



You, your pet and us

Draft Animal Management Plan

Learning to manage your pet



Education

Learning to manage your pet



Legislation and enforcement alone will not encourage pet owners to be responsible. Support through education and advice is another important element to effectively managing animals in Darwin.

Council has a full-time Animal Education Officer who attends to the Pet Care Help Line, delivers a range of education services that can be accessed by all members of the community, and conducts home visits to help pet owners address specific issues.

The education services provided by Council are designed to provide support to all pet owners and increase their understanding of responsible pet ownership, now and into the future.

Pet Care Help Line

The Pet Care Help Line is a phone service Council provides which offers information to the community relating to:

- nuisance pet behaviour
- owner education and assistance
- registration enquiries
- animal By-Law enquiries and
- any other animal-related matters.

To access this service, phone (08) 8930 0606, between 8:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Website information

You can access information about animal management through Council's website including:

- registration fees and conditions
- information fact sheets on a range of topics
- current By-Laws
- Council's strategies, including this Animal Management Plan
- fees and charges associated with infringements
- how to lodge a complaint and
- upcoming events and activities.

Pet owners can also pay their registration renewal fees on-line. Council's website address is www.darwin.nt.gov.au

Community awareness campaigns

Council runs regular community education campaigns to help remind pet owners about their responsibilities and obligations, and the consequences of non-compliance. These campaigns are designed to address common areas of complaint or make owners aware of upcoming dates that they should be aware of, such as registration expiry.

Council also delivers letter box drops in certain neighbourhoods where problems or complaints arise. This helps address complaints where no specific address can be nominated, only an area.



Objective

The key to long-lasting voluntary change in attitudes is education and promotion, which involves the education of owners, prospective owners and their animals.

Learning to manage your pet



Community events

Council has close involvement with a number of community events such as:

- Pet Expo
- World Animal Day
- Defence Expos and
- RSPCA Million Paws Walk.

Through these events, Council is able to have positive contact with pet owners and people thinking about getting a pet. It is also an opportunity for staff to receive feedback from pet owners and community members on a range of issues.

New dog and cat registration kits

When you register a new dog and cat, you will receive an information pack.

This information pack contains:

- a welcome letter
- the pet care handbook
- a magnet to remind owners when to renew their pet's registration, and
- information fact sheets.

This information pack is also available on request.

Information fact sheets

Council has a range of information fact sheets to assist in owner awareness and education.

The following topics are covered:

- Keeping your dog at home
- Keeping your cat at home
- Your dog and the law
- Your cat and the law
- Nuisance barking
- Kids and dogs
- Kids and pets
- Caring for your dog
- Caring for your cat
- Dogs, cats and cane toads
- Exercise areas
- Declared dogs

The fact sheets are available on the website, from field officers, at Council libraries and at the Civic Centre. They can also be mailed or faxed on request by calling the Pet Care Help Line on (08) 8930 0606.



Objective

A combination of education, prevention, awareness programs and enforcement is required to achieve Council's objectives.

Education

Learning to manage your pet



School education program

To help children learn how to be safe around pets and how to care for pets, Council offers a program to all the primary schools in Darwin.

The program, Play It Safe, teaches children how to avoid being hurt by dogs and gives them confidence to interact with dogs safely. It also helps them understand how their actions can affect a dog's behaviour. The presentation, which includes an interactive video, can be tailored to suit all ages of children at primary school.

Children who attend the program are given simple information on the roles and responsibilities that pet owners have in the community. They are given stickers, rulers and fun work sheets specifically designed for the program, and information sheets are sent home to parents.

The program is also offered to other community-based organisations.

Education targeting specific issues

Territory Day fireworks

Territory Day is celebrated on 1 July each year and the associated fireworks can cause havoc with the dog and cat population of Darwin.

Prior to the event, Council runs a campaign to remind pet owners and residents about the effect fireworks can have on pets. In particular, owners are encouraged to make sure their pets are safely contained to reduce the chance of their pet running away through stress or anxiety.

This information is distributed via a media campaign, Council's website and the Pet Care Help Line.

Council collects and impounds many dogs during Territory Day celebrations and receives a large number of lost dog reports. Registered dogs that are impounded by Council due to fireworks noise on Territory Day are given back to their owners with no fee.

Cyclones and thunderstorms

Cyclones and severe thunderstorms affect Darwin during the wet season, October to March. Due to the high level of anxiety pets can feel during these events, there tends to be a large number of pet problems reported, including nuisance barking and pets escaping.

If a cyclone is approaching, Council uses the media to remind pet owners about their responsibilities, provide tips for keeping the pet safe and advise what will happen if their pet is impounded as a result of a cyclone or severe thunderstorm.

For more information about any of these education programs, or to access the information and advice available, call the Pet Care Help Line on (08) 8930 0606.



Objective

To promote responsible pet ownership and voluntary compliance with Darwin City Council By-Laws.



Enquiries 08 8930 0606

www.darwin.nt.gov.au