**Litter Box Basics**

According to a study published in the Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science in 2000, the primary reason that cats are surrendered to shelters is because they stop using the litter box. Something as simple as adding an additional litter box, changing the type of litter or even replacing worn boxes may help to improve overall litter box behavior.

**Cleanliness.** Certain cats may demand that their boxes be cleaned every day (in rare cases, even more frequently), while others may be happy to go a week or more between scooping. In general, daily maintenance, even with a clumping litter, is recommended.   
  
**Location.** An ideal litter box location is both protected and accessible. When entering and exiting the box, the cat should have every opportunity to avoid ambush from other cats, dogs and children.   
  
**How many?** The number of boxes is determined by the number of cats in the household. Feline behaviorists generally recommend the number of boxes be equal to the number of cats plus one, e.g., two cats should have three litter boxes.   
 **Litter TYPES.** Cats have preferences and choices for litter that range from large pellet to clumping granule to soft shred, made from potato to pine to green tea. Alaska Mill & Feed staff can help you find a litter that might suit your cat to a tee.  
  
**If a cat stops using the litter box.** If a cat suddenly stops using the litter box and begins to urinate in other areas of the house, it’s often a first sign of Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disorder, kidney disease or diabetes. When litter box behavior changes for no apparent reason, it's a good idea to visit a veterinarian to rule out possible medical causes.