

DOGS, FENCES AND ROAMING

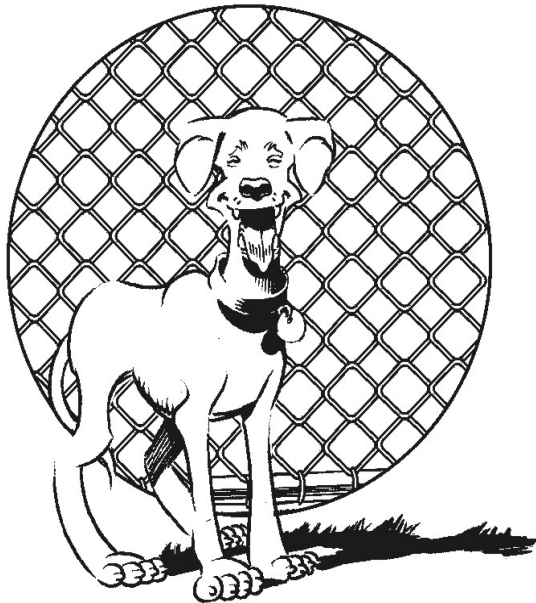
PROTECT YOUR MATE – SHUT THE GATE!

Owning a pet is both a basic right in our community and a serious responsibility. So if you intend owning a dog, you have to take responsibility for confining it to your property.

PETS & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Fences and gates protect your dog from the dangers of roaming, stop it causing a nuisance in your neighbourhood, and ensure your pet does not hurt other animals or people.

While many people keep dogs as a deterrent for unauthorised entry to their property, it is important that people legally passing properties housing dogs are protected from them.



A straying dog is a concern to neighbours and the community. Dogs that are not kept safely behind a fence risk being injured or causing injury to others. They become a traffic hazard for motorists, are a bite risk to innocent people, can display territorial aggression, are an annoyance to other animals in the community and can cause property damage. Owners are liable for any injuries or damage their dog causes.

LEGAL ACCESS

When designing fence layouts to contain your pet, remember you must still provide legal access to your property. This means people should be able to safely approach your front door and utility services representatives should be able to safely access your power, gas and water meter.

FENCING REQUIREMENTS

Having an adequately sized fence for your dog protects both your dog and your neighbourhood. As a responsible pet owner, it is important to ensure that your fence or dog enclosure is:

- High enough that your dog can not jump over
- Low enough that your dog can not dig under
- Strong enough that your dog can not push it over,
- Hole proof so that your dog can not escape through it and
- Sound enough to ensure it cannot attack people or animals through the fence

COMMUNITY RIGHTS

People in the community have a right to live without interference from other people's pets.

Unaccompanied animals roaming the streets are at risk and all residents have a right to have them rescued and either taken to a refuge or returned to their owners.

When Council finds a roaming pet with a registration tag, it will be taken to its registered address. If no-one is home to accept it, attempts will be made to contact the owner and the pet will be taken to the pound to ensure its safety. Unregistered pets found wandering will be taken to the pound and kept for 8 days.

TERRITORIALITY

Roaming also increases the amount of territory your pet considers their own (perhaps your entire street or as far as the dog can see) and this means they are more likely to challenge any animal or person they consider an intruder within this extended territory.

This may increase nuisance barking and the potential for your pet to be involved in an attack.



FIREWORKS & THUNDER STORMS

Dogs are often unnerved during unusually noisy events such as thunderstorms and fireworks displays. Take extra care to secure your dog when a thunderstorm is forecast or fireworks displays are scheduled.

RISKS OF NOT CONFINING YOUR DOG

Failure to securely confine your dog to your property can leave both you and your dog at considerable risk. Your dog may be hit by a car or attacked by another animal.

Conversely, your dog may threaten or attack another animal or person or cause an accident. Should this occur, you may be found liable for damage or injury your dog causes. Council may also declare your dog to be 'Menacing' or 'Dangerous' and place onerous requirements on you in order to allow you to continue to keep your dog. Alternatively, Council may ask you to surrender the dog and have it put down or prosecute you in Court.

You should also be aware that if your dog chases or mauls livestock, the farmer is legally entitled to shoot your dog on-site.

For the safety of others and your dog, keep it securely confined.

REGISTERED WANDERING PETS

Council provides a rescue and refuge service for the community. Registered pets found wandering and wearing their tag will be returned to their address by Council free of charge. However, if the owner is not home or not contactable, the pet will be taken to the pound for safe keeping. Attempts will be made to contact the owner and reunite pet and owner as soon as possible.

UNREGISTERED WANDERING PETS

Impoundment services are operated on a user pays basis. The cost of releasing a pet from the pound varies depending on where the animal is impounded. Pound release fees must be paid before the animal can be returned to the owner.

The fees incorporate the cost of the rescue, transportation to the pound and costs associated with keeping the animal safe and fed for every day it has been kept. If the rescued pet is not registered, the annual registration fee must also be

paid prior to release. As all new registrations are now legally required to be microchipped, microchipping costs will also need to be met.

Register your pet to avoid unnecessary expense.



MORE INFORMATION

Further information is also available in Council's range of Responsible Pet Ownership Fact Sheets. These include:

- Biting and Aggression
- Litter
- Leashes and Exercise
- Registration and Identification
- Responsible Pet Ownership
- Barking Dogs
- Barking Solutions
- Desexing Your Pet
- Registration Fees & Fines

CONTACTING COUNCIL

If you require any further information, or would like a copy of one of Council's Responsible Pet Ownership Fact Sheets, visit either of Council's Customer Service Centres at:

- 68 Sussex Street, Linton or
 - 2 Pope Street, Bannockburn or call
- ☎ 5220 7111 or
☎ 1300 36 30 36 (Toll Free within the Shire)

Email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

Website www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au



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