

Look Out For: Cats!

General information

- Cats can make a habit of spending time in your garden. This can be dangerous because cat feces can contain parasites, like roundworm, hookworm, and tapeworm, that can be dangerous to anyone, specifically those with a weak immune system or those that are pregnant.
- According to the CDC: Accidentally swallowing the parasite through contact with cat feces that contain *Toxoplasma*. This might happen by
 1. Cleaning a cat's litter box when the cat has shed *Toxoplasma* in its feces;
 2. Touching or ingesting anything that has come into contact with cat feces that contain *Toxoplasma*; or
 3. Accidentally ingesting contaminated soil (e.g., not washing hands after gardening or eating unwashed fruits or vegetables from a garden).
- Cat feces must be removed from all areas (beds or pathways) of your garden if discovered. Please contact the Green Village Initiative team so that we can help you remove any cat feces safely. Get in touch with your GVI contact by emailing us at info@gogvi.org, or call us at 203-612-4107.

Items Needed for Safe Removal of Cat Feces

- A garbage bag
- Disposable gloves
- Landscape fabric and a staple gun or stakes
- Garden Log Sheet and access to a calendar



Identifying Cat Feces

- Cat feces are typically dark brown
- Cat feces are firm
- Typically, cat feces are shaped like a log or nugget. Cat feces are tubular in shape (like a Tootsie Roll).





Removing Cat Feces

- It is essential that you wear disposable gloves when removing cat feces.
- Once you identify the location of the cat feces, mark a 1 foot radius around the feces.
- Remove the feces and excavate all soil and plant matter the within 1 foot, put it all into a garbage bag. This ensures that all microbes are contained so no other contamination occurs within the garden.

Resetting the Garden Bed

- All produce in the affected frame must be removed. Remove all plants until the remaining soil is bare. Add the plants to the garbage bag.
- Dispose of your gloves and tie up the garbage bag.
- Cover the frame with landscape fabric and pin it down with stakes or a staple gun. Over time, this will heat the soil and kill any bacteria left over from the disposed cat feces. You will not be planting in this bed for at least 100 days to ensure that there are no remaining bacteria.
- Mark the frame clearly so that others know that the bed is not to be used.
- Jot down the date that the feces was removed, on your Garden Log Sheet.
- Use a calendar to determine 100 days from the date of removal. Note that date in your Garden Log Sheet so that you and other gardeners know when it is safe to use the frame.
- Remember: **do not** plant in the affected frame for at least one hundred days.