

April 15, 2026

Mayor Ramsey and Members of the Hardin City Council,

Alley Cat Allies is writing to express our strong opposition to the discussion in your city's April 7 Law Enforcement Committee meeting about pursuing a gas chamber to kill cats with carbon dioxide (CO₂) asphyxiation. Doing so would be an act of cruelty that is not acceptable or effective. Killing cats with CO₂ gas is also illegal in Montana. As such, we urge the immediate cessation of all consideration of killing community cats.

The recorded discussion of the April 7 meeting detailed paying \$1,000 to set up a CO₂ gas facility for cats. Montana administrative rules, specifically 24.225.930, authorize only specific methods of euthanasia, and CO₂ gas is not among them. Therefore, utilizing this method would violate Montana law as well as constitute cruelty to cats.

Research shows, and top animal welfare organizations agree, that CO₂ asphyxiation is not a humane method of euthanasia for cats. Cats can be resistant to CO₂ gas for several reasons, so this method causes acute distress and suffering.

Alley Cat Allies is the leader of the global movement to protect and improve the lives of cats. As the leading advocacy organization for cats, we work with lawmakers, shelters, and the public toward humane, nonlethal, and effective laws and policies that serve the best interests of cats and the communities in which they live. We offer our expertise and resources to the City of Hardin, provided a commitment is made to pursue humane approaches instead of lethal ones.

Immediately Cease Consideration of Lethal Control of Community Cats

Lethal removal of community cats, or unowned cats who live outdoors, will never be a humane, viable, or necessary course of action. Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the only humane and effective approach to community cats.

Hardin has passed several measures that are inhumane, needlessly penalize community members, and are proven ineffective as approaches to stabilizing a community cat population. Those include feeding bans against community cats, which inherently hinder TNR, as controlled feeding is a critical part of the process. Necessary change would involve removing those measures.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Is the Only Humane and Effective Approach

Through TNR, community cats are humanely trapped; brought to a veterinary clinic to be spayed or neutered, eartipped (the universal sign that a cat has been spayed or neutered through a TNR program), and vaccinated; and then returned to their original outdoor homes.

TNR has been proven to stabilize community cat populations by stopping the cycle of reproduction; to improve the cats' health through vaccinations; and to benefit animal control agencies and shelters by reducing cat intake and calls of concern.

TNR works, while killing does not. Trapping cats to kill them in shelters or through other means is not an untested idea; it was the status quo for decades across our nation and fails due to the **Vacuum Effect**—a phenomenon in which other cats move in to take advantage of the resources that sustained the colony that was removed.

Because of this phenomenon, the cycle of catching and killing cats is not only cruel, it is an endless waste of resources and taxpayer dollars.

Reject the Killing of Community Cats in Hardin

Alley Cat Allies is committed to protecting the community cats of Hardin, and we again offer our support to the city in enacting TNR and other humane, effective programs. But before humane programs can be established, Hardin must reject the lethal control of cats in all forms, including the utilization of illegal CO₂ gas.

Please contact us at outreach@alleycat.org or respond to this email so we can work together to save cats' lives and create vital change in the city.

Sincerely,

Outreach Team
Alley Cat Allies