

## Keeping Cat Safe During Home Construction

**CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional pet sitter, has some tips to make your cat secure.**

*By Jeanne Adlon*

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**Q:** How can I keep my cats safe while having construction done in my home?

**A:** I always say that unless you have a separate room to keep your kitties in while there are workmen in the home, you should try to board them or have a friend take them temporarily.

One client of mine asked me to look after her adorable cats, Muriel and Oscar, but only told me at the last minute that she was having construction done in her small apartment. When I arrived after the workmen had left, I found the furniture piled into the living room with tarps thrown over everything and no cats in sight. With no safe place to escape from the perils of painting, the poor kitties had lodged themselves under the furniture and had stayed there all day. I actually had to climb over the furniture to find them. Fortunately after hearing my voice, they came out and I made sure they had plenty of TLC.

The owner also had a pet frog, which was left in its container on the living-room desk! If I hadn't pulled the paint tarp off of the desk, the poor little guy could have suffocated. He was relocated to the bathroom where I thought he would fare better. There was no room in the apartment that could be closed off for Muriel and Oscar; however, their hideaway was a good one. Since their owner was coming home shortly afterward, I felt OK about leaving them. I did advise her in the future to make better arrangement for her pets.

Cats crave consistency and there is nothing more stressful than a house full of noisy workers, the whirl of machinery or paint fumes. I have seen the unfortunate trail of paw prints through paint — or worse, varnish — when cats are not properly placed in a separate room with all their comforts such as food, water, litter pan and toys. I know cats appear self-sufficient and it might seem OK to leave them to navigate through home construction, but I'll emphasize again, if you can't provide a safe haven, please make other arrangements for your kitties — and frogs!