the middle of the roof.

Two Shelters next to each other:

If you are using two shelters, place them about a foot apart with the doors facing each other. Then you can bridge the gap by laying a larger piece of plywood across both roofs. This weighs down the shelters and creates an area where food can be put outside and fully protects the shelter doors from the elements.

Flap Door – For Winter only:

After the cats have begun using the shelter, you can add a flap door which has a slit down the middle. You can tape it on with duct tape. A piece of clear vinyl plastic (such as shower curtain liner) would work well.