



**MEDIA RELEASE: FRIDAY, 15 DECEMBER, 2017**

**Council urges residents to be mindful of Responsible Pet Ownership**

Pets are fantastic companions and are important members of the family.

Strathbogie Shire Council values its furry residents and wants them to be happy and healthy.

As a responsible pet owner, it is your duty to provide care and attention to your pets to ensure they are happy, healthy and safe.

Part of this is knowing your responsibilities as an owner and local law requirements, as well as being considerate of other people and pets who share public spaces.

**Council has the following advice for dog owners:**

- ✓ Your dog needs to be microchipped and registered with Council. This ensures that your dog can be identified and returned home if they become lost.
- ✓ Make sure your dog is on a leash when walking in public spaces. Council are working to create some off-leash areas in the Strathbogie Shire, which we will keep residents updated on, however in the interim you should always have your dog on a leash.
- ✓ Animals must not be left unattended in cars, even with the windows open. Even on mild days, temperatures inside a car can quickly rise and become fatal. RSPCA can prosecute people who fail to comply.
- ✓ Legally, you are required to securely confine your dog to your property. This means your yard must have a closed gate and an escape proof fence that your dog cannot jump, get under or climb through.
- ✓ Cleaning up after your dog is part of being a responsible owner and dog faeces should be cleaned up in public places. Fines can be issued if you fail to do this. You can use plastic (or biodegradable) bags, trowels or pooper scoopers. Products are available that attach to your dog's leash to store plastic bags for use during walks.
- ✓ Make sure your pet is getting regular checks at the vet. How often you should take your dog to the vet depends on their age and health status, so it is important to check with your local veterinary clinic for recommendations.
- ✓ It is your duty to ensure your animal is transported appropriately and provided with its essential needs, including food, water, protection from heat or cold and a safe position on the vehicle.

- ✓ The law in Victoria requires dogs on utes to be restrained either via a tether or cage to ensure the dog cannot fall off or get injured when the vehicle moves.
- ✓ Found or stray dogs in the possession of a person other than the owner must be handed over to the local Council as soon as possible.
- ✓ Dogs must not create ongoing nuisance problems e.g. constant barking. Pets that are creating nuisance problems can be reported to Council Customer Service on 1800 065 993.
- ✓ Requirements for dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs must be complied with.
- ✓ It is important to start looking for a missing dog immediately, as pounds are only required to hold stray and impounded dogs for 8 days.
- ✓ Under animal cruelty legislation, if you mistreat or fail to properly care for your dog you can be prosecuted and face fines, jail or a ban on owning an animal.

**Council's has the following advice for cat owners:**

- ✓ Your cat needs to be microchipped and registered with Council. This ensures that they can be identified and returned home if they become lost.
- ✓ Responsible cat ownership includes caring for their welfare needs, registration, microchipping and complying with local requirements for keeping cats on your property.
- ✓ Animals must not be left unattended in cars, even with the windows open. Even on mild days, temperatures inside a car can quickly rise and become fatal.
- ✓ Owners need to ensure their cat has a suitable environment, diet and protection from pain, injury and disease.
- ✓ Cats tend to roam free when outdoors; this can expose them to dangers such as being hit by vehicles, injuries from fights with other animals and contraction of diseases such as feline aids. Please be mindful of where your cat is located, particularly during the night.

**-ENDS-**

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