

Feline Filth Forces House Condemnation

Town Council calls emergency meeting to authorize cleanup.

The New York home of a 76-year-old woman was condemned this week after complaints of filth and a stench caused by her failure to look after her more than 18 cats. The stench, debris and piles of cat feces in a house in the town of Niskayuna were so tremendous, officials said, they don't know if the home will be habitable again. Many of the rescued cats were declared too sick or feral to live. Seven of the eight cats taken by the Animal Protective Foundation in Scotia were euthanized or died, according Susan Bobinsky, the foundations executive director. As of Thursday, she was unsure if the other cats would survive. Town ordinances require houses to be in livable condition and free from vermin. If a homeowner violates the code, the town can intervene, including tearing down the structure. An emergency town board meeting was held the morning of Thursday, June 29, to authorize funds to clean waste at the home, where the resident, Anna Holeva, 76, kept at least 18 cats. This is not the first time the town has faced health concerns about the home. About 18 months ago, Holeva was ordered by town officials to stop putting food on her lawn because she was attracting stray cats, according to town supervisor Luke Smith. Smith said the town will place a lien on the home to ensure the homeowner repays cleanup costs. Posted: June 30, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST