

# Don't Let Your Pets

## *Take a Bite Out Of Your Home Sale*

**Do you own pets?** Do they share your living space? Buyers are more discerning than ever these days when deciding if the home they've selected is the right one. So the last thing you want are pet odors or related conditions to deter traffic or a potential sale.

Keep cat boxes, bird and rodent cages, and the surrounding areas clean. Keep a towel or blanket under cages. Excess cat litter, bird seed and wood shavings should be vacuumed frequently. Keeping a clean pet living area shows that you care about maintaining your home.

**Here are some things to keep in mind to make sure your furry little friends don't get in the way of a sale!**

### **Is Fido taking a bite out of your sale?**

Dogs and cats in particular like to scratch and chew. Nervous dogs will scratch doors, floors, door frames, walls, carpet and even chew furniture. A home inspector will note any damage to components (doors, floors, weather stripping, screens) if it affects the overall function of any system within the home.

Luckily, scratches on wood floors (or the cabinet door where you keep Fido's treats) can easily be fixed with a good sanding and finish, but the damage, if left un-treated, can completely draw attention away from the beautiful wood features in your home. Another common

condition is scratched window screens. They can be repaired as well, but replacement is probably the best way to go if you're looking to impress buyers with your home.

How do you avoid this kind of damage in the first place? Keep your pet's nails groomed and avoid locking your pet behind a door or in another room while you entertain guests, or leave the house for long periods of time. Give your dog chews and reward him for good behavior. Give cats carpet pieces or scratching poles.

**Nothing to sneeze at.** Pets, for some, mean allergies and unpleasant smells. Some buyers' allergies are so strong that dander in carpets and furniture can cause an attack within minutes and make a walk-through miserable or even impossible. So keep carpets and furniture vacuumed regularly—and let's not forget about general pet odors. Without going overboard, carpet deodorizing treatments, air fresheners or some strategically-placed potpourri dishes (not where Fido can reach them) should do the trick.

**SHED no tears.** Cats and dogs shed. But a, perhaps, surprising fact? Much of that hair/fur debris commonly ends up under the refrigerator. This is an insurance company documented

fire safety issue and shouldn't be ignored. Vacuum under your refrigerator at least twice a year. Also, don't forget your air conditioning and heating supply registers. Hair/fur absolutely can—and will—affect the functioning and efficiency of these systems. But if you've kept a fairly consistent cleaning schedule, pet hair in your AC unit can be fixed by a professional HVAC company.

**Urine? You're out!** When speaking of pet odors, urine probably has to be the number one cause for wrinkled noses. But don't be fooled by claims that painting over the damage is enough to fix and seal the issue. Urine stains in carpet can seep down into the carpet pad and even into the subfloor leaving lingering odors that could deter potential buyers. Floors, wood trim, or drywall that has been damaged by urine ultimately needs to be replaced. That is the *only* way to truly remove the damage/stains and the resulting odor.

**Itching to sell?** Does your pet have fleas? You'll want to take care of the issue immediately, especially for your pet's sake, but you'll also be happy to know that with the help of a specialist, a flea problem can be fixed without replacing your carpet.

**Ocean views.** Check your fish tanks frequently for leaking. It doesn't take much to ruin a wood floor, or sub flooring under a carpet. Inspections will look for water damage under the tank area and again at the next level below.

**Get well soon.** Maintain your animal's health. Not only will your pet thank you, but so will your home. A sick animal can be extremely damaging (long term) to your carpeting and/or furniture. Inspections will note stains on your flooring materials as areas of concern.

